

Liberty University John W. Rawlings School of Divinity

FROM SPECTATOR TO SERVANT: ADDRESSING THE HEART OF THE
CHRISTIAN FOR SERVICE WITHIN THE CHURCH BASED UPON
EPHESIANS 5:18-21 AND BIBLICAL PRINCIPLES OF SERVANTHOOD

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

By
David W. Di Raddo

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Thesis Project Approval Sheet

Dr. Robert C. Greer, Ph.D.
Advisor

Dr. Brian K. Moulton, Ph.D.
Reader

THE DOCTOR OF MINISTRY THESIS PROJECT ABSTRACT

David W. Di Raddo

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Mentor: Dr. Robert C. Greer, Ph.D.

In the ninth chapter of Matthew's Gospel, verses thirty-six through thirty-eight, Jesus said to His disciples that the fields were ripe for harvest, but the workers are few. This dissertation project will address the question of why today, as in the days of Jesus, workers in the church continue to be few in number. Specifically, what factors have contributed to the majority of those who attend church becoming spectators rather than servants, and what will change the heart of the individual? This study will include three primary data collection methods comprised of a pre- and post-intervention questionnaire, a ten-question survey supplied to 155 area religious leaders, and a pre- and post-intervention number of event logistic participants. The study setting will be Remnant Life Church, in New Cumberland, Pennsylvania, with a participating sample size of approximately forty-six people. A teaching of servanthood's spiritual principles is necessary to prevent many, in ignorance, from embracing opportunities to serve. In addition, the mandate for God's people to serve one another will also be included so that, when the study has ended, church leaders will have the materials, means, and method to biblically lead their congregation to a higher degree of participation.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

An influential, vibrant church is filled with life. That effectiveness will be witnessed not only in the spiritual vitality and growth of the people but in the presence of activity. A noticeable number of people, however, are unwilling or unavailable to participate in the life of the church outside of the Sunday morning worship service. While at first glance, it may appear to be the result of an over-committed social calendar and a matter of scheduling, upon closer examination, there is a much deeper issue within the very heart of today's church-attendee.

In a culture willing to fully embrace a frenetic pace of life, it is becoming increasingly difficult to identify, cultivate, and retain people who are willing to do the work of the church. The demands of a career on both parents, the increase of sports and extracurricular activities for children, and the increased frequency families are traveling have created a dwindling pool of available time. In such scenarios, the individual, the family, and the church suffer for the time lost together.

Regardless of its size, denomination, demographic construct, or geographic location, an increasingly smaller percentage of the total number of attendees will participate in and perform the tasks that comprise the life of a church. As a result, the importance of biblical fellowship, the beauty of relationship building, and the spiritual strength gained through learning from other believers is becoming an increasingly diminished reality.

The change from participant to spectator is an indicator of a much deeper concern. Theologian David F. Wells writes in his book *God in the Wasteland* that "western culture is now

being upended.”¹ He goes on to write that the transformation has not been one of savagery, rather one that has taken place with great ease. It has made its way into every aspect of Western society and has been a powerful agent of change.

The provocateurs of this revolution may not have been aware they were at the center of the whirlwind. It may not have even been their intent to facilitate the upheaval, but their influence is undeniable, and, while it has found its way into every corner of our lives, it is also profoundly spiritual.²

Gen-Exers and Millennials. The church has not escaped the revolution. Two of the most significant demographic groups within the church today are the Gen-Exers, those born between the years 1965 and 1983, and the Millennials, born between 1984 and 2002.³ As they now comprise a large segment of those attending church today, they are coming into an age of maturity that positions them to begin taking the reins of church leadership. They are also bringing with them a different belief system. It is one that has separated itself from the conservative, evangelical thinking and teaching of the mid-20th-century congregation. They are at the heart of the revolution that is upending traditional Christian theology.

As these two groups become more involved in helping to establish the direction and focus of the 21st-century church, current church leaders and theologians are finding the need to address heretofore rare topics. In the past, they would have required little or no discussion. These subjects include, but are not limited to:

- absolute truth

¹ David F. Wells, *God in the Wasteland: The Reality of Truth in a World of Fading Dreams*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmann Publishing, 1994), 6.

² Ibid., 7.

³ Barna Group, *BarnaTrends 2018*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2017), 15.

- the exclusivity of the gospel
- postmodernism
- declining trust in church leadership
- the inerrancy of Scripture
- physical proof of biblical accounts
- pre-marital cohabitation
- homosexuality

Each of these is being pushed to the forefront by this growing percentage of church attendees. If the reality of these crucial issues is not addressed, this segment of attendees will become concomitant with another growing reality, the continuing overall decline of church attendance and membership in the institutional church.⁴ As such, the church of North America may be on the precipice of following in the footsteps of the church in Western Europe, which has almost disappeared in recent decades and now is dependent upon missionaries from other nations to hold together that which still remains. This seems almost inconceivable, given the fact that Western Europe is the cradle of the Reformation. Yet those years are long past and new realities have taken their place. The church in North America may be the next shoe to drop.

The Seeker-Sensitive Church. A second contributing factor to the decline in church participation is the impact of the Seeker-Sensitive church movement. While their influence peaked in the mid-1990s, they are still a major player in how church is understood today.

This movement, whose primary focus is the growth of the church (meaning numerical in importance above anything else), harvested a new breed of Christian – those content with

⁴ Randall W. Reed, “A Book for None: Teaching Biblical Studies to Millennial Nones.” *Teaching Theology & Religion* 19, no 2 (2016): 154, accessed April 9, 2020.

spectator spirituality. Spectator spirituality was already a problem in the church prior to the emergence of the Seeker-Sensitive Movement. What the leaders of this movement did was not resist spectatorism, but to make it part of the warp and woof of how they defined “church.” In other words, they rode the wave of spectatorism, believing greater numbers of people would come if little were asked of them, rather than seeing it as a problem. What they saw was opportunity.

Theirs is a mentality comfortable with a church service that has become “a show” where those who attend have come “to watch and be entertained.” Or, as was reported by one who had visited the flagship church of the seeker-sensitive movement, Willow Creek Valley outside of Chicago, “They entertain; they are actors with an audience. Not much is expected of the audience.”⁵ Yet now, even those at the forefront of that movement have begun to admit that what has emerged from this inoffensive, watered-down, albeit visually stimulating appeal to know God, is a false spirituality bereft of depth and stilted from developing into a mature faith-walk.⁶

Consequences. The consequence is churches are being filled with parishioners who have a consumeristic approach to church life. It may even be described as consumerism on steroids. As a result, that approach has placed a tremendous strain on staff members who must compensate for those who lack a servant’s heart when it comes to contributing to the life of the church. The frequency of burnout within the confines of professional ministry has increased significantly over the past several decades, coinciding with the rise of these two concerns mentioned above.

⁵ Sabrina Tingley, 1996. “Willow Creek Community Church and Holy Covenant United Methodist Church: A Comparison.” *Chicago Theological Seminary Register* 86 (3): 7, accessed April 15, 2020.

⁶ Bob Burney, “FIRST-PERSON: A Shocking Confession from Willow Creek Community Church Leaders,” *Baptist Press*. November 6, 2007, accessed April 27, 2020. <http://www.bpnews.net/26768/firstperson-a-shocking-confession-from-willow-creek-community-church-leaders>.

In a study by the Barna Group involving senior pastors, it was discovered that of those responding to the survey, 75% indicated they suffered from emotional/mental exhaustion either sometimes or frequently.⁷ One primary concern was the lack of rest when nearly every church-sponsored event requires the pastor or staff's participation if the number of helpers from within the church body is insufficient to accomplish the work.

Exhaustion for the individual, however, is not limited to merely becoming tired. Physical fatigue is something easily corrected by rest or the recognition that an individual must limit the time they give. Burnout is something altogether different. To illustrate, if a small tree is bent and then released, it will amend its position and eventually stand tall and straight again. If it is bent until it snaps, however, the tree will stay broken.⁸ Reaching that critical point of brokenness in a minister's life means the joy, enthusiasm, and passion for the work of the church becomes broken as well. Healing can occur, but it is a slow process that cannot be hurried.⁹ Meanwhile, the needs of people are still present, and the work of the church must continue.

More and more churches are grappling with the implications of finding themselves in this "wasteland," as David Wells calls it. He also pronounces a significant problem with the evangelicals, and one of the reasons he believes this revolution against the primary tenants of the church have successfully been seeded and allowed to grow. "The fundamental problem in the evangelical world today is that God rests too inconsequentially upon the church. His truth is too distant, his grace is too ordinary, his judgment is too benign, his gospel too easy, and his Christ is

⁷ Barna Group. *Most Pastors Feel Energized and Supported*. October 2017. Accessed January 18, 2020. <https://www.barna.com/research/most-pastors-feel-energized-and-supported>.

⁸ Richard A. Swenson, *Margin: Restoring Emotional, Physical, Financial, and Time Reserves to Overloaded Lives* (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 2004), 51.

⁹ Ibid.

too common.”¹⁰ He goes on to wonder if the North American church can right itself from this milieu, or if it is destined to experience the same fate as the European church of recent decades, wholly marginalized and ineffective within the mainstream culture.¹¹

Is There Hope? If the congregants of Remnant Life Church understand, embrace, and implement the biblical principles of servanthood, then an increase in the percentage of those participating in the ministry of the church may occur. The work of the church is not an option to be embraced or rejected at the whim of the individual. It is a loving, firm instruction given by Jesus to seek His kingdom first, as recorded in Matthew 6:33.¹²

Clearly, a change in thinking is required. Yet, the rethinking of servanthood with submissiveness spirituality and how the church can be most effective in the twenty-first century is not a question of effective education, manipulation, or reprogramming. Effective motivational speaking can elicit results, but not the right kind nor ones that last. Transforming a carnal Christian into one whose heart has changed and is now a genuine servant of God can only be achieved by the Word and Spirit of God. In other words, a divine miracle is required. No amount of preaching in exegetical perfection is going to change a heart. Neither will persuasion, appealing to the emotional heartstrings of a listener. That change will only be brought about by God and God alone for all those who attend their services each Sunday.

What, then, are the responsibilities of the pastor who desires to see God work such a miracle in his church? Is it even realistic to expect a local church to overcome the 80/20 syndrome that plagues most organizations? And what of the worship leader? What role does he

¹⁰ Wells, *God in the Wasteland*, 30.

¹¹ Darrell Richard Jackson, 2018. “The State of the Churches in Europe,” *Review & Expositor* 115 (2): 164, accessed April 23, 2020.

¹² Unless otherwise noted, all biblical passages referenced are in the New International Version Bible (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2002).

or she have in this endeavor to increase the number of Christians committed to spiritual servanthood? Such are the questions that this project will attempt to answer.

A Change in Thinking and a New Question. To address the issue of participation in the life of the church is by no means being presented as a unique study. Countless books, articles, and seminars have been dedicated to offering solutions to a problem that presented itself as far back as when the first churches were founded following the resurrection of Jesus. However, one would think that after centuries of dealing with the same problem without a solution, perhaps a different question is needing to be asked. To ask the new question means pastors and church leaders may need to consider a course-correction in their teaching as they attempt to reach those willing to serve.

The old questions include, “What is the thinking of the individual regarding serving in the church, and how do we get that thinking to change?” This question is grounded in psychology. Another question often asked is, “How do we get people to reexamine the demands of their lives and make the church a greater priority?” which is rooted in sociology. This project suggests that a question grounded in pneumatology is what must be needed. Now, rather than emphasizing the mind or individual's actions, the focus should be upon the heart and the role of the Holy Spirit in changing the heart. Hence, the new question then becomes, “Is the person sitting in the church pew willing to open their heart to the presence of the Holy Spirit and, as a result, become a servant both within the church and without?”

We can see the connectivity of the words “servant” and “spirit” used by the prophet Isaiah in referencing the servant of the Lord, Jesus Christ. The prophet writes in Isaiah 42:1, “Here is my *servant*, whom I uphold, my chosen one in whom I delight; I will put my *Spirit* on him, and he will bring justice to the nations” (italics added). Isaiah writes that through the Holy

Spirit's power, the Messiah would bring the standards of divine truth to all nations reflecting the actions of a missional calling. Today, that same task is presented to each follower of Jesus Christ, and it must start, not in a foreign nation, but in the local church.

Ministry Context

Born out of a weekly, six-person Bible study, Remnant Life Church held its first service on September 23, 2012, in a hotel ballroom in Mechanicsburg, a small town in central Pennsylvania, eight miles southwest of the state capitol, Harrisburg. The inaugural service welcomed ninety-one people comprised primarily of individuals who had a previous connection to the pastor through past ministry involvement or some other form of personal association.

Early Days. The format of the first service was a straightforward and simple one. After a greeting by the pastor and opening prayer, there was a time of worship singing, which lasted approximately twenty minutes. Immediately following the final song, the children were dismissed to their ministry time, while those who remained spent ten to fifteen minutes in fellowship time. The pastor brought the people back to their seats, and announcements with a pastoral prayer were given. The morning message was then preached. A closing prayer after the message was delivered, with the completed service lasting between one hour fifteen and one hour twenty minutes. A very similar format is still in use today with variations as needed or determined by the pastor.

Demographics. Through the first eight years of the church's life, attendance on most Sundays averaged between sixty and seventy people. The demographics of the attendees represent a broad and diverse group of people from young families and single adults to empty-nesters and a segment of elderly who are in various stages of their twilight years. Females represent approximately a twenty percent greater number than males among regular attendees,

with between ten and fourteen children present each week, ranging in age from three to twelve. The diversity of the congregation appears to be uninfluenced by the usage of a rented space as opposed to a more traditional, permanent, fixed location.

Rented Facility. In recent studies, only twelve percent of pastors surveyed indicated they preferred the flexibility of a temporary space. While the leadership of RLC has remained prayerful and vigilant regarding opportunities to procure a private venue, there is a shared conviction with sixty percent of that same group of pastors who responded that location was of greater importance than the type of meeting space.¹³ In the same way, Remnant Life Church has been committed to providing a meeting location that is readily available to the highest percentage of attendees, even at the expense of a permanent church home.

A few activities are directly related to the fact we meet in a rented facility. The first is the weekly unloading, set-up, tear-down, and reloading of the equipment each Sunday morning. Three men and two women, in addition to the pastor, arrive two and one-half hours before the start of the service each Sunday morning to assist with the unloading and set-up of all necessary equipment needed for the Sunday service and children's ministry. These pre-service preparations must be completed in one hour as the worship team will arrive to begin rehearsal for the morning service. Following the conclusion of the service, additional people will often remain to help break-down, pack, and load equipment. However, this number varies on a given Sunday ranging from nine or ten to only two or three.

Non-Sunday Programs. Given the physical limitations of meeting in a public facility and the associated costs, the non-Sunday programs and events of the church have been intentionally slow in developing as the primary focus has been on the Sunday morning service,

¹³ Barna, *BarnaTrends 2018*, 154.

children's ministry, worship team, and weekly Bible study. As new activities have begun to emerge over the last several years, such as summer picnics, church dinners, special events, and outreach opportunities, a pattern of participants who regularly give of their time has emerged and has rarely changed from activity to activity. In other words, the participants rapidly became the same faces over and over with little effort made by the pastor or church leadership to encourage a more diverse group from the general church population to participate.

Church Background. The majority of the congregation comes with some measure of spiritual, if not an actual church background. The diversity of church experience ranges from denominational and non-denominational, to former Catholics and the unchurched. Additionally, there are many who have come from a background within the charismatic church. Regardless of their church history, all representative groups seem to have made a smooth transition into the expressive style and format of worship embraced and practiced at Remnant Life. Those from a more conservative and liturgical background have needed to adjust to a structure that is not only much simpler in content but also free of the more traditional symbols of the historic church. These have not been omitted by design, but are due primarily to the physical dynamics and space restrictions of a church that is required to set up and tear down equipment each week. Every piece of equipment, in addition to all other service-related materials, must then be transferred and stored in a separate facility until the following service.

Fellowship. At the heart of what the congregation of Remnant Life Church values most is the opportunity to fellowship and love one another. The intentional fellowship break in the middle of the service has allowed for each person who attends to approach and be approached by many different people. Given that the total number of the congregation does not overwhelm the

size of the room, it is difficult for a new person or someone who tends to be reserved and shy around a group of people to hide and avoid the interaction.

The importance of making contact is also true for the pastor, who is explicit and intentional in personally and physically greeting each person who enters the room. Whether it is a hug, handshake, or a fist-bump, every attendee will have been physically welcomed by the pastor before the service begins. This closeness is essential, not only for the regular attendee who comes week after week but for the first-time visitor or those who attend sporadically. It is the intent and goal that their time of greeting and interaction be of the same quality and quantity as those who attend faithfully every week.

Through the course of the calendar year, the church will hold events that require additional people to help prepare, implement, and complete an activity. These church gatherings may include but are not limited to church dinners, picnics, assisting existing local ministries in community outreaches, and distributing food as a part of a local food drive. While these activities do not all require large numbers of participants, the tendency is for the same small group of people to make the necessary preparations while the remaining church attendees will only participate in the event itself.

Problem Presented

In the summer of 2018, a church picnic for the congregation of Remnant Life Church entered the planning stage to be held at a local community park. Several months prior to the date of the event, the pastor provided clear and precise details to the congregation regarding the overall needs required to complete the event successfully. That same information was presented at regular intervals and in various mediums in order to generate awareness of the different responsibilities and activities available. The goal of the announcements was to involve as many

people as possible in the preparation and implementation of the events for that day. While many within the church responded to the opportunity presented, the vast majority of those people were the same who always agreed to offer their time when needed. When a limited number of hands are continually doing the bulk of the work, it can often lead to frustration, lack of new ideas, and burn out of both staff-leaders and lay-participants. The 80/20 problem rears its ugly head once again.

According to Jonathan Leeman, Christians today think nothing of attending a church indefinitely without ever joining. There is less and less time integrating their Monday-to-Saturday lives with other believers. There is even a growing acceptance of being absent from the church a few Sunday's a month or more. In conjunction with this distancing, the individual is also failing to realize that they, too, have a measure of responsibility in the growth and maturing of their fellow believers.¹⁴

The words of Jesus found in Matthew 28:19-20 are for all His followers, not merely for pastors or missionaries. He said: "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." This is the role the church is called to play in the community and marketplace.¹⁵

Jesus also said: "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you." And with that he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit" (Jn 20:21-22; cf. Acts 1:4-5).

¹⁴ Jonathan Leeman, *Church Membership: How the Words Knows Who Represents Jesus*, (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012), 23.

¹⁵ Matthew Bennett, "Finishing the Task?: A Cautionary Analysis of Missionary Language." *Southeastern Theological Review* 9, no 2 (2018): 38, accessed January 28, 2020.

Here we see that part and parcel with the Great Commission is the role of the Holy Spirit. He is the one who empowers the disciples to be effective as they go and engage in the work of the ministry.

First Problem: Knowledge. Without the knowledge and a clear understanding of the biblical call for Christians to be servants, even just within the limited scope of their own community, the pace of life and the demands of the world will continue to require followers of Christ to choose where they spend their time. In addition, the church will also continue to struggle in its efforts to not only involve those who are currently attending but to engage the marginal believer and even the unchurched who already believe they are too busy to add yet another commitment. Understanding what the Bible teaches regarding an individual's life within the church and how servanthood is at the core of how they live, is vital to seeing change occur in the prioritization of that person's life.

The Dutch theologian Abraham Kuyper, once famously said, "There is not a square inch in the whole domain of our human existence over which Christ, who is Sovereign over *all*, does not cry: 'Mine!'"¹⁶ To understand how the church has changed is to understand the influence of the world and yet how God still longs to have them as His own. This world, made in perfection and the image of His goodness, now rests under His curse because of sin.¹⁷ The world's priorities, in the form of apathy, a divided heart, and unquenchable consumption, are weakening the church, its effectiveness, and influence within the home, the marketplace, and the community.

¹⁶ Michael Lawrence, *Biblical Theology in the Life of the Church: A Guide for Ministry*. (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2010), 104.

¹⁷ Ibid.

Second Problem: Empowerment. When Jesus breathed upon the disciples and said, “Receive the Holy Spirit,” He was addressing a dimension of the spiritual life that stands alongside the Word, that being the Spirit of God. Without the ministry of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer, their hearts will not be changed, and they will lack the needed empowerment. The majority of those sitting the pews of many churches today are looking for not only the challenge of solid preaching and teaching but a worship experience of music that “sets the table” for the powerful presence of the Holy Spirit in their lives.

Without the conviction of the Holy Spirit to change the heart of the individual, however, service within the church will be more dependent on what the demands of life allow rather than obedience to the Scripture and focusing on the Kingdom of God to come. The knowledge and comprehension of these principles are essential not only for the spiritual health of the individual but for the health and effective functioning of the church body as well.

Third Problem: Faith. The third problem is faith. More specifically, a lack of belief that the believer should be living for the kingdom that is still future than for the life that is now present. Jesus made this point repeatedly to his disciples, as did the writers of the New Testament epistles. Jesus made it abundantly clear in the Sermon on the Mount when He said:

Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and vermin do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also... But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well (Matt 6:19-21, 33).

The Bible speaks clearly to both these issues. They are demonstrated through the life and teachings of Jesus, the instructions and letters of the Apostle Paul, John, and Jude, as well as Kingdom and servanthood references within the Old Testament.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this DMIN action thesis research project is to address the congregation of Remnant Life Church's perceived lack of biblical understanding/empowerment/faith regarding service within the church as well as the importance of prioritizing the Christian life by focusing on the Kingdom of God and not the things of the world. Several avenues of the problem will be examined. They will include the following:

Sound Orthodoxy: We will examine the changing theological foundations of the church, brought by the Millennial and Generation-X attendees, and how they are impacting church involvement. We will also consider the differences between a seeker-sensitive and attractional church. In addition, the importance of a Christian life that is Kingdom-centered rather than world-centered will be explored.

The biblical admonition for Christians to make disciples must be taught. The role of the church to prepare the congregant to receive the leading of the Holy Spirit is also vital to see real change occur, not just in the mind, but in the heart. While the various elements of the problem are all critical to gaining a full understanding of what may be lacking, it is the priority of the Kingdom-centered life that will act as the fulcrum of the research.

Sound Orthopraxis: Believing, embracing, and implementing the teaching of the Word of God is to live those commands presented throughout the Bible. The problem of church attendees not participating in the life of the church, therefore, is not only rooted in the lack of biblical understanding but a failure to recognize the importance of the prominence of the Kingdom of God in everyday life. Church life cannot be considered optional for the believer, rather an opportunity to fulfill the command given by Jesus to go into all the world and make

disciples. For the majority of Christians, that first step begins in the local church while also encompassing the family and local community.

Measurements: This research study will begin with an identification of the current level of understanding the attendees of Remnant Life Church have regarding foundational concepts of the Bible and the Christian life.

- A questionnaire will be utilized to gather the data for this inaugural phase of practical research.
- The responses will be tabulated and stored. This information will be used at the conclusion of the study to help determine the level of impact and change that occurred in the participants.
- Two events will be planned and implemented at the church. The first will take place before the teaching intervention and the second afterward to help determine the percent change of participants in the activities of the church following the teaching series.
- A teaching series that will focus on servanthood spirituality, as well as the command for Christians to make disciples, will be presented. In addition, the doctrine of the Kingdom of God will also be examined.

By developing this project and seeing it through to completion, the congregation of RLC might better understand the importance of rightly prioritizing their lives focused on the Kingdom of God, how church life will then take the place of greater importance, and why their involvement is necessary. These will be of great benefit not only for the church's work but also for the personal spiritual growth of the individual through obedience to the Word of God.

Basic Assumptions

Several assumptions made by the author in the development and writing of this thesis project will impact the overall process.

First, there is a lack of biblical understanding among the people of Remnant Life Church regarding the place of servanthood in their lives. This lack of knowledge also extends to recognizing the impact of the next generation of believers coming into the church who bring with them a postmodern philosophy of the Word and Christianity. In addition, how the seeker-sensitive church philosophy of observing church rather than participating in it may not be understood. This same lack of knowledge extends to the importance of pursuing first the Kingdom of God. This pursuit has proven to be necessary in order to prioritize daily activities, including life within the church outside of Sunday mornings. It is not the researcher's intent to suggest there is total ignorance. There does, however, appear to be a disconnect regarding what the Scripture teaches on these concepts and observations of what is being lived.

Second, the congregation of Remnant Life desires and will embrace the opportunity to become more involved in the church's activities and life. Every pastor wants to believe their congregants enjoy being at church and look forward to being more engaged through the activity opportunities presented. Activities alone, however, do not keep people at a church. While it is true, there is a percentage of non-churchgoers who have never attended; statistical information supports that seventy-nine percent of the unchurched in this country are, in fact, de-churched.¹⁸ In other words, over three-quarters of those who do not attend church once did but now find little or no value in what it has to offer. Granted, it is not possible to measure what people are

¹⁸ Barna, *Barna Trend*, 165.

thinking. Still, the hope is that people are desirous of making the church and associated events more a part of their lives by prioritizing them to a place of importance.

Third, when responding to questionnaires, self-reports, or other forms of information gathering as determined by the researcher, the participants will be honest and accurate in their responses. While no form of self-reporting can assure the participant's honesty when replying to data-gathering questions with absolute certainty, the familiar relationship between the researcher and the participants makes a strong case for this assumption. Similarly, the researcher's relationship will cause the participant to return the data collection materials in a timely and secure manner in compliance with the security parameters outlined.

Fourth, the participants of the project consider Remnant Life Church to be their home church and possess a basic understanding of the importance of the church in their lives and the community. Those who attend RLC regularly have heard a consistent emphasis from the pastor regarding the importance of the church. The vital role the church plays in the lives of the people, as well as the community-at-large as an extension of their direct involvement, has also been thoroughly examined.

Finally, the Remnant Life Church attendees will commit to attending the majority, if not all, of the eight Sundays identified and designated as a part of the teaching associated with the research project. The participants will be asked by the researcher/pastor to read specific Scripture passages in preparation for the upcoming sermon each week. A commitment to this responsibility requires an investment of time, energy, and effort by those attending the services. It is the hope of the researcher that their involvement in this way will ensure a higher percentage of participants who will see the entire program through to completion.

Definitions

For the reader to fully understand the content of this project, several definitions for clarification are necessary.

Burnout – A severe negative margin for an extended period of time related to the tasks and responsibilities of church leadership.¹⁹

Church Activities – These are the church's events performed by the people, taking place both within or without the congregation. As part of the Body of Christ, each individual must understand their unique function and specific contribution to the church's work and activities.²⁰

Evangelical Church – The group name given to churches that hold to the Bible's literal theological teachings regarding sin, human nature, salvation, the inerrancy of Scripture, and the Holiness of God, to name a few.²¹

Kingdom of God – The dwelling place of God the Father; a future earthly reign of Christ that will be established at His physical second coming.²²

Mandate/Admonition/Command – Within this study, these words will be used interchangeably in reference to the biblical directive given by Jesus to make disciples.²³

¹⁹ Swenson, *Margin: Restoring Emotional*, 70.

²⁰ Robert G. Clouse, "Church: The Nature of the Church," in *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, 2nd ed., edited by Walter A. Elwell (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2001), 248.

²¹ Millard J. Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 1998), 918.

²² *Ibid.*, 1162.

²³ Kenneth L. Barker and John R. Kohlenberger III, *The Expositor's Bible Commentary: New Testament*, abridged ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1994), 133.

Postmodernism – This label identifies a philosophical system rooted in the belief that absolute truth does not exist and has been replaced by a cultural relativism where multiple cultures (and religions) are deemed relevant and valuable.²⁴

Remnant Life Church/RLC – An 8-year-old, non-denominational church-plant located in New Cumberland, Pennsylvania. The congregation consists of between 50 and 60 adults in addition to 8 to 12 children on any given Sunday. The researcher and author of this dissertation project is the founder and pastor.²⁵

Seeker-Sensitive Church – This church growth movement reached its peak in the mid-1990s focusing on nontraditional church methods of attracting people into a church setting who might not otherwise attend. Emphasis was placed on removing all “church-speak” or overtly Christian terminology, presenting a professional, multi-media, highly produced format of worship music and drama, and utilizing a topical rather than expository style of preaching.²⁶

Servanthood – The act of as well as the desire for what one person does for another. All should desire to serve within the church, but it should begin with the leadership who must present a model from which others may see service in action. The proper sense of servanthood will result when church leadership operates without a desire to seek individual recognition or title.²⁷

²⁴ Robert C. Greer, *Mapping Postmodernism: A Survey of Christian Options*, (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2003), 13.

²⁵ “About Us,” *Remnant Life Church*, last revised January 27, 2020, accessed January 29, 2020, <http://www.remnantlife.org/about.html>.

²⁶ Bill Hybels, “Selling Out the House of God? Bill Hybels Answers Critics of the Seeker-Church Movement.” *Christianity Today* 38, no 8 (1994): 21, accessed April 10, 2020.

²⁷ Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 1092.

Participant – The decision of the church attendee to become actively involved in an activity or event of the church. While people give of their time in religious settings more than any other, the motivation of that decision may provide an understanding of why this is so.²⁸

Limitations

Guarding One's Emotional Well-being. Calling attention to another person's deficiency of knowledge or comprehension capability is never an easy task when there is also a desire to guard that person's emotional well-being. However, this type of study will begin with just such a conviction, creating a potential limitation of how that participant may respond. Safeguards must be put in place to ask questions, gather information, and share results that will not lead the participant to any inappropriate or unnecessary negative feelings about themselves, especially if the outcome of the data reveals an identifiable lack of biblical knowledge.

Scope of Sampling. The sample of participants within the study will be comprised entirely of those who regularly attend Remnant Life Church. There will be no control group or random samples taken or utilized, meaning all those who participate in the study will continue to attend the church after the study has concluded. This will also mean those attending the church may at any time withdraw from the study or refuse to participate. They will be welcomed to participate in church services through the course of the project but may also be free to choose to attend another church.

Both of these responses are possible should the individual not be comfortable with the line of questioning or feelings associated with the implications of what they are being asked.

²⁸ Terry A, Wolfer, Dennis R Myers, Edward C Polson, and Betsy Bevis, "Baby Boomers as Congregational Volunteers in Community Ministry." *Religions* 8, no. 4 (2017): 2, accessed February 1, 2020.

The wording and tone of not only the questions but the teaching will play an essential role in guarding the emotional response of the participants.

Measurements. A considerable measure of the project's success will be dependent on the participant's responses to the type of methodology employed. Questions with unknown answers would include, will the participants answer the questions honestly? Second, will they be able to recall what they have learned in the past regarding theological constructs, and how will that impact their responses to the questions? Once again, the way in which information is solicited will largely determine how the participants respond and will consequently not only affect the quality of the data collected but the results as well.

Delimitations

In order to carefully guard the integrity of this study, parameters will have been put in place by the researcher. The general problem stated, the lack of biblical knowledge regarding the commitment of a Christian to servanthood spirituality, is but one possible explanation to explain an individual's frequent absence from the activities of the church outside of Sunday morning worship services. While many other reasons exist that should be considered for future studies, the biblical mandate of servanthood, as well as the importance of a Kingdom prioritized life, will be the primary focus of this project.

The participants in the study will be confined to those adults who regularly attend Remnant Life Church. The project will involve both men and women without restriction due to age or stage of life. In addition, the length of the practical portion of the project will be contained within the current calendar year, allowing for adequate time to determine the starting point of the study through a pre-intervention questionnaire and church event. Within that same time parameter, a biblical study will be created and presented to the attendees of RLC to be followed

by a post-intervention re-assessment and event to determine how much impact, if any, occurred as a result of the teaching series.

Thesis Statement

If the congregants of Remnant Life Church understand, embrace, and implement the biblical principles of servanthood, then an increase in the percentage of those participating in the ministry of the church may occur. This implies the following:

First, the call to participate in church ministry is not one made by the pastor, eldership, or lay leaders. It is both a mandate and empowerment from God. It should, in fact, be seen as a continuation of the teaching and training that Jesus provided to His disciples during His time of ministry on earth.²⁹

Second, the believer will come to the realization that kingdom living requires a re-assessment of one's priorities in this life. For the individual to make themselves available to the life of the church, however, requires the Kingdom of God to be at the center of their life.

Third, the Bible teaches that every Christian must accept the responsibility to make disciples and to be Kingdom-minded above all other things. To see that come to fruition, for many, begins by being an active, and giving part of the church family.

Fourth, the work of the church, to grow disciples and meet the needs of the people, is never-ending.

Fifth, both the individual and the congregation must grow in their walk with the Lord. For the Christian to believe their involvement in church life is optional and embrace it only when

²⁹ James G. Houghland and James R. Wood, "Participation in Local Churches: An Exploration on its Impact on Satisfaction, Growth, and Social Action," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 21, no. 4 (1982):167, accessed January 14, 2020.

it is most convenient, is to misunderstand the teaching of the Bible regarding our Kingdom responsibilities.

Sixth, Christians must stop thinking of the church with a “country-club” mentality where tithes are viewed as the payment of monthly dues, and the various activities of the church are to be enjoyed and selected whenever they choose.

Seventh, as a member of the church family, the activities of the church are not only made available to everyone but must be the responsibility of each person as a part of the mandate to love and serve one another.

For the hearts and minds of the people who attend church to be brought to a place of servanthood is not the responsibility of the pastor. Nor will it occur by the creation and addition of new programs. A change of heart is manifested through the presence and work of the Holy Spirit. The church’s role is to foster an environment where everyone can come and be ushered into the presence of God through substantive preaching, powerful worship, and a demonstration that lives are being changed and strengthened for the work of the Kingdom of God.

Chapter 2

Conceptual Framework

Review of Literature

In what direction is the Protestant evangelical church of the twenty-first century moving? If recent trends are to be believed, it is in danger of becoming functionally ineffective. This observation is not to suggest the power of God, and the presence of the Holy Spirit are ineffective. Rather, the knowledge of truth and empowerment of the people is waning due to the competing influence of a postmodern generation of church-attendees. This likely explains why 49% of Americans in a country which they label a “Christian nation,” believe that “all religion basically teaches the same thing.”³⁰

In this literature review, we will be examining those factors that have influenced the minds and hearts of those who attend church regarding their desire to serve. Servanthood versus being a spectator, and the modernism versus postmodernism impact will be explored. In addition, the importance of biblical preaching and worship music in the life of the church will be examined. This is not an attempt to reinvent the wheel, but an effort to emphasize the necessity of surrendering one’s heart to God to allow Him to work in and through us for the kingdom. Active participants are not only valuable but necessary to the life of the church.³¹ That will only occur, however, through the leading and conviction of the Holy Spirit.

³⁰ Barna Group, *Barna Trends*, 169.

³¹ Dean R. Hoge, Charles E Zech, Patrick H McNamara, and Michael J Donahue. “The Value of Volunteers as Resources for Congregations.” *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 37, no 3 (1998): 470, accessed November 19, 2019.

Those who take the time to participate do so for many reasons. For some, it is the need to develop a social identity.³² Others desire interaction with fellow parishioners in the church, gravitating towards a reward of personal satisfaction from participation.³³ Still, others feel they receive a tangible benefit in their own lives through church participation and its association with better physical and mental health as well as feelings of well-being, life satisfaction, and happiness.³⁴ The focus of this paper, however, is not to examine the reasons people within the church do participate in its work, but why they do not.

Trends of Participation

A starting point in identifying and understanding why fewer people are involved in the life of the church today is to examine the trends of participation according to the demographics of age groups. According to a Barna Group study on various generational groups and their attitudes toward the church, those identified as Baby Busters (born from 1965 through 1983) experienced a nine percent decline in church volunteering over ten years of study to nineteen percent of those surveyed. Baby Boomers (born between 1946 and 1964) saw a ten percent decrease in participation to eighteen percent of those surveyed, and Elders (born before 1946) similarly showed a decline in church participation. The numbers, however, were of less significance.³⁵

³² John P. Davis, "Theology, Culture, Ministry and the Mission of the Church." *Evangelical Review of Theology* 28, no 3 (2004): 252, accessed November 6, 2019.

³³ Hoge, Zech, McNamara, and Donahue, *The Value of Volunteers*, 480.

³⁴ Eran Shor and David J Roelfs, "The Longevity Effects of Religious and Nonreligious Participation: A Meta-Analysis and Meta-Regression." *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 52, no 1 (2013): 120, accessed November 12, 2019.

³⁵ Barna Group, *Religious Changes Among Busters, Boomers, and Elders since 1991*, accessed November 27, 2019, retrieved from <http://barna.org/research/barna-describes-religious-changes-among-busters-boomers-and-elders-since-1991>.

This on-going and consistent trend of decreased involvement presents a disturbing fact to the pastor and leadership of the church in the twenty-first century. Fewer people are making themselves available outside of Sunday morning attendance for the work of the kingdom, both inside the church as well as in the community. Should this trend continue, the work of the church will likewise diminish in its effectiveness.

Efrain Agosto's book on servant-leadership, *Servant Leadership: Jesus and Paul*, suggests Jesus' mission, which came into conflict with the established religious leaders of the day, presents an early example of a change in how works were viewed.³⁶ In the era of the early church, the significance of religion, belief, and worship in the lives of people was not something to be separated from other parts of life. All aspects of living not only revolved around but were regulated by the spiritual values of the family unit, which only served to reinforce the bond of its members.

Given the drastic changes in culture and society over the centuries, it is challenging to rely on physical comparisons as a way to discover the cause. Instead, attention must be given to changes in the hearts of people as it relates to views of the church, serving one another, and a Christian's individual responsibility to the spread of the Gospel.

Servanthood versus Spectatorism

Servanthood

Given an earlier presence of oneness of church and community relationships, the concept of servanthood would have been a familiar one. Servanthood is a biblical model of both service and leadership, which was amalgamated into the term "servant-leader" in the mid-1970s. It was understood that whoever acts in the capacity of serving must possess a servant's heart. They

³⁶ Efrain Agosto, *Servant Leadership: Jesus and Paul*. (St. Louis, Mo: Chalice Press, 2005), 200.

must identify the needs of others with a desire and intention to serve them. They must be alert and sensitive prepared to respond to the needs and challenges of others. They must also offer themselves on the altar of God to be consumed by the flame of His love.³⁷

Servanthood is a dominant image of ministry, and Jesus demonstrated the life of a servant leader perfectly during His three years of ministry on earth.³⁸ He spoke the following words to His disciples that established His directive of servanthood. “You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be your slave — just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.” (Matt 20:25b-29)

Virtually every New Testament writer echoed the life of Jesus as a servant leader, yet that concept is not, nor should it be, reserved for those in leadership alone.³⁹ A desire to serve others is the starting place of servanthood. It is, however, a condition of the heart and not simply the decision of the mind. That initial step must also be guarded for servanthood not to evolve into people-pleasing. To allow this to happen removes the focus from the larger vision of serving God to simply responding to the felt needs of the individual.⁴⁰

Christ-like servanthood, and what it looks like in action, can be difficult to recognize. There are many unhealthy versions practiced ranging from enabling to servitude. Godly

³⁷ Esther O. Ayandokum, “Servanthood: The Biblical Model of Leadership,” *Practical Theology (Baptist College of Theology, Lagos)*, no. 2 (2009): 10, accessed April 24, 2020.

³⁸ Ronald H. Sunderland, “The Dignity of Servanthood in Pastoral Care,” *The Journal of Pastoral Care & Counseling* 57, no. 3 (2003): 269, accessed April 26, 2020.

³⁹ John C. Hutchison, “Servanthood: Jesus’ Countercultural Call to Christian Leaders,” *Bibliotheca Sacra* 166, no. 661 (2009): 53, accessed April 26, 2020.

⁴⁰ Jae Kwang Kye, “Principles from Jesus Christ’s Life That Inform a Biblical Perspective on Servant Leadership,” *한국기독교신학논총* 72, December (2010): 263, accessed April 24, 2020.

servanthood is neither of those. This is why the life of Jesus provides the framework for Christian service. His sacrifice is found not only in the way He served others but also in the way He lead others with a servant's heart.⁴¹ That should truly be the aspiration of every Christian – to love and serve in the way that Jesus did.

Serving others is also about building relationships. Hearts united in and through service are seen throughout the Scripture. Abraham's servant, identified in Genesis 24 only as one of senior status or responsibility, was sent to find Isaac a wife. This was not a task given to a mere slave, but to one who understood the gravity of his master's request. There was a relationship present between the servant and Abraham that went far beyond that of Sarah and the Egyptian woman Hagar. This act of service was one given and sustained by trust and affection, as well as a history of relationship developed over time.⁴² So, too, the heart of servanthood within the church is one that will build relationships between individuals as well as the people of the church to their community.

If Jesus was the perfect model of serving others and we have His life detailed in the Gospels, why do so many Christians permit other aspects of life to minimize the time they have to give? The answer harkens back again to the first step of servanthood, the heart. Too many get caught up with such concerns as church vision, competency in ministry activities, and traditional ministerial arts. These shifts of affection often disguise themselves as the “work” of the church, but in actuality, most often serve to remove the individual from building relationships and service in the church.⁴³

⁴¹ Kye, *Principles from Jesus*, 264.

⁴² Judith H. Newman, “Anonymous Servanthood.” *Anglican Theological Review* 86, no. 4 (2004): 654, accessed April 26, 2020.

⁴³ C. Melissa Snarr, “Identity Quests, Indebted Diversities, and Serving ‘The Church’: Living the Questions of Ministerial Formation.” *Cross Currents* 69, no. 1 (2019): 78, accessed April 24, 2020.

The one who calls himself a “Christian,” must be willing to have religious belief lead to religious behavior. To follow Christ is to demonstrate the qualities of self-sacrifice, servanthood, and yes, even suffering and hardship.⁴⁴ Serving others requires sacrifice. Time, effort, resources, personal desire, and plans must be laid aside willingly for the sake of someone else and their needs. A determination of the will does not accomplish this effort. It is only done by identifying with Jesus as a servant of the Lord because God has done a new thing in our hearts that allows the desire to serve others to take root and grow.⁴⁵

Spectatorism

One of the most vigorous opponents of servanthood in the church has emerged due to an increasing number of attendees who have become spectators. This issue is not one that was absent and then suddenly present. The change, as identified by David F. Wells and noted earlier in chapter one, was not immediate but gradual, occurring over an extended period of time. It began to gain momentum at the same time as a new type of church was being introduced. One that had at its core a minimal, if any, participation by those in attendance.⁴⁶

Called the “seeker-sensitive church” due to its primary goal of drawing in the unchurched and those seeking answers for the questions of life, it was initially widely embraced as a cutting-edge, radical concept for reaching the lost. In the 1980s and 1990s, conferences, handbooks, training series, and personal appearances by the founding fathers drew thousands of people who

⁴⁴ Joshua J. Knabb, Joseph Pelletier, and Anna Grigorian-Routon, “Towards a Psychological Understanding of Servanthood: An Empirical Investigation of the Relationship between Orthodox Beliefs, Experiential Avoidance, and Self-Sacrificial Behaviors among Christians at a Religiously-Affiliated University.” *Journal of Psychology & Theology* 42, no. 3 (2014): 269–83, accessed April 26, 2020.

⁴⁵ James Tengtenga, “The Servant of the Lord.” *Sewanee Theological Review* 57, no. 4 (2014): 552, accessed April 25, 2020.

⁴⁶ Lester Ruth, “Lex Agendi, Lex Orandi: Toward an Understanding of Seeker Services as a New Kind of Liturgy.” *Worship* 70, no. 5 (1996): 389, accessed April 3, 2020.

spent a great time of time and money in order to implement this changing face of the church into their own.

Indeed, various aspects of the church appeared to be in need of change. Attendance on a national scale was in decline with the largest generations who should be in attendance frustrated, claiming that church was no longer relevant for their lives. Gen-Exers, those born between the years 1965 and 1983, were coming into the place of establishing their own homes and beginning to raise families. The seeker-sensitive church seemed poised on the cusp of meeting the needs of those who would comprise the largest percentage of their attendees. Their intent was to present the Gospel in forms with which this group could readily identify.⁴⁷

Not everyone, however, was enamored with the structure and focus of this new way of “doing” church. Many critics called for caution, while others warned of a model presenting what could easily be viewed as cultural accommodation.⁴⁸ It was felt too much emphasis was being placed on the packaging and presentation rather than on the theological substance of the teaching. Andy Stanley states in his ministry autobiography *Deep and Wide* that the environment of the church is the message before the message. The sermon begins in the parking lot. Those who have come to the service, he contends, have already received dozens of messages before he even gets up to speak.⁴⁹

While there is value in recognizing the importance of how people are welcomed upon their arrival on the church property, the attention to the felt needs of the people was quickly

⁴⁷ Robert A. Weathers, “Truth, Method, and Church Growth: A Response to David F Wells.” *Southwestern Journal of Theology* 38, no. 3 (1996): 29, accessed April 24, 2020.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Andy Stanley, *Deep and Wide: Creating Churches Unchurched People Love to Attend* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2012), 157.

becoming the top priority. The content of the services was, therefore, being calibrated to address those needs exclusively.⁵⁰

Advocates, on the other hand, claimed their focus showed little difference from what the great American revivalist Charles Finney was doing in the early to mid-1800s by utilizing relatable worship to reach the unchurched of that time.⁵¹ This style of church, they insisted, now made sense to those coming who had become disconnected from the traditional methods. For a time, the new structure and focus took hold as dissidents were forced to admit the numbers seemed to be justifying the initial discomfort many felt. But it was not long before the absence of growth, maturity, and depth in the lives of those attending would expose the considerable shortcomings of this methodology.

As time went on, Millennials (those born between 1984 and 2002) began to add their numbers to the Gen-Exers swelling the attendance of these now mega-churches. The senior pastors were becoming nationally known best-selling authors proclaiming their work and their church to be successful models of how to, not only grow a church, but reach these two generations. It soon became apparent, however, that little involvement in the form of servanthood from those who attended after the conclusion of the Sunday service was being seen.

At the forefront of the Seeker movement was Willow Creek Community Church, located just outside of Chicago. The senior pastor, Bill Hybels, was instrumental in creating and implementing the structure, style, and look of the service. In 2007, however, at the suggestion of an executive pastor, Willow Creek completed a self-study and discovered that the methodology

⁵⁰ Scott Cormode, "Innovation That Honors Tradition: The Meaning of Christian Innovation." *Journal of Religious Leadership* 14, no. 2 (2015): 89, accessed April 21, 2020.

⁵¹ Melanie Ross, "The Evolution of the 'Frontier Ordo.'" *Worship* 93, April (2019): 140, accessed March 23, 2020.

and associated programs of the seeker-sensitive church was not leading to spiritual growth.⁵² Hybels would later confess that much of what they poured their time, money, and energy into was not producing solid disciples of Jesus Christ.⁵³ They had created a movement of spectators, not one of growing, maturing, and participating Christians.

Those attracted to this church model, specifically the Gen-Exers and Millennials, had become comfortable with watching and observing the activities of the church service, not becoming involved with the heart of a servant. Nearly 85 years ago, Paul Bussard likened the spectator in the church to the tourist visiting the great cities of Europe who is content only to examine the outside of the beautiful buildings. Just as one cannot learn about the church by observing the exterior, so too, the life of the Christian cannot be understood by being a spectator.⁵⁴

Another significant impact the Gen-Exers and Millennials are having on the church today is the introduction of postmodern thinking. Long-standing pillars of church theology are being challenged as the postmoderns in the western church claim that the promise of salvation in humanistic terms is fallacious. As a result, there is now an attack on all beliefs rooted in those transcendent values.⁵⁵ The church found itself in the role of, not only teaching the Bible and pointing people to Jesus, but having to do so with a heretofore unseen set of challenges to truth. Even the truth of the Word of God.

⁵² J. Todd Billings, "Catholic and Reformed: Rediscovering a Tradition." *Pro Ecclesia* 23, no. 2 (2014): 141, accessed April 26, 2020.

⁵³ Burney, "FIRST-PERSON: A Shocking Confession" <http://www.bpnews.net/26768/firstperson-a-shocking-confession-from-willow-creek-community-church-leaders>.

⁵⁴ Paul Bussard, "Merely Spectators." *Orate Fratres* 8, no. 10 (1934): 452, accessed April 15, 2020.

⁵⁵ Weathers, *Truth, Method, and Church Growth*, 30.

Modernism vs. Postmodernism

Modernism

To understand the impact of postmodernism on the church today requires a basic understanding of modernism. The 17th-century French philosopher and mathematician René Descartes' wrote the famous *Cogito ergo sum* ("I think; therefore I am,") paving the way for the elevation of reason to the place of deification during the Enlightenment.⁵⁶ The central point of his philosophy was to declare that he doubted all things except for the fact that he was doubting.⁵⁷ Philosophers accepted the primacy of reason as outlined by Descartes with an outcome of science becoming the final authority rather than just a discipline.⁵⁸ Within the realm of the church, modernism held to reason, not the Bible, as the final authority. Hence, it favored humanism over dogma.

Modernism became an attempt to reconcile historical Christianity with modern science and philosophy. By the turn of the century in 1900, a school of thought emerged within theological modernism that suggested neither a transcendent God nor a universally authoritative Bible could effectively address the changing needs of the church. Liberal theologians presented a new version of Christianity that catered to the felt needs of humanity to the exclusion of, or in some regards, in place of the more logical demands of biblical theology.⁵⁹

From the late-nineteenth century through the 1960s, modernism represented a specific North-American and European cultural movement. Not confined to theology, its influences were

⁵⁶ Van Wyk, Agathades G., "Beyond Modernism: Scholarship and 'Servanthood.'" *Andrews University Seminary Studies* 38, no. 1 (2000): 77, accessed April 27, 2020.

⁵⁷ Robert C. Greer, *Mapping Postmodernism: A Survey of Christian Options*, (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2003), 30.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 80-81.

⁵⁹ Jay Green, "A Creed for Modernism: Shirley Jackson Case and the Irony of Modern Approaches to 'Faith and History.'" *Fides et Historia* 29, no. 3 (1997): 41, accessed April 17, 2020.

seen in art, music, and architecture. Much of what it changed was based on understating or the outright rejection of the traditional forms in each discipline.⁶⁰

Though many enthusiastically welcomed this “advance” in the social and physical arts, some saw cracks forming in its dike. French philosopher, anthropologist, and sociologist Bruno Latour decried the influence of modernism as being artificial, taking away, and denying the experience of the world as an interdependent whole.⁶¹ While not a man of faith, Latour lamented, “What modernism did to religion is even worse than what it did to science. It deprived it of its energy, restricting it to mere furniture of the soul.”⁶²

While modernistic art, literature, and architecture are generally seen as having had a positive influence, the same may not be regarded for its impact on the church. Modernists have been, and remain, individualistic. They view the individual as having to provide meaning and purpose for themselves rather than deriving it from a relationship with God. In that same vein, they hold to the belief that the individual, not a deity, is responsible for determining the course of their life.⁶³

Modernism places all statements of existence and will against the test of rationality.⁶⁴ As God transcends the thinking and reasoning capacity of man, modernists have long desired to bring God down to the level of man by attempting to reshape and mold the truth of God

⁶⁰ Ted A. Campbell, “The United Methodist Church Union Fifty Years Later: The Abiding Problems of a Modernist Vision of Union.” *Methodist History* 57, nos. 1–2 (2018): 112, accessed April 27, 2020.

⁶¹ Anthony Balcomb, “Counter-Modernism, the Primal Imagination and Development Theory: Shifting the Paradigm.” *Journal of Theology for Southern Africa* 157, March (2017): 52, accessed April 21, 2020.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Nancy J. Davis and Robert V. Robinson. “Theological Modernism, Cultural Libertarianism and Laissez-Faire Economics in Contemporary European Societies.” *Sociology of Religion* 62, no. 1 (2001): 26, accessed April 23, 2020.

⁶⁴ Daniël Petrus Goosen, “Tradition, Modernism, and Apartheid.” *Acta Theologica* 25, (2017): 83, accessed April 27, 2020.

according to the tenants of science and philosophy. Failing to accomplish this objective and in response to the collapse of the Enlightenment project, postmodernity began to emerge after World War II and by the 1970s would begin further distancing the evangelical church from its traditional theological roots.⁶⁵

Postmodernism

To speak of postmodernism is to address the foundational theological belief that there are no absolutes. This system of thinking, in particular, adheres itself within the arena of moral values, often under the broader umbrella term of “moral relativism.”⁶⁶ Anticipated by Nietzsche, who rejected the concept of pure reason governing the world, postmodernism is, in part, a philosophical movement that questions the absolute faith of the Enlightenment.⁶⁷

Postmodernism has had a significant impact on the church today by sweeping into its fold a substantial percentage of the two largest demographic groups in the church – the Gen-Exers and the Millennials. Through the embrace of this thinking, there has been a steady deconstruction of tradition and traditional values, specifically those found in Scripture, within the evangelical church. It has been noted by those aware of the shift that those essential values have been undermined and dismantled in favor of the postmodernist agenda.⁶⁸

Recognizing what has been taking place over the past fifty years can perhaps help to shed light on why the Millennials, in particular, have been so difficult to categorize. They have been labeled everything from “The next great generation,” and “Lost in transition” to “Trophy kids,”

⁶⁵ Weathers, *Truth, Method, and Church Growth*, 30.

⁶⁶ Brian Neil Peterson, “Postmodernism’s Deconstruction of the Creation Mandates.” *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 62, no. 1 (2019): 126, accessed April 22, 2020.

⁶⁷ Philippe Denis, “On Teaching Christian History in the Postmodern World.” *Hervormde Teologiese Studies* 75, no. 1 (2019): 4, accessed April 20, 2020.

⁶⁸ Denis, *On Teaching Christian History*, 4.

“The app generation,” and “Generation Me.”⁶⁹ It should come as little surprise then, when attempting to identify the affiliation of groups to spiritual belief, the highest number of those who classify themselves as unaffiliated are Millennials.⁷⁰

The influence of Postmodernism is felt due in no small measure to the sheer volume of those who have been raised within its teaching. Millennials have now surpassed Boomers as the largest living generation in the United States, presenting an increasing challenge given so many within that demographic hold a negative view to traditional, conservative Christianity.⁷¹ Why is that negative view so prevalent? In part, it can be placed on the ease in which they have found it to disassociate themselves from faith and religion altogether. The culture in which they were raised was exposed to a period of shamming and a glut of public spiritual charlatans.⁷² Their parents were those who had put their trust and faith in well-known “spiritual leaders” who were steeped in greed and monetary gain. That sense of betrayal was then passed on to their children.

Because of that disappointment, “The Nones” has now entered the lexicon of group identities (the Nones, incidentally, is shorthand for None-of-the-Above). Within this context, the nones represent thirty-four percent of eighteen to twenty-two-year-olds who do not identify with any religion. Yet, a significant number of those within that number still believe there is a God.⁷³ The draw of postmodernism for many of them, therefore, is the opportunity to keep one foot in both worlds. A belief in God can be maintained, they are led to believe, while still eschewing the

⁶⁹ Jacob J. Hamman, “The Millennial Generation and the Church: Doing It Differently.” *Journal of Pastoral Theology* 25, no. 3 (2015): 162, accessed April 24, 2020.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Mikel Del Rosario and Darrell L. Bock. “The Table Briefing: Ministering to Millennials.” *Bibliotheca Sacra* 174, no. 695 (2017): 343, accessed April 26, 2020.

⁷² Ibid., 344.

⁷³ Ibid.

conservative and traditional elements of Christianity they view as responsible for many of the cultural struggles today.

With the corresponding rise of the seeker-sensitive church, a home was provided for the postmodernists to come, observe, and have little required of them fitting perfectly into their perception of what a modern, spiritually fulfilled life should be. This is not to suggest that the postmodern church-attende holds no values. They are, however, specific and comply with the thinking of their philosophy. According to Del Rosario and Bock, their primary value is a desire for cultural engagement, the second value is selfless service (although little of that value can be seen within the church) and the third value is authentic relationships.⁷⁴ While each value presents itself as positive, the exclusion of biblical concepts remove it from the actions of Christ-like character and place it squarely in the realm of proper modern culture.

The twenty-first-century postmodernist is becoming increasingly difficult to reach for Christ as postmoderns remain critical of any metanarrative – a broad, overarching worldview – from any group. Conservative, liberal, Catholic, Marxist and Christian, therefore, all find themselves under the scrutiny of suspicion of being the harbingers of a metanarrative.⁷⁵ What is also true, however, if balance be desired, is that postmodernity needs not only affirmation from its adherents but critique and suspicion of its own.⁷⁶ As the foreseer of the death of modernism and the rise of the “free spirits” to take its place concluded, right and wrong in Nietzsche’s world is determined by whoever is in power.⁷⁷ It is the power in the pen of those who affirm the rightness of their cause, then, that continually pushes the Millennial and Gen-Exers further away.

⁷⁴ Del Rosario and Bock, *The Table Briefing*, 346.

⁷⁵ Denis, *On Teaching Christian History*, 3.

⁷⁶ David W. Tracy, “Theology and the Many Faces of Postmodernity.” *Theology Today* 51, no. 1 (1994): 107, accessed April 27, 2020.

⁷⁷ Greer, *Mapping Postmodernism*, 204.

On the other hand, it is quite possible that postmodernism is, first and foremost, a reaction to the Enlightenment Project, more so than a rejection of truth.⁷⁸ To take that one step further, Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary academic dean Richard Lints states, “Christianity flourished prior to modernity, so we must believe that Christianity can flourish – at least potentially – in the absence of modernity.”⁷⁹ Still, others will present the argument that, even in the face of and despite the challenges it brings, postmodernism is still more amenable to religious belief than modern thought ever was.⁸⁰ This is true, however, provided that a religious belief does not embrace the idea of being the one and only correct religion.

English theologian and Anglican priest Graham Ward presents an intriguing question in the light of twenty-first-century social and cultural changes by asking if the time of postmodernism has come to an end?⁸¹ His conclusion is by no means set in either a firm positive or negative response. Rather there are parts, he contends, that have been accentuated while others have been altered so as not to reflect the same focus as it did in the 1980s and 1990s.⁸² Canadian sociologist David Lyon provides support for those changes. His observations present two major shifts as having impacted postmodernism. The first was a shift toward consumerism and the second toward communication dependence.⁸³

⁷⁸ Timothy C. Tennent, “Postmodernity, the Paradigm and the Pre-Eminence of Christ.” *The Evangelical Quarterly* 86, no. 4 (2014): 298, accessed April 22, 2020.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ Victoria S. Harrison, “Postmodern Thought and Religion: Open-Traditionalism and Radical Orthodoxy on Religious Belief and Experience.” *Heythrop Journal* 51, no. 6 (2010): 962, accessed April 14, 2020.

⁸¹ Graham Ward, “Theology and Postmodernism: Is It All Over?” *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 80, no. 2 (2012): 467, accessed April 5, 2020.

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ David Lyon, “Being Human, Being Christian in a Postmodern World.” *Quarterly Review* 22, no. 1 (2002): 8, accessed April 28, 2020.

The consumeristic mentality is at the heart of the church service “spectator.” A generation of men and women, feeding at the breast of postmodernism, occupy a vast number of pews in today’s church. With their moral compass surrendered at the altar of relativistic truth, they are content to sit back and watch, sing-along, and even turn to the proper Scripture passage. All the while, they are only drawing in spiritual nourishment without engaging in self-examination and purpose in life. Perhaps an answer to the challenge of reaching the Millennial and Gen-Exer in the throes of postmodernism is best stated by James White, who said, “Our goal is translation – not transformation – of the message.”⁸⁴ Yet, even here, we are left without transformation, which is one of the goals of the gospel (Rom 12:1-2).

Pareto’s Rule of 80/20

The late nineteenth and early twentieth-century Genoan economist Vilfredo Federico Damaso Pareto (1848-1923) is credited with developing the economic rule, now known as *Pareto’s Law* (or *Principle*) that states, the majority of the effects can be attributed to the minority of the causes.⁸⁵ The principle became popular in the world of administration as the rule of 80/20, meaning 80% of all effects result from 20% of all causes.⁸⁶ The meaning of that statement within the world of economics alleges that, for example, 20% of employees of any business are responsible for 80% of productive output; 20% of the customers bring in 80% of the revenue; 20% of products bring in 80% of the revenue; 20% of all people own 80% of all wealth;

⁸⁴ White, James Emery. “The High Road to Credibility.” *Leadership* 16, no. 4 Fall, (1995): 56, accessed April 22, 2020.

⁸⁵ Dale O. Ferrier, 1981. “The Rule of 80/20.” *The Christian Ministry* 12, no. 4 (1981): 29, accessed December 14, 2020.

⁸⁶ Michael Hardy, “Pareto’s Law.” *Mathematical Intelligencer* 32 no. 3 (2010): 38, accessed December 11, 2020.

20% of all people receive 80% of all income; 20% of all employees account for 80% of all absenteeism; and so on.⁸⁷

To extend it further, 20% of drivers cause 80% of the accidents on the road; 80% of the trouble is caused by 20% of the people; and 20% of the effort produces 80% of the results.⁸⁸ This same principle has also been applied to other types of businesses and activities, including medicine, law, management, statistical research strategies, and the church. Adding to its validity, widespread as it is found to apply within the realm of a broad spectrum of vocations, it is also found to apply across multiple cultures worldwide.⁸⁹

When considering the church attendee's availability, the 80/20 principle must also be considered as an accurate gauge of participation. As it would apply specifically to the church, 80% of the work of the church will be undertaken by 20% of those who regularly attend. Pareto's Principle also helps to paint an accurate picture of the responsibilities of the pastor. It can be stated that 80% of the pastor's contact with the congregation will be with 20% of the people; 20% of the people will require 80% of the counseling; and 80% of the problems of the church will come from 20% of the people. Even apart from people, the rule encompasses the truth of 20% of the facilities will require 80% of the maintenance.⁹⁰

Given the widespread application of Pareto's Principle, it would be of great value for the pastor and leadership of a church to invest the necessary time, effort, and resources to thoroughly investigate what programs and activities demonstrate the highest rates of success and failure. The 80/20 rule can help bring clarity to that pursuit as well as give the leadership a target for which to

⁸⁷ Hardy, *Pareto's Law*, 38.

⁸⁸ Ferrier, *The Rule of 80/20*, 30.

⁸⁹ Li Bensen, "The Application of Pareto's 80/20 Rule to Law: A Quantitative Analysis Based upon Trials Involving a Plea of Guilty." *Social Sciences in China* 34, no. 4 (2013): 101, accessed December 11, 2020.

⁹⁰ Ferrier, *The Rule of the 80/20*, 1981.

aim as it relates to the vision and goals of the church.⁹¹ But, as previously stated, it is not merely the individual's physical change that must be considered. It is the purpose of this study to determine what factors will influence and change the heart of the attendee towards service, which may then cause the number of participants to increase so that a 70/30, 60/40, 50/50, or even higher percentage may then be seen.

Review of Scripture

The concept of servanthood is found throughout the whole of the Scripture, with a distinct change in definition occurring upon the initiation of Jesus' ministry. What began in the Old Testament as the slave-master relationship, upon the arrival of Jesus, changed to one of freely giving oneself to another as an outpouring and example of the presence of God's love. The Apostle Paul focused a great deal of his writing to the churches of Asia-Minor on the evidence of the Holy Spirit's presence. Serving one another is one such element that should be present and visible.

This Scripture review will focus first on the words of the Apostle Paul found in Ephesians 5:18-21. This passage formed the foundation of the worship music portion of the 8-week intervention teaching series held at Remnant Life Church from Sunday, August 30, 2020 to Sunday, October 25, 2020. The worship leader incorporated those components identified by Paul as the result of being filled with the Holy Spirit. These would include speaking the Psalms, hymns, and words of spiritual songs to the congregation in-between the songs sung that Sunday. There were also words of personal testimony and thanks shared by the leader as well as members of the worship team. In addition, the songs and Scripture passages used for each service were selected in conjunction with the topic of the sermon for that Sunday.

⁹¹ Ferrier, *The Rule of 800/20*, 30.

Ephesians 5:18-21

In order to teach, encourage, and guide the attendees of Remnant Life Church to a place of embracing servanthood through a move of the Holy Spirit in their hearts, two crucial components of the church service were emphasized. The first was the use of worship music, and the second the presentation of the Word. As the first arm of the intervention, the worship director used Paul's words to the church in Ephesus to form his ministry presentation foundation.

In the fifth chapter of Ephesians, beginning in the eighteenth verse, Paul utilizes the influence of wine on an individual compared to the Holy Spirit's power to influence. An initial question for many readers, however, might be why the command to not get drunk on wine would be connected to the Holy Spirit's filling. Surely there must be other equally effective means to make the same point without utilizing a behavior universally condemned throughout Scripture. The juxtaposition of drinking alcohol to excess and being filled with the Holy Spirit of God can leave the reader with a bad aftertaste.⁹² Yet, Paul shows good reason, if not immediately apparent, for the comparison.

Do Not Get Drunk on Wine (Ephesians 5:18a). Upon an initial reading, it would appear that Paul's progression of thought is keeping in line with the many Jewish texts, both biblical and extra-biblical, that warn of the dangers of drunkenness. Noah's shameful nakedness (Gen 9:21), Lot's incestuous encounter with his daughters (Gen 19:30-36), and Amnon's death (2 Samuel 13:38) to name a few, were all the result of excessive drink. Old Testament prophets such as Jeremiah (Jer 23:9; 25:27; 48:26; 51:7, 39), Nahum (Nah 3:11), and Isaiah (Isa 19:14; 24:20; 28:1) all aligned drunkenness with godless behavior. First-century Jewish writers Josephus,

⁹²Annang Asumang, 2008. "Be Filled With the Spirit and Not with Wine: Echoes of the Messianic Banquet in the Antithesis of Ephesians 5:18." *Conspectus* 5, March (2008): 22, accessed November 12, 2020.

Philo, and Clement likewise addressed the issue with the same measure of conviction as the biblical authors.

In particular, within his letters to new believers and young churches, Paul admonishes the people to change how they once lived now that they are followers and believers in Jesus Christ. A consistent theme in that change is to no longer allow drunkenness or the influence of wine to be a part of their lives. The churches of Rome (Rom 13:13), Corinth (I Cor 5:11; 6:10; 11:21), and Galatia (Gal 5:21), as well as Timothy (I Tim 3:3), and Titus (Titus 1:7) are all given the same warning. Paul regularly places the actions of drunken behavior alongside jealousy, debauchery, sexual immorality, and violence.

The question may also be raised as to the possibility that Paul is addressing banqueting practices of the first century in Ephesus, a city then under Roman rule but of Greek culture. While that may, at first, appear to be an unusual point of focus, it is necessary to be reminded of the Roman culture's influence on the early churches. However, the drinking of wine was not the point of emphasis for the Christian in Ephesus, as evidenced by the single sentence used to introduce and address the activity so abruptly.⁹³ We also know that this was not the first time Paul had encountered a similar issue. The church in Corinth, also under Roman rule at the time, had drawn Paul's ire in his letter written between five and seven years earlier. He had learned that the people were getting drunk while taking the Lord's Supper elements, with the rebuke recorded in I Corinthians 11.⁹⁴ By way of contrast with the Ephesians, the primary point of his

⁹³ Asumang, *Be Filled with the Spirit*, 22.

⁹⁴ Richard A. Wright, "Drinking, Teaching, and Singing: Ephesians 5:18-19 and the Challenges of Moral Instruction at Greco-Roman Banquets." *Lexington Theological Quarterly (Online)* 47 no. 3-4 (2017): 86, accessed November 9, 2020.

concern was not consumption, but his desire for them to give their lives over to the Holy Spirit's influence rather than the influence of pagan practices.

Paul, however, was not only dealing with the Roman religious practices that embraced and promoted the pleasures of the flesh as a part of the ritualistic practices. He was also dealing with the powerful Greek cultural influence as well. Within these recent Gentile converts' lives were the everyday events that regularly revolved around food, drink, and entertainment. The banquet feast was an essential part of the Ephesian's social fabric, and these new followers of Christ were having a difficult time separating those events from the solemnity and reverence of holy communion. Of particular concern for Paul would have been the lure of the worship of Dionysus, the Greek Ephesian god of wine and vegetations.⁹⁵

In ancient religions, as can still be witnessed in many Charismatic circles today, great importance and emphasis were placed on ecstatic mood. It was believed that a person could only approach God by being drawn out of themselves through the expression of rapturous ecstasy.⁹⁶ Music, dancing, gorging on rich foods, and especially the use of intoxicating beverages were utilized to achieve this self-induced state of euphoria. Chief among those who participated in this highest expression of ecstasy were the worshippers of Dionysus. The term ecstasy itself is derived from a Greek word meaning to remove oneself from a given place.⁹⁷ Certainly, Paul could have had this pagan practice in mind when he warned the new believers to avoid

⁹⁵ Maxie D. Dunnam, *Mastering the New Testament: Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, & Philemon*. Lloyd J. Ogilvie, gen. ed. (Dallas, TX: Word Publishing, 1982), 225.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ Nils G. Holm, "Ecstasy Research in the 20th Century: An Introduction," in *Religious Ecstasy*, ed. Nils G. Holm (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell International, 1982): 7, accessed November 12, 2020.

embracing this practice, causing a loss of control that was believed would lead to the goal of ecstatic possession.⁹⁸

Paul's usage of being drunk or filled with wine versus being filled with the Spirit is an understandable comparison regardless of the perceived inappropriate connection. A person who is intoxicated is said to be "under the influence" of alcohol. In the same way, a Spirit-filled Christian is also said to be under the influence but of the Holy Spirit.⁹⁹ But that is where the comparison ends, and the contrasts begin. Unlike the effects of alcohol, the one under the influence of the Holy Spirit does not lose control; he gains it as a person set free from the power of the world now able to choose how they will live in the pursuit of righteousness.

Be Filled with the Spirit (Ephesians 5:18b). To understand Paul's call for the reader to "be filled with the Spirit," one must first examine the original language's meaning. "Be filled" as used in this verse, is written in the present passive imperative tense. In the original Greek, it carries the definition of "repeatedly being filled," but since it is in the passive tense, it is also something that must be allowed to happen. Further, the Greek verb *plēroō* and its cognate *plērēs* refer to being filled as a growing state of being.¹⁰⁰ There is a need in God's children for a constant renewal of the Holy Spirit (Eph 3:14-19; 4:22-24; Rom 12:2) for spiritual maturity and growth to be sustained, but the individual has a choice to allow that to happen in his life or not.

Being filled with the Spirit is also that which directly impacts our thoughts, actions, and relationships with people. As it relates to this study, it is the move of the Holy Spirit in the life of church attendees that will take them from being spectators to becoming servants of the Kingdom.

⁹⁸ Jonathan M. Hammett, "Maenadic Possession: A Ritual of Status Reversal in the Cult of Dionysus." *Journal of Theta Alpha Kappa* 27, no. 1 (2003): 37, accessed November 12, 2020.

⁹⁹ John R. W. Stott, *The Message of Ephesians*, (Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press, 1979), 204.

¹⁰⁰ Kenneth Boa, *Conformed to His Image: Biblical and Practical Approaches to Spiritual Formation*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2001), 299.

The love of God present in their lives, through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, will then bring compassion for others to the forefront when a need is presented, causing them to want to serve God, others, and the church. It is not merely an intellectual decision to become involved; it is an outpouring of the Holy Spirit in their lives as they are moved to service.

Paul affirms enthusiasm and joy, even ecstasy, within the fellowship we find in God, but condemns the drunkenness of wine that produces the counterfeit. It is, in fact, the mark of wisdom to seek the fullness of the Spirit. Experiencing the presence of the Spirit does bring the individual to a place of great joy, but, as said by E.F. Scott, that truly occurs when you “find your overflow of soul in the rapture which the Spirit will give you.”¹⁰¹

Five participles that explain “being filled.”

As the individual is filled, five participles are presented by the Apostle that is directly connected to the activity of being and coming under the influence of the Holy Spirit. In addition, each result of being filled can be witnessed by others as a testimony to the change taking place in a person’s life. While Paul wrote these words to the church as a whole, they can certainly be embraced by the individual as a way to determine the condition of the heart.

1. Speaking to One Another (Eph 5:19a). Paul notes that the earliest indication of a person being filled with the Spirit is the character of the words that come out of the mouth. John Calvin wrote, “As the soul does not live idly in the body, but gives motion and vigor to every member and part, so the Spirit of God cannot dwell in us without manifesting Himself by the

¹⁰¹ Dunnam, *Mastering the New Testament*, 225.

outward effects.”¹⁰² Just as the fruit of the Spirit is the evidence of a life surrendered to living for God, so too the words spoken to one another is evidence of the presence of the Spirit.

By speaking the words of the psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, the individual is engaging in the most common form of expression in biblical times. Testimonies, life stories, and family history were most often communicated in oral form, not written.¹⁰³ Although Paul was knowledgeable in Greek philosophy, having been raised in Tarsus and studied philosophy at the feet of Gamaliel, he wrote for the comprehension of the common man. Paul understood the need to communicate in a way that would impact the reader's mind and, more importantly, the heart.

The first of the words spoken are those of the Book of Psalms. *Psalmós* (ψαλμός) does refer to the playing of an instrument in the accompaniment of the text. The words were often spoken, as they still are today, in the form of verse or prayer. In addition, the Book of Psalms are quoted and carried into the New Testament in Luke, 20:42; 24:44, Acts 1:20; 13:33, and 1 Corinthians 14:26, to name just a few. David and others penned some of the most heartfelt words of praise and thanksgiving ever recorded. To speak or speaking, *laléō* (λαλέω) in the original language, written in the present tense, is not a singular activity but intended to show a lifestyle of the Spirit-filled believer. As the word also translates as “sounds” or “utterances,” it is the sounds of the Spirit-filled heart that is pleasing to God.

The second word Paul encourages the reader to speak are those of hymns. *Hýmnos* (ὕμνος) are sacred songs of praise and, as they involve the human voice, they bring a capacity to

¹⁰² Christian Classics Ethereal Library, John Calvin Commentary on Galatians 5, World Wide Study Bible Galatians 5 - Christian Classics Ethereal Library (ccel.org), accessed December 1, 2020.

¹⁰³ Gracia Grindal, “Writing Hymns and Singing Them : Memory and Oral Culture: Some Reconsiderations.” *Hymn* 70, no. 1 (October 1, 2019): 24, accessed November 30, 2020.

convey deep emotion in a range of different ways.¹⁰⁴ The modern-day Christian considers the old-fashioned hymns to be those written in the late 17th through 18th-centuries by Charles Wesley, William Cowper, Fannie Crosby, John Newton, and Isaac Watts, among others. The power and enduring nature of their work are found in the textual content grounded in the Word of God. To speak the words of those nearly 300-year-old hymns is to quote, nearly verbatim, the words of the Holy Scripture.

John MacArthur, Jr., in his commentary on Ephesians, expresses the importance of the song being sung by the one who is filled with the Spirit.

For over a thousand dark years of its history (c. 500–1500), the church, in general, did not sing. From shortly after New Testament times until the Reformation, what music the church had was usually performed by professional musicians. The music they presented could not be understood or appreciated by the average church member. In any case, they could only sit and listen, unable to participate. But when the Bible came back into the church during the Reformation, singing came with it. Martin Luther and some of the other Reformation leaders are among the greatest hymn writers of church history. Where the true gospel is known and believed, music is loved and sung. God’s Spirit in the heart puts music in the heart. In his great allegory *Pilgrim’s Progress*, John Bunyan pictured the pilgrim, Christian, falling into the slough of despond, straying into doubting castle, and enduring many other hardships, frustrations, and failures. And though the expression “filled with the Spirit” is not used in the story, each time Christian is delivered, we see him going on his way singing. Every time he came back under the Spirit’s control, he had a song in his heart.¹⁰⁵

When defining the word “hymn,” it must also be understood that it is not restricted to a particular geographic region, period of time, or denominational assignment. To attempt to do so is to create artificial constructs that belie the seemingly timeless impact these solemn words possess.¹⁰⁶ Paul was encouraging his readers to utilize the words from the Book of Psalms and

¹⁰⁴ Smith, Robert Smith, “Music, Singing, and Emotions: Exploring the Connections.” *Themelios* 37, no. 3 (2012): 468, accessed December 6, 2020.

¹⁰⁵ John F. MacArthur, Jr., *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary: Ephesians*, (Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 1986), 250.

¹⁰⁶ Paul Westermeyer, “Reflections on the Word Hymn.” *Hymn* 69, no. 4 (January 1, 2018): 28, accessed November 30, 2020.

other works of praise sung to God in worship, again, as an outpouring of the presence of the Spirit in their lives.

The third word Paul encourages to be spoken to one another due to being filled with the Spirit are words of spiritual songs. Paul, rightly so, is proclaiming that those who are Spirit-filled overflow with songs. These may be songs containing words written by others, or they may be spontaneous and random words of joy, worship, and praise. *Pneumatikós* (πνευματικός) is that which is related to the human spirit or the soul. The grammatical suffix *tikos*, meaning like or in a manner, joined to the root *pneuma*, meaning spirit, renders the literal interpretation spirit-like. Therefore, they are words that pertain to the spirit, belong to the spirit, and are of the nature of the spirit.

Times of great spiritual blessing attest to the outpouring of spiritual words when the heart is filled with the love of God. Instances of ecstatic speech have been heard when, in the throes of the power of God, words spoken of the mind are insufficient to express the joy of that moment. While there are those who will say that these experiences are being driven by the emotion of the individual overwhelming the will, supporters will most often point the detractor to Romans 8:26 and the words of Paul concerning “groans that words cannot express.” This verse stands unique within the context of the New Testament writings because what Paul communicates is an incapacity for even Christians to express the right type of prayer in these circumstances.¹⁰⁷

To whatever conclusion an individual arrives, the verse’s primary point is that the one who allows himself to be filled with the Spirit will demonstrate those effects, as will the one who

¹⁰⁷ John Bertrone, “The Experience of Glossolalia and the Spirit’s Empathy : Romans 8:26 Revisited.” *Pneuma* 25, no 1 (2003): 55, accessed November 30, 2020.

is drunk with wine. But the activities of that demonstration are starkly different. While the one in physical intoxication loses control of himself, the one in spiritual intoxication shares the joy of the experience through proper communication with words of the psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs.

Paul's word of instruction to the church in Ephesus are not intended, nor should they be used as a defense for any side of current worship debates. Any effort to do so would prove to be anachronistic at best.¹⁰⁸ Instead, Paul is promoting the beauty and virtue of a life fully surrendered to the Holy Spirit. Paul is also providing the reader with a clear choice between the things of the world (the influence of wine) and the things of God (the influence of the Holy Spirit).

2. *Singing and Making Music in Your Heart to the Lord (Eph 5:19b)*. To sing is to utter words in musical tones and with melodic inflections and modulations.¹⁰⁹ The word utilized here, *áidō* (ᾄδω), specifies the singing as an action in praise to someone. Songs of praise have been offered to God from the earliest times as a primary part of the worship experience in the Old Testament. Moses' song to God in Exodus 15, following the salvation of the Israelites from the Egyptians at the Red Sea, is the first recorded song of praise and is given out of an overwhelming sense of thanks and gratitude.

An excellent demonstration of Spirit-filled singing can be found in Acts 16 and presents a clear indication of why Paul understood this expression's power and importance. Paul and his traveling companion Silas have been arrested in the Roman colony of Philippi and have been imprisoned for casting a demon out of a young girl and ruining her master's fortune-telling

¹⁰⁸ Scott Aniol, "Psalms, Hymns, and Spiritual Songs: Assessing the Debate." *Artistic Theologian* 6 (2018): 18, accessed December 1, 2020.

¹⁰⁹ Merriam-Webster On-line dictionary, [Sing | Definition of Sing by Merriam-Webster \(merriam-webster.com\)](https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/sing)

business (Acts 16:12, 16-24). “About midnight, Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the other prisoners were listening to them” (Acts 16:25). While they were singing, God sent an earthquake that freed them and all the other prisoners, but not one attempted to escape. The jailer fell on his knees before the two men of God and asked what he must do to be saved. As a direct result of that Spirit-filled singing, the jailer and his entire family received salvation.

As a continual demonstration of the effect of being filled with the Spirit, Paul immediately identifies who is to be the object of the songs of praise: The Lord. Nowhere in the Bible are songs of praise presented in a more clear and prominent position than that of the Book of Psalms. The word “sing” is found 69 times within the NIV version and cover a wide range of worship topics including joy (Ps 5:11; 27:6; 67:4; 81:1; 90:14; 92:4; 132:9,16; 149:5), praise (Ps 7:17; 9:2,11; 13:6; 47:6,7; 59:17; 68:32; 75:9; 96:2; 101:1; 147:7), gladness (Ps 32:11), a new song (Ps 33:3; 96:1), righteousness (Ps 51:14; 145:7), among the peoples (Ps 57:9), strength (Ps 56:16,17), help (Ps 65:13), name (Ps 66:2), and His great love (Ps 89:1; 101:1; 108:1).

3. Making Music in Your Heart (Eph 5:19c). The best evidence suggests that the earliest church of the New Testament was a singing church.¹¹⁰ Yet, in this instance, Paul is not referring to congregational singing. Here he specifies that the making of music takes place in the heart. When Scripture refers to the heart, it is rarely regarding the physical organ. While the word Paul uses, *kardía* (*καρδία*), can be applied to the center of the circulation of blood, it is most often used figuratively in Scripture to refer to the seat and center of human life. It is the place of emotions, personality, will, motive, and attitude. It is also where the change from the old to the

¹¹⁰ David F. Detwiler, “Church Music and Colossians 3:16.” *Bibliotheca Sacra* 158, no. 631 (2001): 347, accessed December 1, 2020.

new takes place at the moment of spiritual surrender and salvation. It is a creative act of God on the inside, not external efforts or a commitment to self-transformation, that creates a home for the Spirit to dwell, and when the heart is reborn, a new song is sung.¹¹¹

The heart is also often regarded as the seat of emotions. “He has a broken heart” would adequately describe the emotional condition of a rejected suitor. But the Bible also refers to it as the seat of the intellect as demonstrated by Jesus’ words, “For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false testimony, and slander” (Matthew 15:19). It is this critical importance of the condition of the heart that leads Paul to express such great concern for the newly spiritually regenerated hearts of his readers (Eph 4:20-24; Rom 6:1-9; 2 Cor 3:18). He regularly encourages them to continue their transformation and to grow in the maturity and understanding of the power of the Spirit.¹¹²

The heart Paul refers to is a natural place, given the presence of emotions as well as the intellect, for the songs of praise to arise. In the Psalms, David and the other authors use the words “my heart” fifty-five times as an expression of joy (Ps 4:7), thanks (Ps 9:1), rejoicing (Ps 16:9), praise (Ps 86:12; 138:1), and meditation (Ps 19:4; 77:6), to name a few. Then, David writes in Psalm 108:1, “My heart is steadfast, O God; I will sing and make music with all my soul.” Here are the very words that Paul uses in Ephesians 5:19 to not only help guide those who have been filled with the Spirit but to continue promoting his desire for unity among the people

¹¹¹ James W. Skeen, “Principles of the Heart: Growth of New Life in Us.” *Journal of Biblical Theology* 2, no. 2 (2019): 121, accessed December 1, 2020.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, 122.

of Ephesus. Given the divisions and internal strife in Paul's absence, this had become a reoccurring theme in his letter.¹¹³

4. *Always Giving Thanks (Eph 5:20a)*. If an inner joy that places a song of praise in the heart is the first evidence of the Spirit's presence, the giving of thanks in all things and at all times is the second. Surely a grumbling and complaining heart are not compatible with the presence of the Spirit. Few places in the Scripture more clearly demonstrate God's response to an ungrateful heart than that of His reaction to the Israelites as they wandered in the desert in a seemingly constant state of ingratitude.

In the thirteenth chapter of Numbers, the people have received the twelve spies' report, rejecting Joshua and Caleb's word to march forward into Caanan and, instead, accepted the ten's report that they cannot take the land from the inhabitants. In the fourteenth chapter, the people begin to rebel against Moses and Aaron in an effort to return to Egypt. In Numbers 14:27, God says to Moses, "How long will this wicked community grumble against me? I have heard the complaints of these grumbling Israelites." God then decreed that no adult would enter the promised land due to their unfaithfulness and complaining (Num 14:29:30).

Gratitude is a Christian virtue and an indication of a heart that understands the source of all things received in this life. Gratitude is also an affirmation of a bond between the giver and receiver and is central to the human-divine relationship.¹¹⁴ A thankful heart is a clear indication of the Holy Spirit's presence as gratitude and thankfulness was not created by man but by God. The Word is filled with commands, invitations, and encouragements to give thanks. Once again,

¹¹³ Gertrud Tönsing, "'The Spirit': Left out and Then Reintroduced? A Study of Colossians 3:16 and Ephesians 5:18-19 in the Context of the Authorship Debate." *Scriptura* 119, no. 1 (2020): 14, accessed December 3, 2020.

¹¹⁴ Robert A. Emmons and Teresa T Kneezel, "Giving Thanks: Spiritual and Religious Correlates of Gratitude." *Journal of Psychology and Christianity* 24, no.2 (2005): 140, accessed December 3, 2020.

the Psalms overflow with these expressions.¹¹⁵ You are my God, and I will praise you; you are my God, and I will exalt you. Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; his love endures forever. (118:28-29); You turned my wailing into dancing; you removed my sackcloth and clothed me with joy, that my heart may sing your praises and not be silent. LORD my God, I will praise you forever. (30:11-12); Save us, LORD, our God, and gather us from the nations, that we may give thanks to your holy name and glory in your praise (106:47). When you are thankful, it helps you realize that your problems and circumstances do not define you.¹¹⁶ It is yet another outpouring of the Spirit.

5. *Submitting to one another (Eph 5:21)*. To submit or be subject to finds its roots in a Greek military term meaning “to arrange troop divisions in a military fashion under the command of a leader.” The original language *hypotássō* (ὑποτάσσω) defines it, in non-military use, as a voluntary attitude of giving in, cooperating, assuming responsibility, and carrying a burden. These are all terms and definitions that speak to the humility, gentleness, patience, and tolerance of one filled with the Spirit. The taking of one’s subordinate place in each earthly relationship is a fruit of the Spirit’s greater work and an act of worship in daily life.¹¹⁷

The act of submission is found throughout the New Testament. We see it early in the life of Jesus as He submits to His parents in Luke 2:51. In addition, other examples of this order derived from submission are readily found: demons to the disciples (Luke 10:17, 20); citizens to the governing authorities (Rom 13:1; Titus 3:1; 1 Pet 2:13); all things in the universe to Christ

¹¹⁵ Sue Lutz, “THANKFULNESS: Even When It Hurts.” *The Journal of Biblical Counseling* 20, no. 2 (2002): 40, accessed December 6, 2020.

¹¹⁶ Ibid, 42.

¹¹⁷ John G. Nordling, “...Submitting to One Another out of Reverence for Christ [Υποτασσόμενοι Ἀλλήλοις Ἐν Φόβῳ Χριστοῦ]” (Ephesians 5:21).” *Concordia Theological Quarterly* 77, nos. 3–4 (2013): 328, accessed December 6, 2020.

(Cor 15:27 [citing Ps 8:7]; Eph 1:22); angels, authorities, and powers to Christ (1 Peter 3:22); of Christ to God the Father (I Cor 15:28); of church members to their leaders (1 Cor 16:15-16); the church to Christ (Eph 5:24); of slaves to their masters (Titus 2:9; 1 Pet 2:18); Christians to God (Heb 12:9; James 4:7); and wives to their husbands (Col 3:18; Titus 2:4-5; 1 Pet 3:5).

It should be noted that within these examples, there is never a reversal of authority. Mary and Joseph were never subject to the boy Jesus nor were masters ever subject to their slaves.¹¹⁸ Yet in Paul's words to the Ephesians in verse 21, there is no suggested order given; instead, it is to "one another." Here, Paul uses the reciprocal plural pronoun *allélōn* (ἀλλήλων) to indicate equality that does not place one over the other as with the slave and master, but submission as brothers in the Lord.

To be filled with the Spirit is to present visible examples of the change that has taken place. It is seen in the words that are spoken and the music made in the heart of one under the influence of the Holy Spirit. It is heard in the songs that are sung and the words of thanks in all circumstances. And it is in the humility of submitting to others, not in authority or headship, but in love.

Selected Passages Regarding Serving and Servanthood

As was stated in earlier sections of this study, serving begins in the heart. As it relates to an individual sitting in the pew each Sunday morning, the question must be asked, what comes to mind when the pastor talks about serving in the church or a request is made for congregants to assist in a project or programmed event? Does the Bible teach on serving or provide a pattern for the Christian to follow? While the concept of serving changed from the Old to the New Testament, the fact remains that the condition of the individual's heart played a primary role in

¹¹⁸ Nordling, *Submitting to One Another*, 330.

their understanding, whether slave or free, man or woman, young or old. In the Old Testament, the concept of servanthood points to two primary ways of serving; serving God and serving man.

Old Testament

Serving God. In the NIV translation, the words “serve the Lord,” “serve God,” and “serve the Lord your God,” along with a few additional variations, appear 170 times. We see the first reference to this instruction through the words of Moses to the children of Israel. In Deuteronomy 6:13, he says to the people, “Fear the *Lord your God*, *serve him only* and take your oaths in his name.” Again, in chapter 10 and verse 12, “And now, Israel, what does the LORD your God ask of you but to fear the Lord your God, to walk in obedience to him, to love him, to *serve the Lord your God* with all your heart and with all your soul.”

Yet, these words were not a suggestion; they were a command that demanded obedience then as they still do today. In Old Testament times, to ignore this fundamental component of worship was to bring the consequence of disobedience. Moses makes this clear in Deuteronomy 28:46-48, “Because you *did not serve the Lord your God* joyfully and gladly in the time of prosperity, therefore in hunger and thirst, in nakedness and dire poverty, you will serve the enemies the Lord sends against you.” In addition, Joshua equated a refusal to serve God with rebellion and sin, telling the people in Joshua 24:19-20 that disaster would come upon them.

From Genesis to Malachi, serving God was a primary point of emphasis, particularly among the godly kings of Israel and in the teaching and words of the prophets. In I Samuel 12:14, the prophet, in his farewell address to the people, reminds them, “If you fear the Lord and *serve* and obey him and do not rebel against his commands, and if both you and the king who reigns over you follow the LORD your God—good!” In I Chronicles 28:9, David is presenting his son, Solomon with the plans to the temple and tells him, “And you, my son Solomon,

acknowledge the God of your father, and *serve him* with wholehearted devotion and with a willing mind,”

The examples of this vital component in the lives of the Hebrew people continue in the words of warning regarding serving foreign or false gods from the prophet Jeremiah (Jer 5:19; 11:10; 13:10; 16:11,13; 22:9; 25:6; 35:15). Daniel records both his and his friends’ refusal to serve the gods of the Babylonian King Nebuchadnezzar (Dan 3:12,14,17,18; 3:28), and when Daniel is placed into the lion’s den, the king hopes Daniel will be spared as he is being put in and inquires to his well-being the next morning by using the same phrase, “by the God whom you serve continually” (Dan 6:16,20). The Old Testament reminds us repeatedly that a fundamental focus of our lives should be to serve God.

A Servant of Man. The second primary reference to serving in the Old Testament is that of one man serving another, most often in a slave or house-servant posture. A challenge the reader must be aware of when encountering the word “servant,” however, is the broad range of meaning of the Hebrew *‘ebed*, as well as the plural form *‘abadim* (עֲבָדִים).¹¹⁹ The word is derived from the root *‘abad* (עָבַד) meaning to work or labor, and not only applies to multiple scenarios but also designates function.¹²⁰ While the literal translation is ‘subordinated to someone else,’ the subordination can be manifest in several ways. *‘Ebed* can be understood, in accordance with the context, to be a slave, servant, subject, official, vassal, or a servant/follower of a particular god.¹²¹

¹¹⁹ Michael A. Harbin, “The Manumission of Slaves in Jubilee and Sabbath Years.” *Tyndale Bulletin* 63, no. 1 (2012): 54, accessed December 16, 2020.

¹²⁰ Robert Lennox, 1958. “The Servant of Yahweh in the Old Testament.” *Theology Today* 15, no. 3 (1958): 315, accessed December 16, 2020.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*

While the concept of the servant who is a slave of another was common in that time, it must be kept in mind that the concept of slavery in Israel was limited when compared to the surrounding pagan nations of the Ancient Near East. Not only could a slave become a member of the household serving in dignity, but could also obtain a position of trusted responsibility (Gen 15:2).¹²² Not every situation was that of the slave and master.

In Genesis 29:20, we read that Jacob served Laban for seven years to marry his daughter Rachel. Instead, Laban gave him his oldest daughter, Leah, requiring Jacob to serve Laban another seven years to have Rachel (Gen 29:23,30). While Jacob was free to leave at any time from the employ of Laban, his desire to have Rachel as his wife made him a slave of what was required. In that way, it could be said that his freedom was not his own. The use of the same word in this account as those of men and women who could not choose freedom reveals the word's broad definition again.

Two final examples of the Old Testaments' usage of the word servant would include those involved in unsuccessful political or military campaigns. Those conquered would be relegated, not only to the place of a vanquished foe but a servant of the conqueror (I Kings 20:32). In addition, those who served in the tabernacle, temple, or courts of rulers and kings were also said to be servants to the responsibility of their role (Josh 9:23).¹²³

New Testament

At the arrival of Jesus, the definition of servant underwent a drastic change from how it was used in the Old Testament. This is not to say that the older definitions were abolished. Instead, new ones were added. The first record of Jesus utilizing the word 'serve' is found in

¹²² Lennox, *The Servant of Yahweh*, 315.

¹²³ Ibid., 316.

Matthew 4:10. Upon hearing the third attempt of Satan to tempt Him, Jesus responded, “Away from me, Satan! For it is written: ‘Worship the Lord your God, and *serve* him only” (italics added). Jesus confirms the Old Testament writings that place the command to serve God and God alone at such a high place of importance for all people.

As has been already established, serving others begins in the heart. Jesus presented His life as an example of how to serve and what priority helping others should take in a person’s life. Jesus clearly states a foundational purpose of His earthly ministry when He says in Matthew 20:28, “...just as the Son of man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many.” Paul reinforces Jesus’ words in Ephesians 6:7 by telling the reader, “Serve wholeheartedly, as if you were serving the Lord, not people.” Jesus’ life and the Apostle Paul’s words serve to initiate the change of heart necessary in today’s church members.

Paul continues to stress the importance of serving, even as he lists it among the church’s vitally important gifts. He writes that many parts make up the single body of believers, but the gifts, manifested by the presence of the Holy Spirit, should operate to the benefit of all.¹²⁴ In Romans 12:7, he declares that if anyone has the gift of serving, they should serve. While Paul points out the gifts’ distinctiveness, a primary gift should not be taken to the exclusion of others from being exercised when the need arises.

A particular act of serving that requires a giving of oneself is the gift of hospitality. The epistles of 2 and 3 John address this critical way of meeting a need. While the apostle John devotes the entire second epistle to commending the heart of an unnamed woman, the recipient of the letter, it is not the only place in the Scripture when welcoming people into the home is highlighted.

¹²⁴ William R. Newell, *Romans: Verse by Verse*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publishing, 1973), 460.

In a time of great need following a shipwreck, Paul is cared for by people on the island of Malta in the heart of the Mediterranean Sea (Acts 28:1-10). Again, in Romans 12:13 and 16:13, Paul gives thanks to those who hosted him and cared for his needs. In 1 Peter 4:9, the apostle Peter instructs the readers to be hospitable to one another and to not grumble or complain about the responsibility. The author of Hebrews even warns the readers that to ignore or miss the opportunity to be welcoming to strangers may be an opportunity missed to entertain “angels unaware” (Heb 13:2).

As in the second epistle, John writes to commend a man by the name of Gais for his kindness, care, and servant’s heart in the third epistle. Here is yet another example for Christians today to understand how important it is to give of yourself to others. It not only emulates the model of Jesus’ life, but it is, as followers of Jesus, remaining faithful to His command that we should “love one another” (Jn 13:35).

In one of the most well-known miracles of Jesus, we see a powerful demonstration of serving in the form of a compassionate act. To show compassion is not merely a sympathetic awareness of someone else’s distress; it is also a desire to alleviate it. No action by Jesus better fits this definition than the feeding of the five thousand, the only miracle of Jesus recorded in all four gospels (Matt 14; Mk 6; Lk 9; Jn 6).

Each account records that Jesus had compassion on the crowd as their need for food was brought before Him. One would think that James recalls this event when he writes, “If one of you says to them, ‘Go in peace; keep warm and well fed,’ but does nothing about their physical needs, what good is it” (James 2:16). The Remnant Life Church attendees have been told the importance of doing as a part of caring for others. Jesus told His followers that people would

know they were His disciples by their love for one another (Jn 13:35). Love is not something that can be spoken only; it must be seen through the acts of kindness and care.

Finally, Jesus taught that relating to others through the presence of God's love was to live a way that was contrary to the world's perception of relationships. Jesus stated in Matthew 20 that the last would be first, and the first shall be last. In the previous chapter of Matthew 19, Jesus tells a rich young man that many who are first shall be last, and those who are last shall be first. Jesus teaches that the world's obsession to be above all those around you is of no importance in His Father's Kingdom. To serve others is to assume a position of humility, even to the point of laying down or humbling yourself, for another person (Jn 15:13).

The ultimate demonstration of this principle is seen in the act of Jesus washing the disciple's feet in the upper room the same night that Jesus was arrested (Jn 13:1-15). By this simple act reserved for the lowest of the house-servants, Jesus was physically showing His disciples that it did not matter what position you held. It did not matter your title; it did not even matter what other people thought of you because all are called to serve one another. This was a Kingdom principle humbly being acted out; to freely give of yourself to others is to simply yet powerfully demonstrate the love of God.

Chapter 3

Methodology

Intervention Design

Overview

In the introduction of *Futurecast* published in 2011, researcher George Barna states, “Good information improperly or inaccurately interpreted leaves us worse off than if we had no information.”¹²⁵ So, too, within this study, the information must be gathered, examined, and interpreted to provide clear and accurate conclusions befitting and addressing the stated thesis.

In an article by Leonardo Ambasciano, he addresses the challenges of critically analyzing data within an academic discipline. One such method he offered is to observe and address the interconnected and the overlapping.¹²⁶ The data to be interpreted in this research project is connected most closely with behavioral actions. While thoughts and matters of the heart cannot be quantified, they can be observed with variations noted through changes of behavior and actions that connect and overlap with one another.

This project’s methodology will focus on behavioral changes, as observed primarily through the participation of the subjects in church activities. It recognizes that the desire to participate in the life of the church is born not out of the mind but the heart that requires a method to be implemented to establish a starting point from which to measure quantitative change. With most of the work in the church being accomplished by a small percentage of those who attend, what would move the heart of the individual to desire to participate and permanently adjust the priorities and activities of their life to reflect God's work in their life?

¹²⁵ Barna, *Futurecast*, xii.

¹²⁶ Leonardo Ambasciano, “(Pseudo)Science, Religious Beliefs, and Historiography: Assessing the Scientification of Religion’s Method and Theory.” *Zygon* 51, no. 4 (2016): 1063, accessed May 18, 2020.

Before measurable activities can be implemented, however, a base-line of biblical knowledge should be established to determine if the attendee understands the importance of church life. Are we expecting a behavioral change to occur when there is no comprehension of servanthood's biblical concept and how Jesus taught and demonstrated this aspect of the Christian's life? In other words, is there an awareness among the congregation that a problem exists? Once this is tested, will a carefully prepared time of worship and instruction of the Word over a specific length of time prepare the hearts of the individuals for the Holy Spirit to make the changes that result in a measurable behavioral modification?

Research Design

In his book *Qualitative Research: A Multi-Methods approach to Projects for Doctor of Ministry Theses*, Tim Sensing states that the type of research to be utilized in this study “systematically seeks answers to questions by examining various social settings and the individuals who inhabit these settings.”¹²⁷ He goes on to add that it is “grounded in the social world of experience and seeks to make sense of lived experiences.”¹²⁸ Given that this research project's focus is centered on issues of the heart and subsequent behavioral expressions demonstrated, the design will be engaged in the field, rather than the library or a clinical facility.

The model has been created in three distinct phases, with the first two consisting of a pair of sub-phases. The sub-phases will involve nearly identical components and structures designed to provide pre and post-intervention data for analysis.

Phase One

The first measuring phase of the participants will be achieved through the use of a

¹²⁷ Tim Sensing, *Qualitative Research: A Multi-Methods Approach to Projects for Doctor of Ministry Theses*, (Eugene, OR: WIPF & Stock Publishers, 2011), 57.

¹²⁸ Ibid.

questionnaire to determine personal knowledge of biblical principles as well as perceptions and practices regarding the church, the importance of the Bible, family activities, and what factors influence where time is spent away from the church setting. Once this is completed, analyzed, and interpreted, a starting point will have been established from which to measure potential outcomes.

The contents of the questions have been created with several factors in mind. The first is to determine the participant's base-line understanding of biblical themes and theological foundations. Second, the researcher needs to understand the variety of concepts and beliefs present in the participants at the outset of the study. Third, the questions were written in conjunction with the seven implications associated with the project's thesis statement. The same questionnaire will then be distributed and collected again at the end of the study to provide measurable results regarding the intervention teaching's possible impact.

The initial questionnaire's secondary general purpose is to help ascertain whether the participants believe there is a problem regarding the amount of time and priority they give to the church. If the participant believes their time involved in the life and activities of the church is sufficient or adequate, those perceptions will most likely be the primary determinant of how often they participate. The knowledge of biblical principles is essential, but, again, it is the condition of the heart that will initiate the activity of the person. These two elements of the questionnaire will help provide a direction and a clear focus for the second phase of the project design to provide measurable data.

Phase Two

Once data from phase one has been gathered and examined, a church-wide event will be planned and presented to the congregation. The event will be of such a structure that every

person will have the opportunity to participate in various aspects of planning, preparing, and implementing the necessary components to complete the task successfully. The event's organizational requirements will be broad enough so that every type of skill and gift will have an equal opportunity to be utilized.

It is important to note that an emphasis on spiritual gifts presented in Romans 12 and 1 Corinthians 12 will be minimized. In its place, a more fundamental concept will be addressed in that all Christians should see themselves as submissive to one another (Eph 5:21), which implies servanthood. It is from servanthood, used as a baseline, from which spiritual gifts could then later be discussed.

The number of participants who agree to serve will represent the pre-instructional statistical base-line of the project. As with the questionnaire, a second, similar event will be scheduled at the conclusion of the teaching intervention series to determine what, if any, changes occurred in the percentage of participants for each event.

Phase Three

At the conclusion of the first event, the researcher will initiate a teaching series centered on the biblical principles of servanthood. The intervention will take place over eight-weeks augmented each Sunday by worship music selected, prepared, and presented strategically and in direct correlation with the biblical principle being taught that week. In addition to the music, the worship leader will lead the congregation through spoken words of worship from the Psalms, prayers of thanksgiving, as well as offering words of encouragement and praise.

While the worship team, comprised of six individuals, will participate each week in the time of worship, it will be the responsibility of the leader to integrate the spoken word within the selected songs. Others may be assigned a reading or prayer, but only occasionally, so as to

maintain the continuity of the worship leader and the pastor as leading the eight-week intervention series. While the Holy Spirit may often lead the service in an unanticipated direction, the format of the time of worship will be scripted and planned in detail several days prior to each Sunday service.

At the conclusion of the series, an event will be scheduled identical or very close in format and structure to the pre-intervention event. Like the first, this church-wide event will allow for each attendee to make themselves available to participate in the work of its preparation and completion. After the activity has been concluded, the number of participants will be compared to the first event, and the percentage of increase or decrease noted, analyzed, and detailed for the reporting of results and the corresponding conclusion.

The final component of phase three will be the distribution of the second or follow-up questionnaire. These questions will be very similar in content to the first questionnaire, although a change in wording may occur, or the questions may be placed in a different order so as to accurately as possible determine the level of learning or change that may have taken place.

Participants and Settings

Participants

The majority of the participants in this study will be adults who regularly attend Remnant Life Church, New Cumberland, Pennsylvania. Participants must be at least 18 years of age and attend Remnant Life a minimum of twice a month. The church, founded and pastored by the researcher, has been in operation for eight years.

A secondary group of the study will involve local church leaders. The researcher will reach out to pastors, priests, and rabbis within a 25-mile radius of RLC to request that they fill-out and return a ten-question survey. The questions asked will center on that ministerial leader's

experience with the attendees' participation level to accomplish their church's work or activities. The information collected will be used to determine if the problem of disproportionate involvement is, in fact, present, if the leader addresses the issue, and if they believe that teaching scriptural concepts will help to change the level of participation. In addition, strategies and action plans that may already be in place will be evaluated for effectiveness and considered in relation to suggested solutions and suggestions for further study at the conclusion of the project.

Settings

Multiple settings will be employed to carry out the study. Each adult attending RLC will participate in Phase One in the privacy of their home, where the questionnaire will be filled out and returned to the church the following Sunday. The questionnaire will be physically returned to the church without identifying the participant to protect their anonymity. The completed questionnaires will be gathered by a third party to provide added security and presented to the researcher in an envelope to prevent identity compromise.

The second location will be a local park where a picnic-styled event will be organized. The park is located 3.8 miles from the church site and is well-known to all who attend. The park provides multiple locations for various activities that will enable people with a variety of skills and gifts to become involved. Both the pre and post-intervention events will take place at this same park.

The third location will be at the church site itself. Remnant Life Church currently meets in the Lemoyne Borough Hall Community Room, a public venue located in Lemoyne, Pennsylvania. While the church does not have unlimited access to the facility, the relationship with the manager allows for usage whenever necessary, according to availability. The

questionnaires will be returned to this location, and the intervention teaching will take place during the Sunday morning service held here.

Project Schedule

Timeline

The anticipated total time for the project intervention and implementation is 18-20 weeks. In order to maintain a sense of continuity throughout the entire process, the following timeline is proposed to be completed within the 2020 calendar year:

July 12 – The project concept will be presented verbally to the attendees of Remnant Life Church. Information will also be placed on the church web site and Facebook page.

July 13 – The recruitment letter and pre-intervention questionnaire will be mailed to select members of the congregation over the age of 18 while others will be distributed in person the following Sunday.

July 19 and 26 – The questionnaires will be returned to the church.

July 26 – The pre-intervention event will be announced to the church verbally as well as information appearing on the church website and Facebook page.

July 26; August 2 and 9 – Sign-up sheets will be available at the church for participants to commit their time.

August 16 – Pre-intervention church event

August 30; September 6, 13, 20 – Preaching/Worship music intervention weeks one through four

October 4, 11, 18, 25 – Preaching/Worship music intervention weeks five through eight

October 11 – The post-intervention event will be announced to the church verbally, as well as information appearing on the church website and Facebook page.

October 11, 18, 25 – Sign-up sheets will be available at the church for participants to commit their time.

November 1 – Post-intervention church event

November 8, 15, 22 – Post-intervention questionnaire will be made available to and received from the congregation

November 29 – Last Sunday to return completed questionnaires; these will be returned to the church

The pastor and church leader survey will continue to be received, tabulated, and evaluated throughout the entire period of the intervention. Of particular note will be the percent of church leader questionnaires that are returned. While an 8% to 12% of return is acceptable in most data-collection studies, the researcher anticipates a higher number given the study's potential value to those who chose to participate.

Durations

Each component of the intervention has been assigned an approximate length of time the participant can expect to invest. While the individual will ultimately control their time commitment, these numbers should provide a general idea of what can be expected.

Pre-Intervention Questionnaire – 20 to 25 minutes

Pre-Intervention Church-Wide Event – 2 to 3 hours following the conclusion of the designated Sunday morning service

Intervention – an 8-week teaching series with each service lasting approximately 75 minutes

Post-Intervention Church-Wide Event – 2 to 3 hours following the completion of the designated Sunday morning service

Post-Intervention Questionnaire – 20 – 25 minutes

RLC Selected Leaders Interview – 30 to 40 minutes

Types of Data to be Collected and Tools Needed

Types of Data to be Collected

Tim Sensing states in his book, *Quantitative Research*, that it is often difficult to separate the activities of data collection and data analysis.¹²⁹ Once the raw information, numbers, and trends have been observed, cataloged, and gathered together, how is the best analysis method determined? Swinton and Mowett, when defining data analysis in *Practical Theology and Qualitative Research*, call it “the process of bringing order, structure, and meaning to the complicated mass of qualitative data that the researcher generates during the research process.”¹³⁰ While thoroughness is vital to any research project, simplicity is, likewise, a valuable ally when results are based primarily on a measurable numerical value.

Within this project's framework, there lay two specific components that will provide statistical significance to the study and a necessary element to the conclusions and results. The first is the pre-intervention questionnaire. Each participant will receive and answer a fifty-eight-question questionnaire designed to measure knowledge and perceptions of biblical concepts, issues of truth, morality, and spirituality, as well as personal religious habits.

Virtually every statement has a possibility of four responses ranging from “strongly agree” and “strongly disagree” to “I don’t know” and “I have no opinion.” Statements will not be arranged by specific topics or categories and will hold no weighted value. Answers will then be transferred to a collection sheet and then moved to a graph displaying the range of responses.

¹²⁹ Sensing, *Qualitative Research*, 194.

¹³⁰ John Swinton and Harriet Mowat, *Practical Research and Qualitative Analysis*, (London: SCM Press, 2006), 57.

The same questionnaire will also be administered a second time at the conclusion of the intervention utilizing the same methodology of analysis and recording of responses.

The data from the first questionnaire will be analyzed and compared with the second to determine if a change has occurred in the comprehension of biblical concepts regarding the importance of Christians serving within the church. In addition, ethical and moral behavioral concepts will be examined to determine what, if any, changes of perception and thinking have occurred. The responses will be grouped in correlation with the seven implications of the thesis statement.

The other measured activity for change involves the two church-wide events scheduled just before and after the teaching intervention. Following the announcement for the event's date and location, sign up sheets will be made available for attendees to offer their time in completing the necessary logistical components of the event. A church picnic, one that would necessitate and utilize more helpers due to the event's physical nature, is preferred over a dinner with less required functional needs.

The second, or post-intervention event, will be presented with the same format as the first. At the conclusion, sign-up sheets from both events will be examined to determine if an increase in those who gave of their time in the work of the event occurred. This change will be presented as a percentage of increase or decrease to support and augment the information collected from the two questionnaires' response. Both of these data sources will provide measurable statistical details to conclude the effectiveness of the intervention.

Tools Needed

Materials needed for the collection of data include both equipment and personnel.

- Printed Questionnaire

- Basket or container for the questionnaires to be collected at their return
- Sign-up sheets for the pre and post-intervention events
- A ten-question survey to be distributed to area church pastors and leaders
- A password-protected office computer for data storage
- Observers
 - Four members of the leadership of the church will be tasked with making observations through the course of the project.
 - They will be watching and listening to people through all phases of the intervention, including pre and post-events, noting behavioral changes or conversations that may take place.
 - This tool aims to casually and informally observe and report how the people are responding and reacting to what is happening.
 - After the final event, the researcher will interview the participants and note their observations for inclusion in the data analysis.
 - The observers are not to ask specific questions, make notes during the time of interaction, or guide anyone in their behavior.
 - The value of this method is to utilize an enhanced style of observational data collection. Sensing writes of “triangulation” in observation using the researcher's observations and those from both inside and outside the church.¹³¹ The method in this study will provide a two-tiered approach, which will help guard the researcher against the bias that may hinder the study's effectiveness.¹³²

¹³¹ Sensing, *Qualitative Research*, 75.

¹³² Ibid., 94.

Additional Information

While all attendees of Remnant Life Church will be made aware of the project's initiation through announcements from the pulpit, the information will be presented carefully to guard the project's integrity, minimize the chance of influencing answers, and safeguard the data being collected for examination. In addition, announcement slides and the church web site and Facebook page will be utilized to keep the project on schedule, meet the deadlines for the teaching series, as well as the entire project's milestone requirements.

Permission has been obtained by the researcher from the Remnant Life Church Board of Directors and Eldership to proceed with the project. The leadership will be notified in advance of the starting dates for each intervention plan component as well as presented a copy of the final results and conclusions.

Impact of COVID Virus

At the time of this writing, in the fall of 2020, the COVID-19 virus pandemic is present but beginning to subside, and public meetings in Pennsylvania are beginning to occur after a nearly three-month period of forced shut-down. While churches, business, and leisure activities are becoming active again, it is unknown how the public will respond to being within closer social proximity to one another, given the continued concern regarding potential transmission and spread of the virus.

The attendees of Remnant Life Church have not been meeting together during the time of the shutdown, and it is unknown what impact that layoff will have on the attendance numbers in these first weeks and months of returning to corporate gatherings. This project's practical field study is ready to begin as soon as public meetings are once again permitted, but, as a result, the totals may be skewed to a higher or lower number and percentage. While the impact on

attendance and activity participation as a result of this unusual time cannot be anticipated or predicted, it is worth noting that the study's outcome and conclusions might be different if conducted in a time not associated with the pandemic.

Components and Implementation of the Intervention

The problem stated for the church poses the question, "Why does such a small percentage of the church body accomplish the highest percentage of the work completed?" Relying on the formula of Pareto's Principle, is it possible to increase the 80/20 rule to 70/30, 60/40, 50/50, or greater? While Remnant Life Church enjoys strong participation from its people, there is no doubt that, as in most other churches, the same faces can be seen whenever a call is made for people to come and assist with a program or outreach ministry.

The participants for this research project were identified as the adult attendees of Remnant Life Church. It was established from the beginning of the project that the participants did not need to be a "member" of the church, only "regular attendees." The minimum age requirement to participate was set at 18. Since the project's goal was to measure change within the entire church, it was necessary to include as many adults as possible, realizing that there is no guarantee those who begin the project will see it all the way through to completion.

Given the close relationship the attendees have with the pastor, there was no resistance to the project due in part to the church's small size. All adults willingly consented to participate, with a significant number of people indicating their excitement to see what conclusions would result from the study. Steps were taken at the outset of the program introduction to ensure that everyone knew the questionnaires' responses would be anonymous, and it would not be possible to link answers to a specific identity.

For the purpose of collecting data, four written and one oral forms were created to gather information and establish a base-line from which to draw conclusions. The materials created were:

- A 58-question pre-intervention questionnaire
- A 61-question post-intervention questionnaire
- A 10-question pastor/church leader survey
- Two sign-up sheets; one for each church-wide event
- An oral interview with selected leaders of the church regarding observed behavioral changes

Pre-Intervention Questionnaire

The first tool used in the study was a 58-question questionnaire created by the researcher and designed to measure a broad spectrum of topics regarding the spiritual level of the participants' life as well as their beliefs and general knowledge of biblical principles. (See Appendix A.) The questions were created utilizing several criteria. The first was to determine if the individual had a basic grasp of fundamental biblical teachings regarding attending church, participation in the Body, and general teachings regarding relationships.

Second, the seven implications identified in conjunction with the project's thesis statement acted as a guide. Questions were created to address the following:

First, does the attendee believe that the work of the church begins with and is generated by the pastor and leadership alone? Does the attendee know that the teaching of Jesus instructed all Christians to participate in the work of the church as a Kingdom-building exercise of their faith?

Second, does the attendee know that the priorities of their life (i.e. where they spend their time, invest their money, etc.) must reflect the importance of church and church activities?

Third, does the attendee understand that investing in other people's lives as an act of disciple-making can be achieved through participation in the life of the church?

Fourth, does the attendee believe that the work of the church and relationship with other Christians occurs on Sundays alone?

Fifth, is the attendee active in the church on a convenience-only method of determining involvement, or do they realize that their walk and growth in the Lord is an important priority that is enhanced through their life in the church?

Sixth, does giving to the church create a "country-club" mentality in the attendee's mind, meaning their involvement is governed by what they like and don't like, rather than as a responsibility of the Kingdom?

Seventh, does the attendee believe that the activities of the church are primarily for those who regularly attend? Or does the Christian have a responsibility to invite friends and family to church events as a way of reaching out to the lost?

Not only was the information gathered used to determine a general understanding of the participant, but a base-line of knowledge was established that would be used to measure the potential change in answers received in the post-intervention questionnaire. The key component to facilitate the changes will be an eight-week intervention worship and teaching series.

Pre-Intervention Event

After the questionnaires had been distributed and as they were being returned, a church-wide event was scheduled and announced. The event's primary purpose was to measure the number of people who would be willing to make themselves available to help with the event's

preparation and setup. This number will establish the baseline from which to measure any change that may occur as a result of the intervention teaching series.

The site selected for the event is a local park less than 3 miles from the church meeting location. A picnic-style event was chosen given the increased preparation needed for such a gathering since all materials must be brought to the site, set-up, torn down, and the area policed before leaving. It was thought that with a greater variety of activities needing to be done, the more opportunity there would be for people to recognize the need and make themselves available.

A sign-up sheet was made available for a period of three weeks to provide ample opportunity for those who wished to participate to indicate their desire. (See Appendix B.) By signing up, the individual(s) were expressing their intent to give of their time in preparing for the entire church to come together for the event. The number of those who signed up was noted and recorded to compare with post-intervention event set-up participants.

Intervention Teaching Series

On the Sunday following the pre-intervention event, the researcher began an 8-week series of teachings focusing on the theology of serving and servanthood. As stated in this project's thesis, if the attendees of Remnant Life Church are presented with a fundamental understanding of the biblical concepts of servanthood, a change will take place in their hearts as they embrace the truth of its importance.

The series, while not exhaustive, focused on the heart of serving. It was not the intent of the researcher to convince the listener that they needed to serve. Instead, through the presence and move of the Holy Spirit in their lives, a desire to serve becomes a natural outpouring and demonstration of God's love.

First Teaching

Titled “Serving begins in the Heart,” the opening lesson emphasized the importance of surrendering the heart to God in order to be willing to serve. Several aspects and functions of the heart were reviewed, including the heart is the soul, the core of an individual’s being, and the seat of God’s presence. It is the inner part, resolution, character, conscience, and the seat of emotion and passion. It is also the place Moses called the people to serve God from in Deuteronomy 10:12 when he said for them “to serve the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul.

Other Scripture noted included Paul’s statement that the heart is the place of our salvation (Romans 10:9). It is the place where we keep the law of God (Job 22:22; Psalm 119:11, 119:30). It is also the origin of our hopes, our dreams, and even our fears (I Peter 3:15; Psalm 37:4; John 14:1) (See Appendix C).

Second Teaching

“The Perfect Servant” is, of course, Jesus Christ. His life was and is a model given to us of living a selfless, God-centered life. His entire life and ministry were exemplified by serving others. The earthly mission of Jesus was summed up in Matthew 20:28, “...just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many.” The Apostle Paul repeats this same theme of serving as Jesus did in his letters to the churches in Asia-Minor that they should serve one another in love (Galatians 5:13; Ephesians 6:7; Romans 12:6-7).

The letter of Paul to Philemon offers a picture of not only the acceptance of a runaway slave returning as a brother in the Lord, but of the gift of salvation and what Jesus did for each of us. Philemon is a representation of God the Father. Onesimus, the runaway slave now a follower

of Christ, is the sinner. Paul is acting in the way of Jesus the redeemer. The change of the heart of Onesimus is the central key to the story, just as it is for the attendee of Remnant Life Church (See Appendix D).

Third Teaching

Most people, when asked to serve, are able to find many excuses why they cannot. The next teaching, “Serving Without Excuse,” examines the reasons Moses gave to God at the burning bush of why he could not go to Egypt. The five excuses he gave are in many ways similar to those still used by people today, and in each case, God had a response.

Moses declared that he was not qualified, and God said He would be with him (Exodus 3:11-12). Moses claimed he had no authority; God said to tell them I AM sent you (Exodus 3:13-15). Moses was concerned he would be called a liar, and God gave him miracles to perform (Exodus 4:1-7). Moses doubted his ability to speak clearly, and God reminded him that He was the creator of his mouth and lips (Exodus 4:10-12). Moses said he stuttered, and God said He would send his brother Aaron with him, but Moses would still be required to obey God (Exodus 6:12, 30; 7:1-2) (See Appendix E).

Fourth Teaching

The second and third epistles of John are filled with the service in the form of hospitality. “A Heart of Hospitality” examines John's words in his second epistle written to a woman who regularly opened her home to travelers. The point of emphasis to the listener at RLC is not restricted to hosting people in the home; it is also about personal approachability. Do the individual’s demeanor, personality, and countenance present themselves as welcoming to others? To serve others comes from a heart of love and those qualities of love should be evident.

The Scripture addresses hospitality in many forms. Paul, shipwrecked on the island of Malta, is taken in and cared for by the chief official (Acts 28:1-10). Paul gives thanks to those who showed him hospitality in Rome (Romans 12:13, 16:23). In his letter to Timothy, Paul lists hospitality as a virtue to be prized (I Timothy 5:9-10). The author of Hebrews cautions believers to show hospitality to strangers, not knowing if it might be an angel (Hebrews 13:2). Finally, Peter tells his readers to be hospitable and to be careful not to grumble or complain about what they are doing (I Peter 4:9) (See Appendix F).

Fifth Teaching

The heart of hospitality provides not only a service to others, but it blesses the one giving. “The Blessing of Hospitality” looks at the words of 3rd John as he commends a man named Gaius for opening his home to all those who were in need. John points out that hospitality is being extended even to those who are strangers (3 John 5), and many know of his kindness, which has become a testimony of God’s love in action (3 John 6-8). Yet, there were also those who were, in their pride, refusing to open their homes. The listener at RLC is challenged to examine those things that would prevent them from opening their hearts and home to someone in need (See Appendix G).

Sixth Teaching

As the Holy Spirit is moving and working in the heart of the individual, it finds expression in many ways. “Serving out of Compassion” is demonstrated through the feeding of the 5000, the only miracle of Jesus found in all four of the Gospel accounts. Jesus saw the need of the people and was moved with compassion for them (Mark 6:34). Compassion is not just an awareness of need but the desire to act in a way that will alleviate it. To serve in a Christ-like

manner is to meet the need, not merely identify it (James 2:16). Acts of kindness and service to others are the visible outpourings of compassion (See Appendix H).

Seventh Teaching

Perhaps no other act of Jesus during his ministry was a more powerful demonstration of what it means to serve others than the evening in the upper room when He washed the disciples' feet. John 13:1-15 paints a picture of the change that Jesus taught His followers that was in complete contrast to all that they knew; the first will be last, and the last will be first (Matthew 20:16). The changed heart is one that is acting in humility.

Jesus spoke in John 15:13 that the greatest act of love was laying down one's life for another. While many teach that it is the sacrifice of death, it also means to bend, kneel, or bow. In other words, it is a posture of humility and service. Jesus demonstrated this by assuming the position of the lowest slave who would wash the dirt off the feet of a traveler entering the home. He then commanded them, and us, to do the same for others (See Appendix I).

Eighth Teaching

The final teaching of the series emphasizes again that to serve others is to emulate the life of Jesus. "The Privilege of Serving" reminds the listener that the flesh will always want to elevate itself first, not others. Paul writes of the battle between the Spirit and the flesh and that there is no life in Christ without the Spirit of God in your life (Galatians 5:16-17; I Corinthians 15:50).

To fully understand the privilege of serving can only come from those who are serving. The listener at Remnant Life was challenged to ask God for opportunities to serve others. They were encouraged to keep their eyes off of themselves to see those God would send and use the model of Jesus' life for how they should live their own in service to others (See Appendix J).

Post-Intervention Event

At the completion of the intervention teaching series, a second church-wide event was scheduled. An identical format was followed, matching the pre-intervention event, with regard to structure, design, opportunities to serve, and the sign-up procedure. A picnic-style event was to be utilized, giving the greatest number of components that required assistance.

As with the first event, the purpose was to determine the number of people who would give their time to assist in preparing the event. In this case, however, the number of those who stepped forward would be compared to the number of participants who presented themselves prior to the implementation of the intervention series. A change in participants' volume could be determined by observing either an increase, decrease, or no change to the number who came forward (See Appendix K).

Post-Intervention Questionnaire

Following the second event, a post-intervention questionnaire was distributed to the adults of the congregation. While the questions were identical to those in the first questionnaire, the order of the questions was randomized in order to prevent answers from being duplicated due to a familiarity with the layout. In addition, some of the questions were grouped according to their connection with one of the seven implications associated with the thesis statement.

The purpose of the follow-up questionnaire was to determine if a change had occurred in the congregant that would not only be reflected in their actions but in their thinking as well as their core beliefs as well. While a slightly fewer number of participants returned the second questionnaire, it was not a sufficient enough percentage to negatively impact the results and is most likely due to the on-going changes of meeting regulations in Pennsylvania associated with the COVID-19 pandemic.

Pastor/Church Leaders Survey

The final piece of the intervention components was created and distributed to area pastors and church leaders in the Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, central Pennsylvania region. Ten questions were written, printed on two pages, and mailed to 155 churches. A stamped return envelope was included in addition to the appropriate information in compliance with IRB regulations.

The scope of the questions was intended to determine several things. First, according to the leader's estimation, what percentage of the people who attend that church participated in events outside of the primary service. Second, have they observed an increase or decrease in that number, and to what might they attribute that change? Third, does the leader encourage the people to participate and, if so, what method(s) do they employ? Fourth, do they believe that instruction from the Bible would effectively change the individual and make a difference in their participation frequency? Fifth, what percentage of their attendees initiate or oversee activities, and are they aware of Pareto's Rule of 80/20? Finally, it was asked if the leader believed that the individual's overall spiritual health was impacted by their involvement in the church.

Oral Interview with RLC Church Leaders

Prior to the date of the first church-wide, pre-intervention event, several leaders of RLC were approached and asked if they would be willing to participate through an oral interview with the researcher at the conclusion of the post-intervention event. Throughout the entirety of the study, they were asked to observe and note any behavioral changes that would demonstrate a difference in the attitude of the people toward serving.

They were asked to observe tangible, physical demonstrations, and what was being said and any sense they got that things were changing in how the people were approaching opportunities to serve. They were encouraged to note even subtle changes such as different

people interacting with one another who did not do this before and how those who were shy and not likely to approach others might now be doing so.

The purpose of including these observations in this study is to add a crucial spiritual quotient amid the data. While the questionnaires address cognitive knowledge, there must be some discussion on what behavioral changes are also being noted simultaneously. While it may be non-measurable in physical terms, the Spirit is where the actions and words originate. Jesus taught in Luke 6:45, “A good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart, and an evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in his heart. For the mouth speaks what the heart is full of.” As the Spirit changes the heart, the observable words and actions will give testimony to its presence.

Chapter 4

Results

Introduction

What does it take for the pastor of a church or a denomination's leadership to see their people move from being spectators to servants? Is there any way to change those who attend the weekly worship service from being only takers of what they see and hear without ever giving back in this consumeristic-driven culture? As in all things of behavioral change, it begins in the heart. While early writers of Hebrew and Christian literature tended to think of man as being primarily influenced by external stimuli, they came, in time, to realize that it is the heart of man in which the battles of spirit and soul are won or lost, thus dictating their actions.¹³³ So, too, if the church's on-going struggle to receive the time and participation of its parishioners is going to change, it will begin in the heart.

The thesis of this project asks if the biblical concepts of servanthood are presented to the congregation in a series of teachings in conjunction with spirit-filled worship music using Ephesians 5:18-21 as a guide, will change occur in the heart of the individual that can be seen in their willingness to become more involved in the activities of the church? In addition, will the worship and teaching also influence their understanding and attitudes regarding basic biblical concepts as it relates to seven implications associated with the project's thesis statement?

This chapter will present the results of the data gathered utilizing a Likert scale method of measurement. The Likert scale is a psychometric scale often used in research to represent

¹³³ Owen Rupert Brandon, "Heart." In *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, 2nd ed., edited by Walter A. Elwell, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2001), 541.

people's opinions and attitudes toward a specific question or subject matter. It will be used to measure from one extreme to another in such answers as "always" and "never."¹³⁴

Pre and Post-Intervention Questionnaires

The answers received in the first and second questionnaires were analyzed in several ways. The first was to assign a numerical value of 1, 2, 3, or 4 to each possible answer so that, when summarized, a total number value would be established for each question. Second, every response from each questionnaire was recorded on a graph. Each of the fifty-eight questions was then totaled for both questionnaires and divided by the number of total respondents to arrive at an average score for each question. In this way, the statistical assessment was based on the mean score of each question.

Having completed the scoring average for each question in both questionnaires, the researcher then selected each question's preferred answer, providing what has been identified as the "optimal" answer. Each answer's numerical average from both questionnaires was then compared to the optimal answer score, and the deviation of the score from that answer was recorded.

At the completion of the raw data tabulation, the fifty-eight questions were then assigned to one of the seven implications associated with the project's thesis statement. This was done in order to clarify which questions best addressed the components of the thesis. In addition, some questions did not fit any of the seven implications focus but were utilized to gather general information regarding the congregation's general beliefs. While these questions were not

¹³⁴ Donald. S. Holmes and A. Erhan Mergen. "Converting Survey Results from Four-Point to Five-Point Scale: A Case Study." *Total Quality Management & Business Excellence* 25, nos. 1/2 (2014): 176, accessed December 22, 2020.

included in the final tabulations, they were used when addressing overall final results and their impact on the completed project.

None of the answers were qualified as right or wrong. Rather, they were set against the optimal response for comparative purposes to provide consideration as a positive or negative association. They were then tabulated to answer the question of how the averages of the scores would change from the pre-intervention to post-intervention responses.

(NOTE: Please refer to Appendix A for the specific questions used for each implication as identified within the parentheses).

The Seven Implications

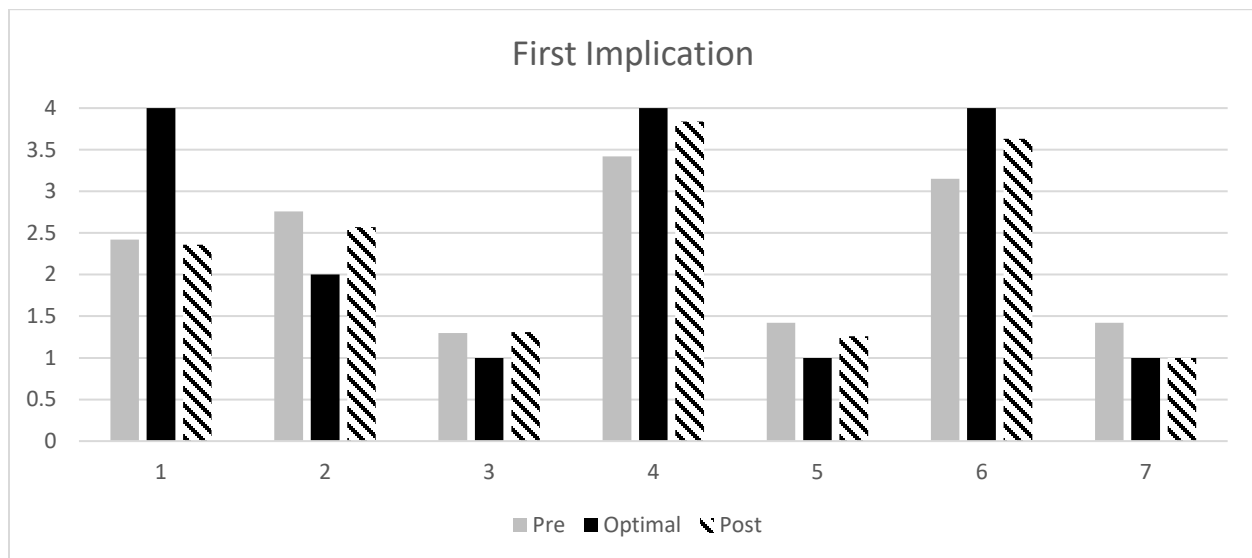
Implication #1 (15, 23, 32, 35, 39, 50, 56)

The first implication states that the ministry of the church is not confined to the pastor, eldership, or lay leaders. Not only should all participate, but it is a mandate and a continuation of the teaching and training of Jesus during His ministry on earth.

The seven questions associated with this implication focus on the participant's perceptions of the role of the pastor as it relates to the creation and initiation of the events and activities of service for the church. In addition, the questions address whether it is the responsibility of the pastor alone to help others grow in the things of the Lord, or if that is something we are all called to do.

Of the seven questions, only the first showed a significant difference between the optimal and pre and post responses. It should also be noted that no change took place following the intervention teaching. However, each of the other questions was closer to the optimal response and showed positive movement following the intervention teaching. The results of this group of questions suggest that the teaching intervention series may have impacted perceptions of the

pastor's role in the development of events as it relates to these specific concepts, and the movement that took place was toward the optimal response.

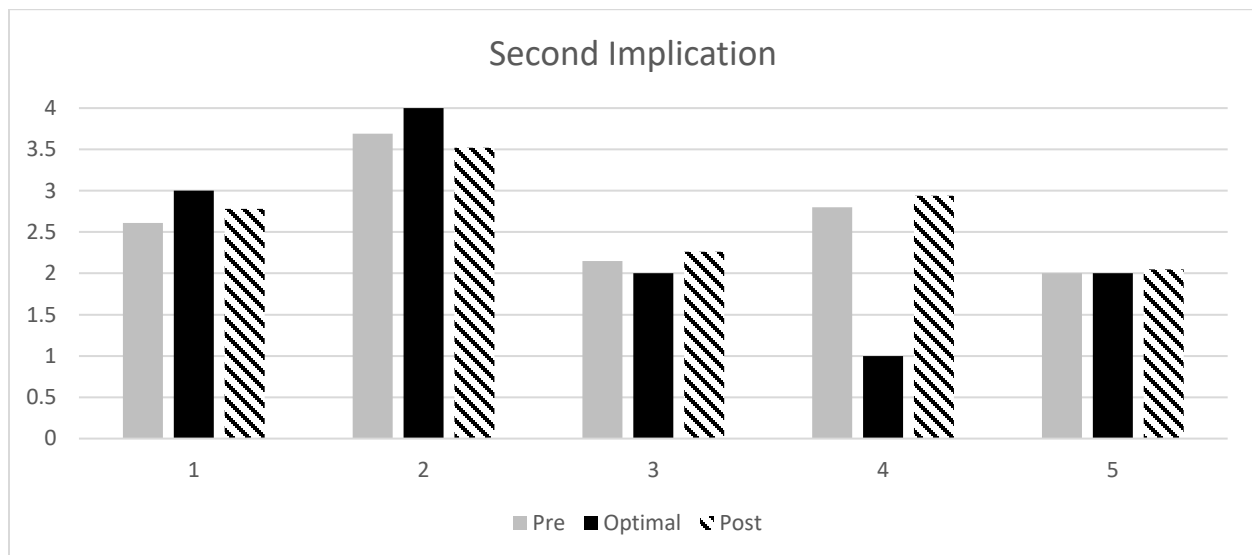


Implication #2 (1, 2, 7, 8, 21)

Implication number two deals with the priorities of the person's life to ensure that Kingdom-related things, including the importance of being involved in the local church, are at the center of their life. The questions associated with this implication have to do with where time is spent outside of the church and activities such as Bible reading that reflect what is important at home. Questions were also asked regarding the number of spiritual beliefs present and the impact those have on the home's overall peace.

While four of the five questions were close to the optimal in both the pre and post responses, only slight changes occurred following the intervention teaching series. Question number four, however, showed a significant difference in both the pre and post responses in relation to the optimal score. This is the first question that demonstrates the need for further teaching and instruction in order to address the fundamental aspects of the concept being

examined. In addition, a follow-up survey or questionnaire might prove valuable for this question as well as others that show a similar disparity.



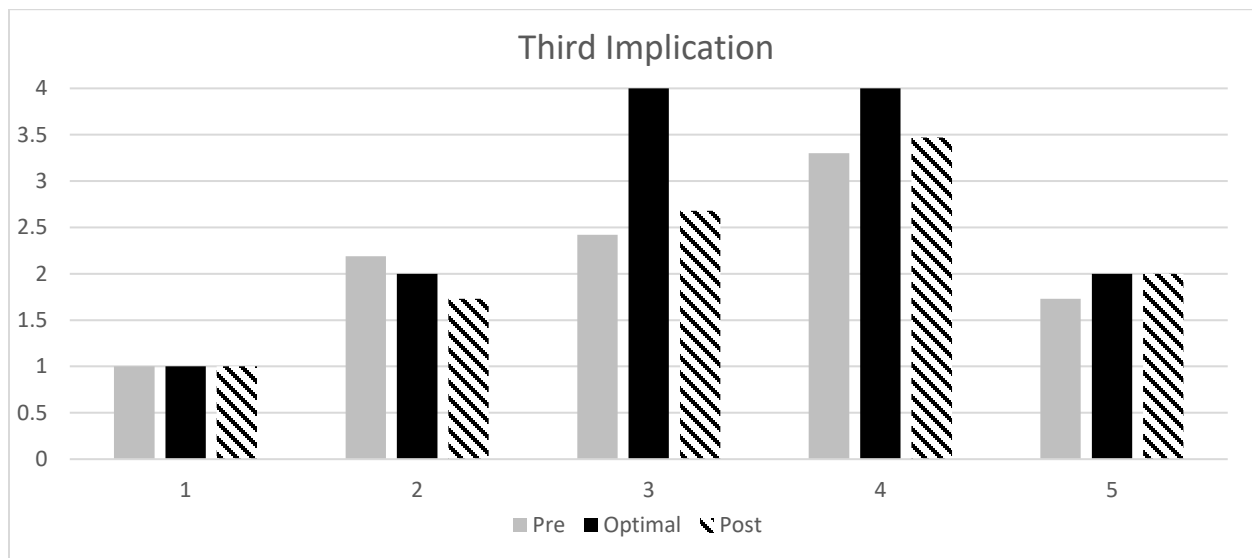
Implication #3 (26, 28, 29, 31, 33)

The third implication states that the Bible teaches that every Christian must accept the responsibility to make disciples. For many, that begins by being an active and involved part of the church. This is not to suggest that discipleship making should not also occur outside of the church, but relationship building and serving one another is vital to that learning process.

The five questions of this implication focus on what part the church plays in the life of the individual, why they attend church, and if a person should decide for themselves whether going to church is necessary or if the Bible addresses that answer. Each of the questions within this group showed either positive movement toward the optimal response or did not move significantly following the intervention teaching.

The wide variation noted in question three in both the pre and post responses to the expected response indicates that additional teaching might be needed. It is also important to note that the purpose of these questions and the corresponding data were intended to show correlation,

not causation. This movement offers the possibility that a fundamental change occurred in the individual.

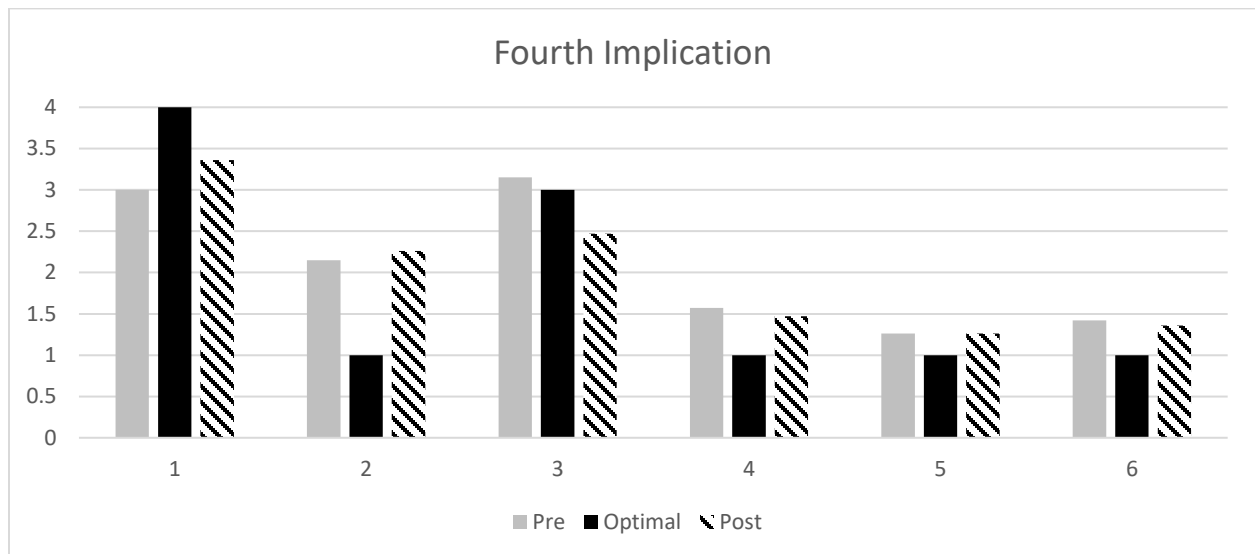


Implication #4 (14, 36, 37, 38, 48, 49)

The fourth implication says that the work of the church, to grow disciples and meet the needs of people through service, is never-ending. The six questions directly address the individual's understanding of the concept of serving. In particular, how does the person believe they should serve. Should their acts be ones they generate, or should they wait to be asked to serve?

Along with the questions of servanthood, the individual is also asked about their understanding of sharing Jesus with other people. Both of these activities require a humble heart that is the starting place of giving to others. With the exception of number two, each of the questions showed movement toward the optimal answer following the intervention teaching. Not only did the second question have the most significant disparity between the pre and post responses and the expected answer, but following the intervention, the post answer moved further from the optimal.

The significance of the second response is that it dealt with how often the individual offered their time to serve when events were taking place at the church. Further study with greater statistical rigor should be able to determine more precisely why the post response moved further away and why both responses showed the greatest difference from the optimal response.

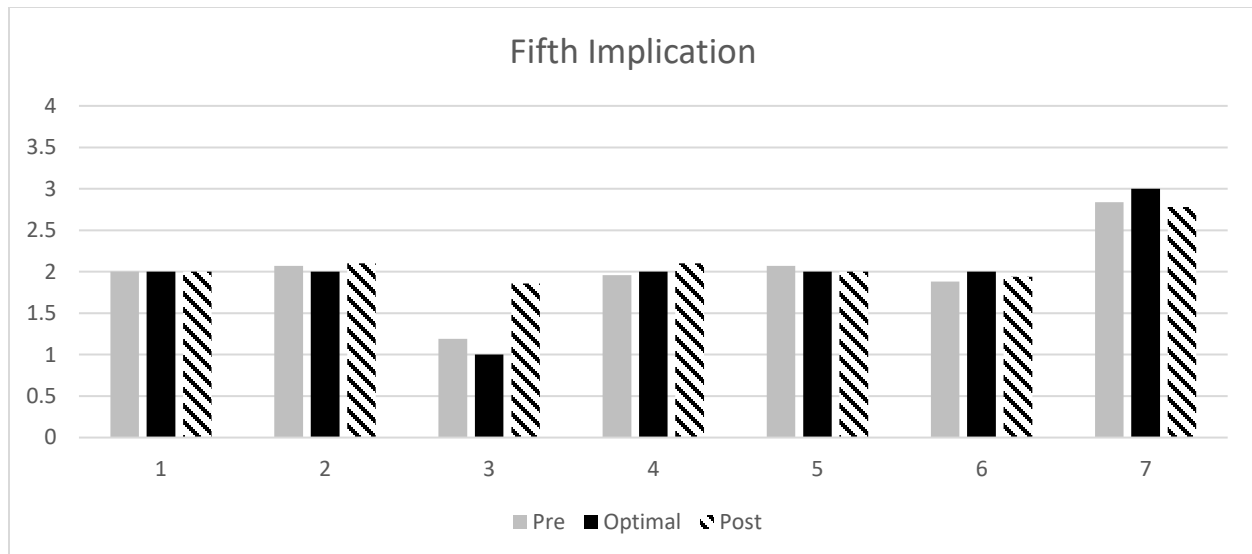


Implication #5 (9, 10, 11, 12, 25, 45, 46)

The fifth implication states that both the individual and congregation must continue to grow in their walk with the Lord, and to do so means their involvement in the church should not be viewed as optional. To embrace the gathering of believers only when it is convenient is to misunderstand what the Bible teaches.

The seven questions associated with this implication focus on what the individual believes regarding fundamental principles essential to spiritual growth. Questions regarding cultural influence, what is truth, and standards of morality are asked. In addition, their understanding of the importance and priority of their relationship with God is explored. The pre and post responses for this group of questions all presented themselves in very close proximity to the optimal response, with very little change occurring due to the teaching.

The only result that presented itself differently from the others was question number three regarding absolute versus relative truth. One possible reason the post response moved further from the expected answer may be an uncertainty of the difference between the two choices. While the concept of these two types of truth has been repeatedly referenced and addressed at RLC in past sermons, it was not presented in detail during the intervention teaching series.

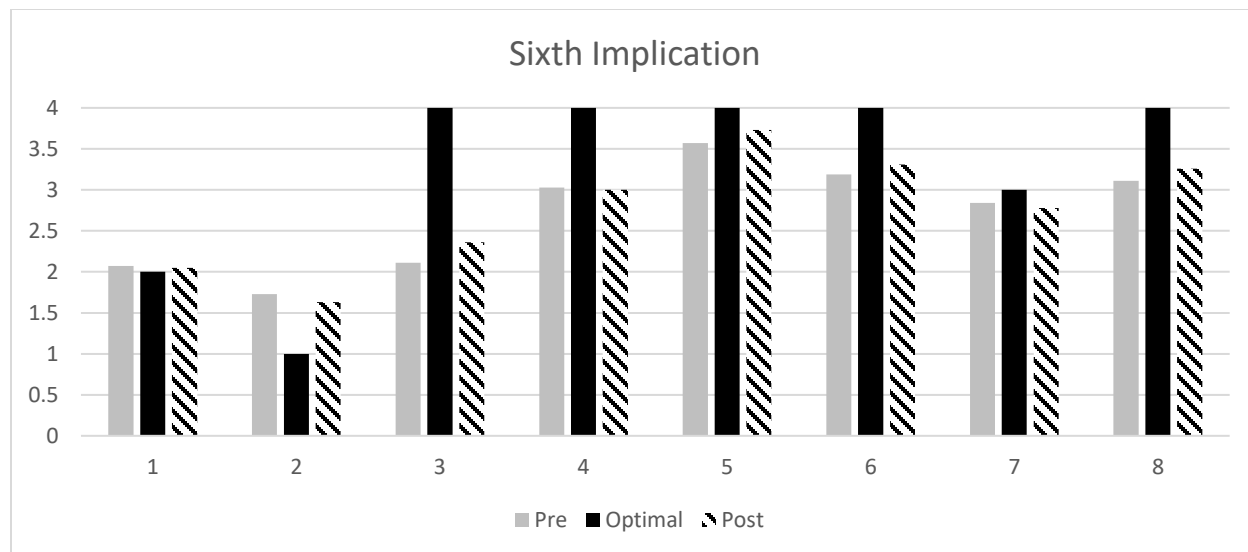


Implication #6 (18, 19, 30, 40, 41, 42, 46, 51)

Implication number six addresses the individual's view of church as it relates to the giving of tithes. Christians must not view the church with a country-club mentality, and their dues are seen as membership fees. Also, the church's activities are not those that should be enjoyed and selected at the whim of the individual but should be seen as a responsibility for the purpose of building the Kingdom.

The eight questions presented deal with the idea of money within the church and what the individual understands the relationship to be. The first two questions address what the Bible says regarding earthly riches and the kingdom of Heaven. The others focus on what is done with the money once it is given and how the individual views their role, if any, in making those decisions.

The optimal responses for this implication utilized more extreme answers than any of the other six, with five of the eight carrying the highest rated value of four. All of the responses showed movement toward the optimal in the post answers with the exception of number seven, remained relatively stable. The intervention teaching appeared to have a positive impact on each of these points.

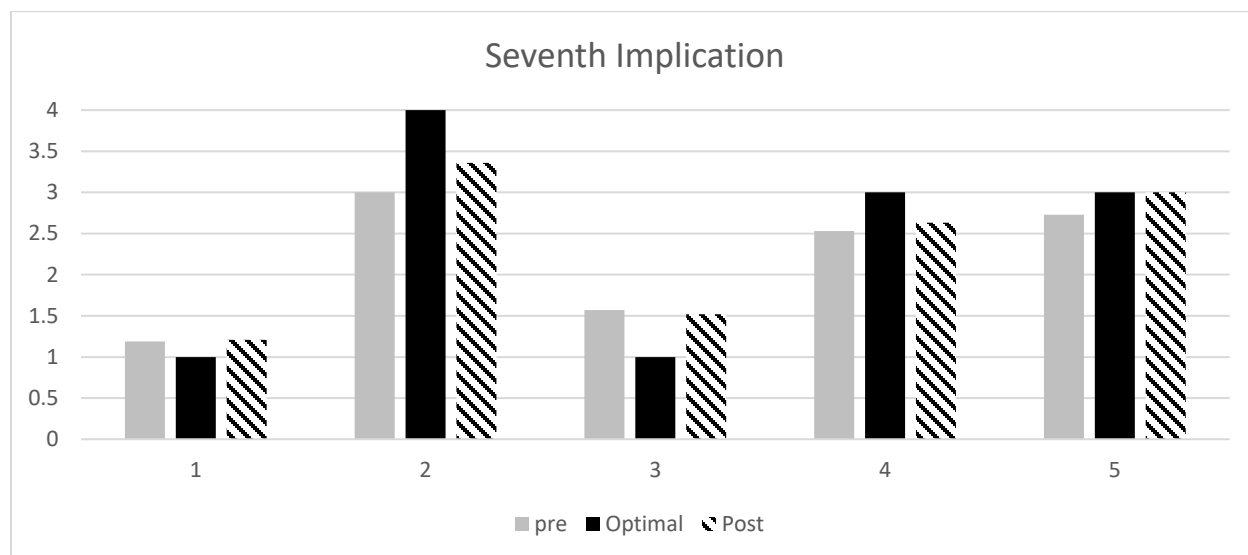


Implication #7 (13, 14, 54, 55, 57)

The final implication says that the activities of the church are not only available for everyone (members, occasional attendees, guests), but they are the responsibility of each person as an essential component of loving and serving one another. A primary focus of the five questions related to this implication was the amount of time the individual spends with other people during church activities and how important it is to them.

The responses to the questions in this group showed either positive movement following the teaching intervention or slight movement toward the optimal response. Only the second response showed a marked difference between the optimal and given responses suggesting that

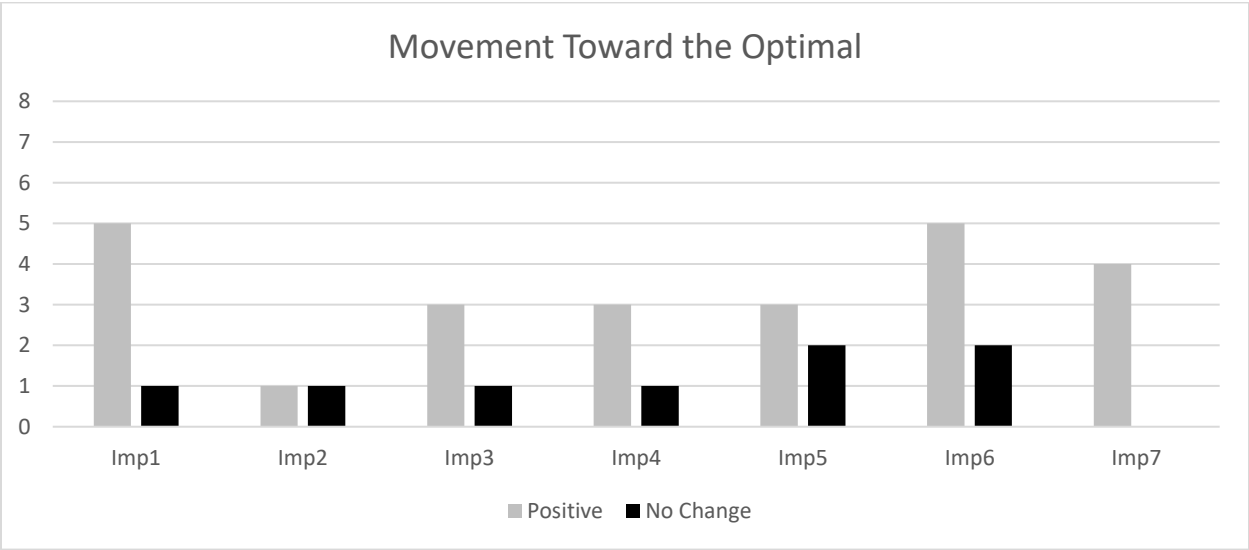
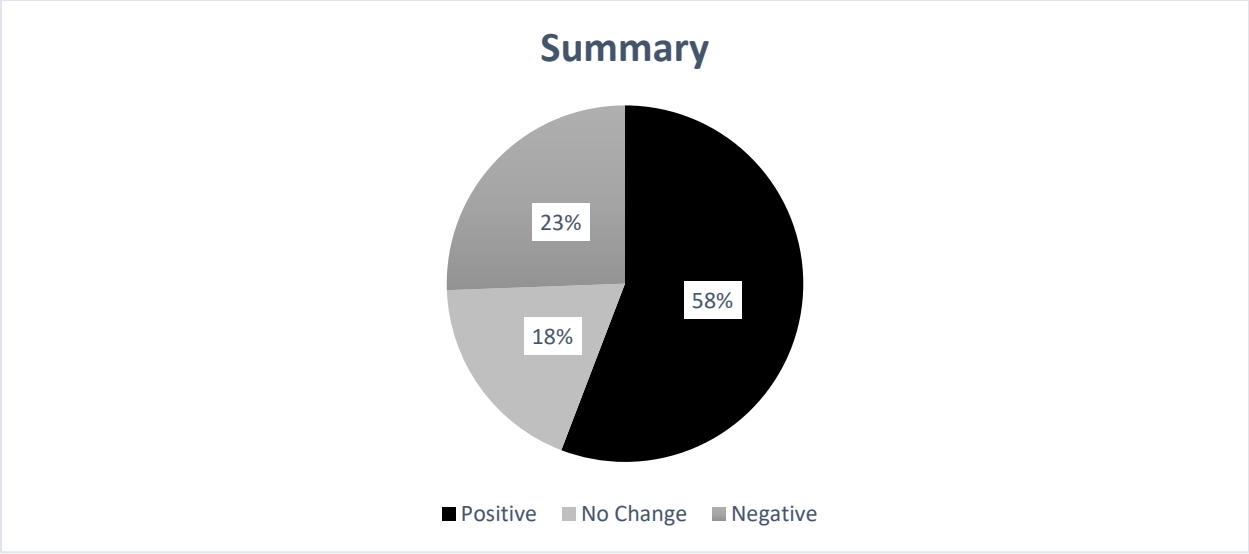
further instruction is warranted regarding the openness of the events to all people regardless of their attendance status.



Summary

A total of forty-three of the fifty-eight available questions were utilized for analyzing the change of responses from the pre to post questions related to the seven implications. Of that total, when considering means scores, twenty-five, or 58% of the responses, showed positive movement approaching the optimal. Eight of the responses, or 18%, showed no change, and ten responses, or 23%, showed negative movement away from the desired answer. This information implies that there is a correlation between the implementation of the teaching series strategy and its effect on the respondents' outcomes.

When considering the results shown on the "Movement Toward the Optimal" graph, implications one, six, and seven appear to demonstrate a higher grasp of the concepts explored since they showed a positive change toward the optimal score. Number two showed no change of movement, and numbers three, four, and five showed a 40-50% change toward the optimal response. This would indicate that further training or teaching on those focus parts is warranted.

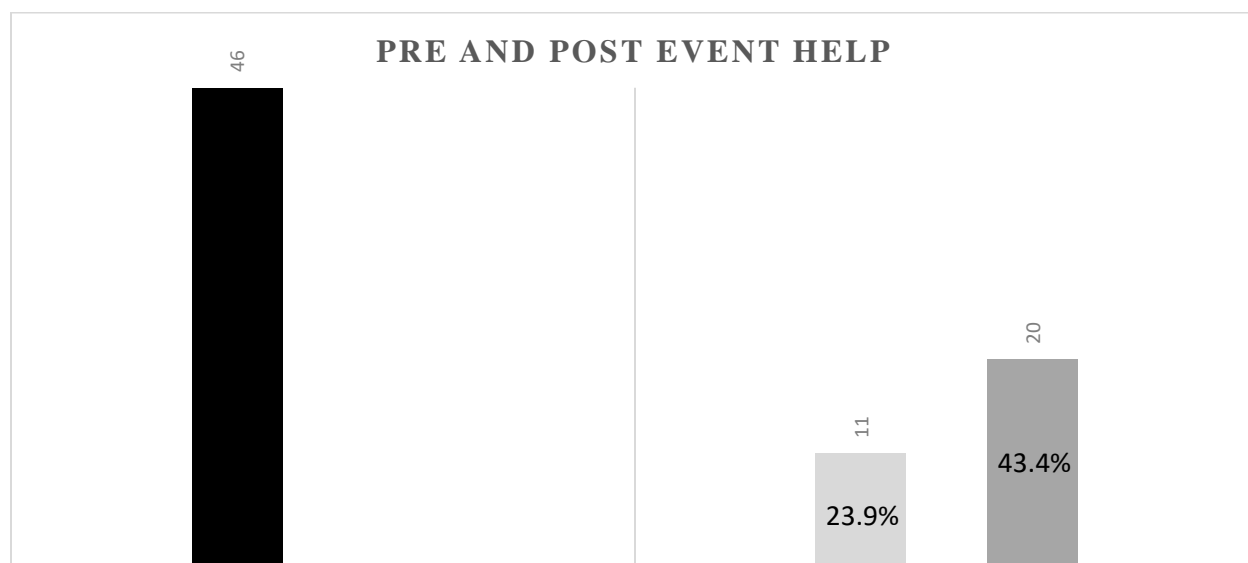


Assisting with the Pre and Post Intervention Events

Following the distribution and retrieval of the pre and post-intervention questionnaires, two events were held for the purpose of determining the number of people who would be willing to serve in the capacity of preparation, set-up, tear-down, and any other logistical elements of the two events. The first event was held before the start of the intervention teaching series, and the second was held after the teaching series.

The average number of regular attendees at RLC during this research project has been set at forty-six. This number is less than usually attend but reflects the impact of Pennsylvania's fluctuating regulations during the COVID pandemic. The pre-intervention event sign-up showed eleven of the forty-six indicated a desire to serve, or 29.3% of the total number anticipated. The post-intervention event sign-up showed twenty of the forty-six wished to serve, or 43.3% of those attending.

These numbers indicate an increase of 19.5% of those attending the post-intervention event who indicated a desire to serve in some capacity. This data suggests that the intervention teaching series may have had an influential impact on the attendees of Remnant Life Church with regard to their willingness to serve one another. (Please see Appendix B to view the pre-event sign-up sheet and Appendix K to view the post-event sign-up sheet).



Pastor/Church Leaders Survey

One question that needed to be addressed was if other churches were experiencing the same issue of a lack of participants to fulfill the church's needs and work. Much of what is being asked of the church leaders corresponds to Pareto's Rule of 80/20, stating that 80% of the work

is accomplished by 20% of the people. Understanding what is occurring in churches of different religions, denominations, and structures can help in understanding the breadth of the issue and how intense the need for intervention is.

The researcher created a ten-question survey, which was then mailed to 154 local pastors, priests, and rabbis (Appendix L). Of the total number sent, forty-seven responded for a respectable 30.5% return. Six of the ten questions have been evaluated statistically as most relevant to the study, with the percentage of responses used as the unit of measure.

Question 1 – 48.9% of respondents indicated they believe that more than 30% of their attendees participate in the activities of the church outside of the primary weekly service. While this question does not explicitly identify the workers of the church, it does suggest that leaders have a higher opinion of their parishioner's involvement than is thought to be the case universally.

Question 3 – When asked what the leader believed prevented people from participating in the church's activities, 48.2% responded that it was family obligations. While each possible response received significant consideration, the importance of a Christ-centered home, as supported in the pre and post-intervention questionnaires, takes on added meaning and importance.

Question 4 – When asked if encouraging the people of the church to become more involved was actively and purposefully pursued by the leadership, 85% indicated that it was. While this number is significant, it would seem to suggest that the positive results from verbal efforts are not as effective as some other methods may prove to be.

Question 7 – The leader was asked if they believed that a teaching series from their sacred texts addressing the topic of church involvement would make a difference in their

attendee's response to opportunities presented to them to serve. 59% indicated they thought it would be of value, while 40% indicated they did not believe it would help or were unsure. This response would seem to indicate a need for an intervention tool to be created and explicitly designed to address the issue of church participation. This teaching's potential effectiveness is further bolstered by the implications of this study that suggest positive results can be realized.

Question 8 – When asked what percentage of the events at their church were initiated or overseen by someone other than the pastor or other church leader, 67% indicated that it was less than 30% of the activities. This number would indicate a closer identification with the 80/20 rule.

Question 10 – The leaders were asked if they believed that the attendee's overall spiritual health was impacted by how often they were involved in the life of the church. 74% responded that it did have an impact. However, a staggering 26% indicated that involvement in the church would have no effect on the individual's spiritual health. This would seem to suggest that a secondary consideration for a teaching intervention is needed. It is essential that the leaders of the church have a solid knowledge of biblical principles regarding service to one another through an active life within the church if they are to teach those to their congregants.

Question	A	B	C	D
	%	%	%	%
1	8	12	29	48
3	25	19	48	17
4	85	0	15	0
7	59	17	23	0
8	2	36	29	31
10	74	0	2	23

Oral Interview with RLC Church Leaders

Change in Behavior Observations

The following observations of behavioral change have been noted through conversations with four Remnant Life Church leaders. The first is a male (Interviewee 1) and an elder of the church. The second is a male (Interviewee 2), a member of the board of directors, and helps lead one of the church outreach ministries. The third is a female (Interviewee 3), the board's treasurer, and a co-founder of the church. The fourth is a female (Interviewee 4) and leads the senior women's group. Each was asked what changes, if any, they have observed over the past six months that may be attributed to the teaching series and emphasis on serving one another. The men were interviewed separately, and the two women were interviewed together.

RLC sets up and tears down chairs and equipment at the beginning and the end of each service. Interviewee 1 indicated that one area where he has seen a significant increase is in how many more people are making themselves available for the post-service breakdown. He stated there seems to be a heightened level of ownership from the people in general and a greater sense of "this is my church." He also spoke of an increase in the giving of time and materials to the church's outreach programs. These include setting up and furnishing apartments for homeless single mothers and a Saturday morning ministry operation of free clothing and feeding people living on the streets of downtown Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

This same observation was repeated by Interviewee 2, who is also active in the outreach programs. He noted more people have been approaching him to become involved in one of the outreach programs, not necessarily as a direct response to a request from the pulpit to serve, but through a genuine desire to meet an expressed need. He also commented on the increased buzz before and after the service and that people seem to be more generally aware of what needs to be

done. In that same thinking, he also said that more people seem to be staying longer after the service is over, adding to the number of those available to help with post-service activities.

Interviewee 3, who is involved in the hospitality area's pre-service set-up, noted that more people are approaching her and asking if there is anything they can do to help. These are not planned events or activities but those that take place each week. Recently, there have been times when so many are available her that she struggles to find something for them to do. In addition, these are not the same few people who have always offered to help, but they are new faces.

A second aspect of the changes she has observed comes not only from what is being done but who it is that is doing them. According to the observer, the people are spreading out more and participating in different group dynamics instead of talking to the same individuals or groups. Often there are random acts of service being seen regardless of the demographic of the server or the one being served.

The final interviewee has a unique perspective from which to observe what has been happening, as do those she spends most of her time talking with. A group of six women, all over seventy years of age, meet together for lunch once a month. This group, led by interviewee 4, talk together frequently each Sunday as well as many times throughout the week.

Interviewee 4 noted that this group of women has all commented on the increase of those willing to help serve. While much of this is being seen on Sunday morning, they each noted that so much of what is done occurs without anyone asking, and it is also being extended to offers to help with their individual needs.

Examples of this service include the words of the morning worship songs being printed in extra large print for one of the women who is legally blind. Other women are continually being

approached to see if they need anything, such as a coffee or an arm to support them as they walk around the room. The women are also being contacted throughout the course of the week by various individuals to see if they need anything. A final note to these observations is the number of youth and children who also want to help with what needs to be done.

The Apostle Paul, in his second letter to the church in Corinth, wrote, “He has made us competent as ministers of a new covenant—not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life” (2 Corinthians 3:6). What has been reported by these four church leaders appears to be the Spirit bringing life to the hearts of many of the people of Remnant Life Church. When the heart is changed, it manifests itself in the actions that Paul describes as the fruits of the Spirit found in Galatians 5:22-23. Indeed, one of the most important of that list, as it relates to this study, is kindness. In this case, it is the kindness demonstrated in acts of service to one another.

Chapter 5

Conclusions

The final chapter of this project will summarize the major points, address what has been learned from the field results, and suggest steps that might be taken moving forward. The thesis statement of this study focuses on the premise that if the attendees of Remnant Life Church are adequately instructed regarding the biblical concepts of servanthood, the number of those desiring to participate in the church's activities and events may increase. This is intended to address not only those who merely attend but those who are willing to do the work necessary to accomplish the required tasks.

At the core of this study is the necessity for Christians to be in fellowship with other believers. While it is true that many factors prevent regular attendance and church participation, it cannot be denied that there are benefits to be derived from being an active part of a church family. In a study conducted by New Zealand researchers Drs. Lukas and Sonja Dreyer, they report that the correlation between religious involvement and both the spiritual and physical improved health of an individual is supported by continuing study.¹³⁵ In addition, and more importantly, the Bible calls for all believers to spend time with one another and “not giving up meeting together” (Hebrews 10:25).

Results in Relation to the Literature

The literature review for this project focused primarily on those factors that prevent people from becoming involved in the life of the church. However, the central point of what must be changed is not found in the datebook of the individual; rather, it is the heart where the

¹³⁵ Sonja Dreyer and Lukas I Dreyer. “Religious Involvement, Psychosocial Resourcefulness, and Health.” *Journal of Religion and Health* 51, no. 4 (2012): 1173, accessed December 28, 2020.

care, compassion, and desire to serve is born. The result of continual cultural change highlighted by the influences of modernism and postmodernism has created a generation of spectators who are consumers of all things, even those things offered by the church. In light of this understanding, the question should be asked how the modern-day church-attender can be moved from the position of spectator to that of a servant?

In the research conducted for this study, there is significant evidence that real change can occur as supported through the collected and analyzed data. A common starting point for the purpose of comparative gain or loss for this specific topic is found in Pareto's Rule of 80/20. This researcher found that when a two-pronged intervention approach was utilized in the church comprised of worship music and instruction from the Word, positive results were realized that would regularly exceed that accepted standard.

The majority of literature addressing the involvement of people in their church utilize the word "volunteer." This researcher avoided using that word throughout the study because it removes the biblical mandate and joins the work of the church with the likes of coaching a little league team, chaperoning a school field trip, or helping to serve meals in a homeless shelter. While all of those activities hold a distinct measure of value, no one engages in them because of a spiritual conviction and an understanding of what Jesus Christ taught on serving one another. The work of the church is not accomplished through the acts of a kind-hearted volunteer; it is the responsibility of every believer.

In addition, research studies do not always reflect what is being experienced among those who deal directly with the people of the church. In an article by Hoge, Zech, McNamara, and Donahue on church volunteers, their findings suggest that over half of the people in the churches

studied freely gave of their time.¹³⁶ This conclusion does not align, however, with the 80/20 rule that most churches experience. But those numbers do not need to be seen as unmovable. For instance, in this study, 23.9% of the total number of people in attendance offered to help in the logistic set-up of the pre-intervention event, which is close to the expected number of 20%. However, after the intervention teaching series was completed, the number of those offering to help rose to 43.4% of the total in attendance, representing a significant positive change.

While the majority of literature produced on church “volunteerism” focuses on changing the individual's mind bringing them to a place of recognizing the value of a project, the work of the church begins in the heart and must therefore be realized through the presence and action of the Holy Spirit. Servanthood is an outpouring of a heart that has surrendered itself to the leading of the Holy Spirit and a desire to obey the teaching of Jesus Christ, in addition to emulating the examples established in the work and writings of the Apostle Paul.

When considering the changes that took place in the lives of those who attend Remnant Life Church, seen in their responses to the questionnaires and an increased willingness to serve, the value and necessity of biblically grounded teaching and preaching becomes evident. But the movement of the responses toward an optimal point throughout the seven implications of the thesis statement is not set on knowledge alone but in the surrender of a heart willing to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

What Has Been Learned?

In identifying what has been learned from this study, several questions need to be addressed. The first is this: does the problem truly exist throughout The Church as a whole, or is it an isolated concern? If the 80/20 rule is accepted as universal, there would appear to be a

¹³⁶ Hoge, Zech, McNamara and Donahue, *The Value of Volunteers*, 1998.

discrepancy between what is believed to be accurate and what is reported. The church leaders who responded to this project's survey indicated their belief that 48.9%, or nearly half of their attendees, are involved in the life of the church outside of the main Sunday morning service. This suggests either a disconnect from the truth of what is happening, a desire to present a more positive light on their church, or their hopes are being superimposed onto reality.

This may or may not have an impact on a desire to fix or address the problem. If the leadership does not perceive a problem is present, there will be no interest in applying an intervention designed to teach the biblical concepts of servanthood. What may present itself, however, is an opportunity to offer biblical instruction to the leadership based on the fact that an alarming 26% of respondents indicated they did not believe church involvement impacted the individual's overall spiritual health.

The second question to be asked is: how can a change of heart be measured? Behavior is the primary way that inner change can be observed. In this study, the number of people who signed up to assist in the preparation of the two church events at Remnant Life Church provided a strong indication that a change had taken place. In the first pre-intervention event, eleven of a possible forty-six offered their assistance. In the post-intervention event, that number grew to twenty representing a 14.1% change.

The change was noted following an eight-week intervention series held on consecutive Sunday mornings that featured two primary components. The first was a biblically intensive time of singing worship songs based on the teaching of Ephesians 5:18-21 and Paul's call for the people not to be filled with wine but to be filled with the Holy Spirit. The Apostle then provided five participles as examples of what being filled with the Holy Spirit looks like in one's life under the influence of the Holy Spirit. Those participles of speaking the Psalms, singing hymns and

spiritual songs, making music in your heart, giving thanks, and submitting to one another were incorporated into the worship music portion of the service. In this way, an atmosphere of reverence was established, preparing the individual to receive the presentation of the Word.

The second part was a teaching series on servanthood designed to create a full picture of what it means to serve those around you. The picture becomes whole when it is understood that serving begins in the heart. It is then manifested into compassionate, kind, and loving actions in the same way that Jess lived and modeled for His disciples. These changes were seen and continue to be witnessed in the people of Remnant Life Church as observed and shared by the selected leaders who were interviewed for this project. Not only was there an increase in the number of people offering their help at the second church event, but that heart of service can still be seen in action today.

In the further quest to determine what has been learned, a third question should be answered: are the study results replicable in other settings? This study is not dependent on the size of the church, nor must it be in an established traditional church setting. It is not required that the participants be of a particular denomination or even a specific religion. According to the pastor's survey, two-thirds of the respondents were familiar with the 80/20 rule suggesting that they all deal with the repercussions of that struggle for church participants.

It has often been said that the first step to solving a problem is admitting there is one. In order to replicate this same study with a desire to realize similar results, it must be acknowledged that a problem exists. This is not to cast a negative light on the church, those who attend, or the leadership; rather, it is intended to recognize a need. Once the leader or leadership of the church is committed to addressing the need, the formation of the intervention follows. The teaching series' content can and should be tailored in consideration of the church's specific dynamics or

denomination. Finally, in whatever form the study may take, a method of measuring results must be created to determine the intervention's effectiveness and consider if additional procedures are warranted.

Recommendations for Further Study

When addressing a church-wide concern, a single study should by no means be considered exhaustive in its scope. Through the course and development of this project, multiple avenues of further study were observed. One way to further the research that became readily apparent is to implement a more intense statistical rigor to the questionnaires and survey findings.

For instance, the results of the seven implications data obtained through the pre and post-intervention questionnaires present several possibilities. In this study, only mean scores were utilized. A more detailed statistical analysis could reveal details of responses not seen in this study's broader observation methodology. Rather than using a positive or negative movement toward the optimal as the marker, recording percentage points of movement for each response would reveal a more detailed summary of areas that require further instruction and training. One possible means to accomplish this would be to implement a variance from the mean score, such as .50 or .75, to provide more detailed information in the calculation of the intervention's impact.

The questionnaires used in this study were under a strict anonymity policy to prevent the possibility of an association of the answers provided with an individual. Additional studies may wish to remove this restriction so that all answers are assigned to the participant to discover possible underlying factors that may impact their responses. In this way, causation rather than correlation becomes the focus allowing for those factors to be specifically addressed.

When considering further study involving the pastors and church leaders, similar variations to data gathering methods would apply. Face-to-face interviews replacing the written survey would provide the opportunity for follow-up questions, enabling the interviewer to gather specific and detailed answers. In this way, underlying factors of influence unique to that leader, church, or denomination may be revealed to help in creating the appropriate intervention method and content focus unique to the respondent.

Future researchers may also consider targeting specific leaders by a particular demographic or marker rather than utilizing geographic proximity. Leaders may be identified by how long they have been in ministry to consider if longevity has an impact on awareness of a problem or how the issue is being addressed. Educational background, belief system, and the individual's role in the church may all be used to narrow the participants' parameters for involvement in the study. In this way, the questions asked, and the data collected can be made more specific to address portions of the overall problem that may be targeted for that study.

If events are being used to determine a change in participation level, several elements may be adjusted. Rather than allowing for the congregants to indicate their desire to participate by way of a general sign-up sheet collecting only names and contact information, the parameters may be narrowed. Those who wish to give of their time may need to identify with a specific task, the time to sign-up may be limited, or their participation availability may be reduced to specific increments of time rather than being left open-ended. These, in addition to other changes, may all allow for additional observational and raw data to be collected to further determine significance in the movement of responses pre and post-intervention.

Final Thoughts

When a single project occupies one's thinking, almost to the exclusion of most other things, it can become easy to get lost in the weeds and lose sight of what is most important within the study. This project did not start with the goal of coming to a single conclusion. The issue of church participation is one that has been present since the first church was established after the coming of the Holy Spirit, at Pentecost, as recorded in the second chapter of Acts. One dissertation study will not answer every question, even those posed in this work.

The goal of this study was to identify and examine several of the reasons why the attitude toward church involvement has changed. The percentage of those who at one time made the life of the church a high priority has been in constant decline with little change in sight. The world is becoming more evil. An ever-growing number of distractions are vying for the little free time people allow themselves, and more churches are being closing due to dwindling attendance.

What this project exposed to this researcher is the need for pastors and church leaders to address the core issue of the problem – the heart of the congregant. It is not more biblical knowledge alone that will bring behavioral change but a move of the Holy Spirit. The pastor and worship leader play a role each week in preparing the individual to receive what God has for them, but the change will not come due to coercion, creative and robust teaching, or emotional manipulation. It will only come through a life-altering encounter with the power of God.

In Luke 6:45, Jesus is teaching His followers how a person is recognized in the same way a tree is known by the fruit it bears. He says, "A good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart, and an evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in his heart. For the mouth speaks what the heart is full of." No lasting change in a person's behavior will occur unless it begins with a change of heart.

This researcher hopes that a change of people's hearts will bring a physical and spiritual charge to the church through the reengagement of its people. But it should not stop there. May this change also impact family dynamics, help put struggling marriages on a path to healing, restore the damaged love between a father and son or a mother and daughter, and strengthen the single most important relationship of all, a heart that is fully surrendered to living for Jesus Christ to the glory and honor of God.

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Appendix A

Remnant Life Church Questionnaire

Please DO NOT place your name anywhere on this document

1. On average, over the past six months, how many times a week do you or your family read the Bible together?
 - a. 1-2
 - b. 3-4
 - c. 5-7
 - d. I/We do not read the Bible as a family.
2. How important do you consider Bible reading in the home?
 - a. Not important at all
 - b. Mostly unimportant
 - c. Somewhat important
 - d. Very important
3. Which of the following statements best describes your thinking of the Bible?
 - a. It provides suggestions and recommendations for how to live.
 - b. It is the full and absolute authority for how to live.
 - c. It is a collection of ancient stories and wise sayings.
 - d. It is an interesting book written similarly to other works of fiction containing moral lessons.
4. Which of the following statements best represents your belief in the origin of the Bible?
 - a. It is a collection of writings authored by men.
 - b. It is a text of the birth and ancient historical times of the nation of Israel.
 - c. It is a collection of writings written by men but under the direct influence, guidance, and revelation of God.
 - d. It is a sacred text the same as the Quran of Islam, the Torah of Judaism, the Hindu's Vedas, and the recorded teachings of Buddha.
5. Do you consider your home to be a "Christian" home?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. Not sure
 - d. I don't know how to define if it is or is not.

6. What would you consider to be the overall level of peace in your home?
 - a. Not very peaceful at all
 - b. Somewhat peaceful
 - c. Usually peaceful
 - d. Very peaceful
7. How many different spiritual beliefs are represented in your home?
 - a. 0
 - b. 1
 - c. 2
 - d. 3+
8. How often do different spiritual beliefs in your home cause conflict?
 - a. Never
 - b. Occasionally
 - c. Often
 - d. There is one spiritual belief in our home.
9. How important is a relationship with God in one's home life?
 - a. Somewhat important
 - b. Very important
 - c. Neither important nor unimportant
 - d. Not important at all
10. Is it more important to agree with cultural correctness or the teaching of the Bible?
 - a. Cultural correctness
 - b. The Bible
 - c. Neither
 - d. Both
11. Do you believe in "absolute truth" as opposed to "relative truth?"
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. Undecided
 - d. I don't know the difference between those two terms.
12. Is the standard for morality provided by an external set of guidelines, or left to the individual to decide?
 - a. Left to the individual
 - b. According to an external set of guidelines
 - c. I am not sure
 - d. It does not matter where a person's standard of morality comes from.

13. Serving one another is a visible demonstration of God's love.
- Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree
14. Church activities should be reserved for regular attendees with occasional "special events" open to guests and visitors.
- Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree
15. The pastor is the representative of the church and is responsible for initiating and creating opportunities for the people to love and serve one another.
- Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree
16. According to the Bible, repentance is a prerequisite for entering the kingdom of heaven.
- Yes
 - No
 - I am not sure.
 - The Bible does not explicitly say that.
17. The Bible teaches that those on earth who are great will also be great in heaven.
- Yes
 - No
 - I'm not sure.
 - The Bible is not clear on that.
18. The riches of life on earth mean the same as what the Bible calls the riches of heaven.
- Yes
 - No
 - I'm not sure.
 - The Bible does not say that.
19. Jesus said that it is impossible for a rich person on earth to enter into the Kingdom of God.
- Yes
 - No
 - I'm not sure.

- d. Jesus was not clear on this point.
20. Jesus most often used parables to teach people about the kingdom of heaven.
- a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. Jesus did not utilize parables in his teaching.
 - d. Jesus did not talk about the kingdom of heaven.
21. The Apostle Paul taught that wicked people would be able to enter the kingdom of heaven.
- a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. I'm not sure.
 - d. Paul did not teach on entering the kingdom of heaven.
22. My gender is
- a. Male
 - b. Female
23. What do you believe of other religions (e.g., Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Mormonism, Native American) when it comes to their afterlife?
- a. The souls of those committed to these religions will also experience a blessed afterlife.
 - b. The souls of those committed to these religions undergo the eternal wrath of God in the afterlife.
 - c. The souls of those committed to these religions will experience either a blessed or wrathful afterlife, depending on the kind of life they lived on earth.
 - d. I do not know what happens to the souls of people who believe these religions.
24. Do you believe in the existence of a literal place called Hell in the afterlife?
- a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. I'm not sure.
 - d. The Bible is not clear on that.
25. Is being a good, kind, and loving person during life on earth adequate for a person to go to heaven after they die?
- a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. I'm not sure.
 - d. I have no opinion.

26. How often do you attend church?
- a. Almost every Sunday
 - b. When it is convenient
 - c. Once a month
 - d. Rarely
27. When on vacation away from home, do you attend church?
- a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. Occasionally
 - d. Never
28. Why do you attend church?
- a. To earn the favor of God
 - b. To show my gratitude to God
 - c. To hear a good sermon
 - d. To be inspired and feel better about myself
29. Attending church regularly is something a Christian should decide for him/herself, depending on what value he/she believes it provides.
- a. Strongly agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Disagree
 - d. Strongly disagree
30. Church life should be scheduled using the same level of priority as weekly social events, children/youth sports, leisure activities, and overtime work opportunities.
- a. Strongly agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Disagree
 - d. Strongly disagree
31. It does not matter how involved I am in the church as long as I show up from time to time.
- a. Strongly agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Disagree
 - d. Strongly disagree
32. What is your opinion of the sermons you hear at Remnant Life Church?
- a. When the pastor preaches, I often hear the Spirit of God speaking to my heart.
 - b. When the pastor preaches, I sometimes hear the Spirit of God speaking to my heart.

- c. When the pastor preaches, I seldom hear the Spirit of God speaking to my heart.
 - d. When the pastor preaches, I never hear the Spirit of God speaking to my heart.
33. Why do you choose to attend Remnant Life Church?
- a. I have friends who attend.
 - b. I sense the presence of God at Remnant Life Church.
 - c. I enjoy singing and worship.
 - d. My spouse insists this is where we should attend.
34. Are the sermons preached at Remnant Life Church too long, too short, or just about right in length?
- a. Too long
 - b. Too short
 - c. Just about right
 - d. It depends on the subject of the sermon.
35. It is the responsibility of the pastor and leadership to do all the work of the church.
- a. Strongly agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Disagree
 - d. Strongly Disagree
36. I offer my time to serve when and where needed when events are being held at my church.
- a. Always
 - b. Often
 - c. Sometimes
 - d. Rarely
37. I will offer my time to serve when events are being held at my church, but only after I have been asked personally by the pastor or another church leader.
- a. Always
 - b. Often
 - c. Sometimes
 - d. Rarely
38. Serving in the local church is an essential part of the Christian's life.
- a. Strongly agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Disagree
 - d. Strongly disagree

39. A Christian should view serving the church and others as a part of and continuation of the teaching Jesus provided to His disciples during His earthly ministry.
- a. Strongly agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Disagree
 - d. Strongly disagree
40. If I give money to my church, I should have a say in how the money is used and the decisions associated with those purchases and expenditures.
- a. Strongly agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Disagree
 - d. Strongly disagree
41. Giving money to the church is like paying dues at a social or country club.
- a. Strongly agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Disagree
 - d. Strongly disagree
42. I know the Bible talks about giving, but the most important thing is to pay my bills first before I see how much money I have remaining to tithe.
- a. Strongly agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Disagree
 - d. Strongly disagree
43. Do you regard a man and a woman who live together outside of marriage to be living in sin?
- a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. It depends on whether or not they are committed to one another.
 - d. I have no opinion.
44. Do you believe homosexuality is opposed by the will of God and contrary to the teaching of the Bible?
- a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. It depends on whether or not they are committed to one another.
 - d. I have no opinion.

45. Which of the following statements best reflects your thinking regarding a relationship with God?
- a. There are many ways to come into a relationship with God.
 - b. Salvation through Jesus Christ is the only way to a relationship with God.
 - c. No religion is specific about how to have a relationship with God.
 - d. I have no opinion.
46. Of the options provided, which would you classify as being of the highest priority in your life pursuit?
- a. Financial security
 - b. Physical safety and health
 - c. An intimate relationship with God through Jesus Christ
 - d. Family
47. How many days/nights a week do you have regular commitments (not including employment) that require your attendance?
- a. 0-1
 - b. 2-3
 - c. 4-5
 - d. 6-7
48. As a Christian, I have a responsibility to share Jesus Christ with others.
- a. Strongly agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Disagree
 - d. Strongly disagree
49. As a Christian, I have a responsibility to help other Christians grown in their walk with the Lord.
- a. Strongly agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Disagree
 - d. Strongly disagree
50. It is the pastor's responsibility alone to help the people of my church grow in the things of the Lord.
- a. Strongly agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Disagree
 - d. Strongly disagree
51. Whether I choose to participate in the events of my church or not does not really matter.
- a. Strongly agree

- b. Agree
 - c. Disagree
 - d. Strongly disagree
52. The Bible is...
- a. ... a very good and important book.
 - b. ... filled with good ideas about how to live a life that is kind.
 - c. ... the inspired, infallible Word of God.
 - d. ... a collection of stories that are neither proven nor unproven.
53. Which statement best describes what you believe faith to be?
- a. It is trusting that something good will happen most of the time.
 - b. It is believing in something even though you may not be able to see or experience it physically.
 - c. It is a word to describe people who are desperate about something and grasping for anything to give them hope.
 - d. I have no opinion.
54. Is spending time with other people who attend Remnant Life Church important to you?
- a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. It will depend on why we are getting together.
 - d. I have no opinion.
55. What is your opinion of the number of events held at Remnant Life Church aside from the Sunday worship service?
- a. There are too many events.
 - b. There are not enough events.
 - c. There are just the right number of events.
 - d. How many events a church holds is not important.
56. Helping others grow in the Lord is an on-going, never-ending function of the church.
- a. Strongly agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Disagree
 - d. Strongly disagree
57. The time I spend with other RLC attendees on Sunday morning is sufficient for my time of interaction with them.
- a. Strongly agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Disagree
 - d. Strongly disagree

58. Is salvation an individual's decision, or if they are raised in a Christian home, will that automatically save them?
- a. It is an individual decision.
 - b. Being raised in a Christian home will automatically bring salvation.
 - c. Either one will provide salvation.
 - d. I'm not sure.

Appendix C

Servanthood
Week 1
Deuteronomy 10:12
“Serving Begins in the Heart”

What images come to mind when you hear someone talk about serving?

- Waiters and waitresses?
- Forced labor?
- Acts of kindness?
- A tennis match?

Your perception of what it means to serve someone will, in no small measure, determine how willing you are to do so when the opportunity presents itself.

- Do you view serving others as demeaning?
- Is your schedule already so full that you can't think of adding one more thing?
- Or have you never been asked to serve, and you are waiting to be approached?

Now, within all those questions, add a few more...

- What is my responsibility to serve as a Christian?
- Does the Bible talk about serving each other?
- What did Jesus have to say about it?

Answering these questions begin with knowing where servanthood originates

- Serving others does not begin with a decision to physically involved in an activity or event
- It is not about clearing your calendar or moving some things around to free up a few hours
- The desire to serve is an outpouring of the condition of your heart.
 - Compassion for others is the seed of serving
 - Burning barn; owner called insurance agent; no answer; where is he?!; he tapped her on the shoulder; fighting the fire

The heart, also called the soul, is the core of our being and the very seat of God's presence in our lives

- Moses writes in **Deut 10:12** - *And now, Israel, what does the LORD your God ask of you but to fear the LORD your God, to walk in obedience to him, to love him, to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul,*
 - The word for “heart” in the original language is *lay-vavh*
 - It means not only the heart of man, but also the inner part, soul, resolution, character, conscious, and seat of emotions and passions
 - The heart is the motivator of the mind which then triggers our actions

An individual's heart is also much more -

- It is the very condition of our salvation

- **Rom 10:9** - *If you declare with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.*
- It is where we keep the law of God
 - **Job 22:22** - *Accept instruction from his mouth and lay up his words in your heart.*
 - **Psalms 119:11** - *I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you.*
 - **Psalms 119:30** - *I have chosen the way of faithfulness; I have set my heart on your laws.*
- It is the place our hopes, dreams, and even fears have their origin
 - **1 Peter 3:15** - *But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect,*
 - **Psalms 37:4** - *Take delight in the LORD, and he will give you the desires of your heart.*
 - **John 14:1** - *“Do not let your hearts be afraid. You believe in God; believe also in me.*

Just as your salvation, God’s word, and the emotions of your spirit is seated in your heart, so does a desire to serve come from that same place

- Let’s examine briefly the first instance of serving from a heart of love found in the Scripture
 - Jacob is the son of Isaac, the grandson of Abraham, and it is time for him to find a wife
 - He fell in love with a beautiful girl named Rachel, but she has an older sister
 - Rachel’s father said if Jacob worked for him for seven years, he could marry her
 - But on the night of the wedding, Jacob discovers that he has been tricked and instead he has married the older sister, Leah
 - He then worked seven more years to be permitted to also marry Rachel
- **Genesis 29:20** - *So Jacob served seven years to get Rachel, but they seemed like only a few days to him because of his love for her.*

Jacob had every right to be furious with Laban, his father-in-law, for deceiving him into marrying Leah before Rachel and having to work for an additional seven years

- But his heart was filled with love for Rachel and out of that love he worked faithfully even in unfair circumstances

Serving in love ignores the surroundings of the situation

- Serving in love is not concerned with who gets the credit
- It does not seek the “glamour detail” of an assignment
- It does not care if no one sees the service

Serving in love is an offering given to God

- As Christians, the love of God has been freely given to each of us
- Serving is a way for us to, not only bless others, but to show our gratitude to God for the love He has given us

Appendix D

Servanthood Week 2 Philemon 8-21 “The Perfect Servant”

The life of Jesus is a model given to us of living a selfless, God-centered life

- His entire life and ministry was exemplified by serving other people
- The ultimate act of service was laying down His life as the final blood sacrifice for our sins

Jesus proclaimed His earthly mission as one of service to others

- **Matt 20:28** – “...just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”
 - What we see is one of the many reasons people did not know what to do about Jesus
 - Especially the religious leaders of the day
 - The Pharisees, the teachers, and the rabbis were revered and served
 - The Pharisees made sure they were treated that way
 - Jesus more than all of them – He was the Messiah!
 - But He did not act that way
- **Luke 22:25-27** - Jesus said to them, “The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them; and those who exercise authority over them call themselves Benefactors. But you are not to be like that. Instead, the greatest among you should be like the youngest, and the one who rules like the one who serves. For who is greater, the one who is at the table or the one who serves? Is it not the one who is at the table? But I am among you as one who serves.”
 - Jesus is speaking to the disciples just after they had been quarreling among themselves about...who was the greatest among them (seriously?!)
 - Servants of God are to serve others not assign themselves a title of honor for what they do (Benefactors)
 - Unfortunately, often the more spiritually astute or learned some people become the harder they are to be around
 - Pastor I was working with said to me once, “I want to teach you something,” my response was, “No, Thank You!”
 - Why? – Pride
 - Jesus, once again, says to them, *I am among you as one who serves*
- Jesus was continually teaching His disciples, not just through His words, but through His actions, the value, importance, and godliness of serving

We then look at the teaching of the apostle Paul to the new churches of Asia-Minor – keys components of serving one another in love

- **Gal 5:13** - *You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh; rather, serve one another humbly in love.*
 - Three primary components of serving
 - It is a choice born out of the heart; free to choose

- Not done in the flesh
 - In other words, not for personal or selfish gain
 - In humility
- **Eph 6:7** - *Serve wholeheartedly, as if you were serving the Lord, not people*
 - Paul directly addresses in this verse the motivation for serving
 - Is it to please God, or people?
 - You can actually spot the answer to this pretty quickly
 - If a person gets offended because no one thanked them, the answer as to please people
- **Rom 12:6-7** - *We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your faith; if it is serving, then serve; if it is teaching, then teach;*
 - Serve in the way that God has prepared you
 - What someone else does mean that you do that same thing

All of these elements of serving come back to Jesus, the perfect servant, and His final act of serving for all mankind – His death for our salvation

The small book of **Philemon** (only 25 verses) offers a unique look at the heart of love toward a servant, but it is also a picture of the gift of salvation and what Jesus did for each of us

READ – Philemon 8-21

- Paul is writing to Philemon asking him to accept a runaway slave back into their fellowship
 - Philemon was the host, and perhaps even pastor of this small house church located in Colosse.
 - Onesimus, a slave belonging to Philemon, had not only run away but it appears also stole from his master as Paul offers to pay back anything owed (**Phil 18**)
 - During his time away, he met Paul, became a follower of Jesus, and knows he needs to return to his master
 - Paul asks that Philemon receive Onesimus back not as a restored slave but as a brother in Christ.
 - Philemon served others as the host of the church and Paul knew that how he responded would impact the rest of the believers
 - The story presented in Philemon is a picture of salvation and filled with the heart of selflessness and service
 - The three primary figures, Philemon, Onesimus, and Paul, are representations of the triangle of salvation
1. Philemon is a representation of God the Father
 - a. The offense of sin was present in the running away of the slave and what was taken
 - b. Philemon had every right to require justice for the sin – as did God from His creation

- c. But God the Father, like the father of the prodigal son, never stops searching to restore us to Himself
- 2. Onesimus is a representative of the sinner – of each of us
 - a. He is a runaway, separated from the master, but desires to be returned
 - b. Once of no value, but now treasured
 - c. Once selfish but now with a selfless heart turned to service
- 3. Paul is the representation of Jesus the Redeemer
 - a. In this letter Paul (Jesus) is pleading with Philemon (the Father) on behalf of Onesimus (the sinner)
 - b. And like Jesus did for each of us, Paul presents himself to pay what has been lost or taken
 - c. Each and every one of these actions are born out of love

The hearts of the two main characters in this story are changing:

- Onesimus has received Christ and has been changed from within
 - That change of heart is impacting his actions
 - From a runaway slave to returning as a repentant brother in the Lord
- Philemon is being asked by Paul to look beyond the law and expectations of man and see Onesimus with the same love that opens his home to others
 - The love of Christ is forgiving
 - The love of Christ welcomes with open arms the one who has been changed from within
- Where does it begin for us?
 - In church? No –
 - It begins in your home with those you are closest to
 - Do you serve one another in love in your home?
 - That is where you will see the quickest the condition of your heart
- Jesus demonstrated, with His whole life, the heart of a servant
- We will examine more closely some of those specific instances when Jesus showed what it means to serve in a variety of circumstances
- Serving begins in the heart, and the model is seen in the life of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ

Appendix E

Servanthood

Week 3

Exodus 3:10-15; 4:1-5,10-12; 6:12,30

“Serving Without Excuse”

As in all things of the life of a Christian, your life is one of choices

- Opportunities are presented in many ways to serve others
- It might be an individual
- It might be an event impacting many
- In all those you choose whether to give of yourself or not

When someone chooses not to serve, there are always reasons, excuses, as to why not

- Most often:
 - Too busy
 - Tired
 - Inconvenient
 - I just don't feel like it
- Each of those reasons is motivated by one thing – self
- How do you combat the selfishness that prevents you from giving of yourself?

Moses

- Raised in the courts of Pharaoh; fled to the land of the Midianites; called of God to lead the people
- Moses tried to talk God out of sending him back to Egypt
- Like us, Moses had what he thought were excellent reasons why he did not want to serve God

READ: Exodus 3:10-15; 4:1-5; 6:12,30

Moses gave five excuses while still in the presence of God in the burning bush:

1. Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt? (Ex 3:11)
 - a. I am not qualified; I can't do this
 - i. Our culture places great importance in training and education even over skill and desire
 - ii. True in churches; degrees mean more than anointing
 - b. God's reply – I will be with you, and I will give you a sign (Ex 3:12)
 - i. You will be anointed
 - ii. Nothing was going to be more important to Moses than God being with him
 - c. Helping others and giving of yourself is an outpouring of God's presence in your heart
2. What if they ask me your name? (Ex 3:13)
 - a. If it's not me, then it's you

- i. Again, the world values visible, outward authority
 - ii. Experience, power, money, education...
 - iii. Moses says, if you're still going to send me, then what are your credentials?
 - b. God's reply – Tell them *I AM who I AM*; the God of your forefathers (Ex 3:14-15)
 - c. (Yahweh) '*I am who I am*' from a Hebrew phrase indicating existence as well as action
 - d. God is present, and He is active
- 3. What if they don't believe me or said You didn't speak to me? (Ex 4:1)
 - a. What will they think of me?
 - i. I don't want to look foolish
 - ii. Pride must be protected
 - b. God's reply – I will empower you to perform miracles as proof (Ex 4:5-7)
 - i. Staff becomes a snake
 - ii. Hand becomes leprous
 - iii. Slight of hand compared to the awesome power of God
 - c. God's power is much greater than any obstacle we may think we have
 - i. But you must go to Him first
 - ii. You must have the faith to believe
- 4. I am not eloquent, slow of speech, and you've never asked anything like this from me before (Ex 4:10)
 - a. You did not adequately prepare me for this
 - i. A new tactic - shifting of blame
 - ii. Not my fault!
 - b. God's reply – who do you think you are talking to? I made you! (Ex 4:11-12)
 - c. Not only is He the creator, but you are never a finished creation – You are and should be in a continual state of change
 - i. That means you are growing, learning, changing because of His love and power in your life
 - ii. Every opportunity to serve is a chance to grow and put into practice what you have learned
- 5. You don't understand, I stutter (Ex 6:12,30)
 - a. You still don't get it (back to #1 – I can't do this)
 - b. God's reply – I will send your brother to speak the prophetic words. But you will still speak what I tell you (Ex 7:1-2)
 - c. While God will make a way, what He asks of you will be done
 - d. Nothing prevents the will of God from being accomplished

God had a plan

- It began in the Garden
- It came to the time when a nation of God's people was ready to be born
- They were a people, because of God's plan, that would witness the coming of the Savior

- God needed Moses to get approximately 2.4 million people from Egypt to Canaan
- Moses' 5 excuses were not going to keep that from happening

Moses did what God wanted him to do because, despite his earlier excuses, his heart was right

As we have already seen, the choices you make begin with what is in your heart, not in your head.

- The heart of a Christian must be fully surrendered to God
 - Not just the areas that might seem obvious – anger, greed, jealousy, envy, etc
 - But the will and the spirit of self that hesitates or refuses to put others first

Our excuses may sound different, but they all say the same thing:

- What I want, what I am doing, my life is more important
- Too harsh, or too true?
- Refusing to make excuses is an important part of developing a heart to serve.

Appendix F

Servanthood

Week 4

2 John

“A Heart of Hospitality”

The second and third epistles of John are two of the shortest books in the Bible, yet they speak as if they were great volumes on the topic of hospitality

READ – 2 John

At the time of the writing of these letters, John is the last surviving original disciple of Jesus

- It is addressed to “the chosen lady and her children” who regularly opened their home to travelers
- This had become a regular practice, taking in itinerant preachers, who were more and more common following the resurrection and ascension of Jesus
 - This letter is an appendix to **1 John**
 - No new theological truth is shared rather an emphasis on guarding against antichristian preaching
 - It is the only letter of the NT addressed to a woman – likely a widow
- John is writing to a woman who is known for her hospitality
 - So much so that she needs to be warned to not just take in anybody that presents themselves

What is hospitality?

- It was not a word that appeared until the days of the New Testament
- Hospitality is the act of being hospitable
 - Welcoming and open in your home or life
 - In the original language (phih-LOX-ah-neeah)
 - Fond of or generous to your guests (but more...)
 - Lover of strangers (anyone can show love to those you know)
 - And so hospitality, once again, begins in the heart
- But hospitality is not confined to the opening of one’s home
- Hospitality is also about personal approachability
 - Simple question: Are you approachable?
 - What is your demeanor? (You can start with church but it is more about other places)
 - Smile? Look people in the eye? Be the first to speak? What about on a bad day?
 - Not sure I would want to be a Christian based on how many look or act
 - Working out in a gym for the first time
 - Warned about a man who was known to be nasty to people
 - A pastor

Hospitality in the Scripture

1. The apostle Paul is shipwrecked and now on the island of Malta (in the geographic center of the Mediterranean south of Sicily, Italy – he is shown hospitality by the chief official of the island
 - a. **READ - Acts 28:1-10**
 - b. Paul was hosted for 3 days
 - c. God worked through Paul to heal the official's father as well as the rest of the sick on the island
 - d. Hospitality is often the setting of the environment for other works of God to come
2. In **Romans 12:13** and **16:23** Paul recalls and gives thanks for the hospitality shown him and encourages others to do the same for each other
 - a. Hospitable treatment very often breeds the same actions in the recipients
 - b. What? Did you think pay it forward was a new concept?
3. In **I Timothy 5:9-10** Paul lists hospitality as a virtue to be prized in the widows of the city and as a prerequisite for receiving help from the people
4. In **Hebrews 13:2** the author cautions believers to show hospitality to strangers since they may be entertaining angels and not be aware of it
 - a. I think of this verse often
 - b. The most unlikely is actually the most likely
5. Peter then teaches in **I Peter 4:9** that we should be hospitable to one another but to never grumble about what we are doing
 - a. To complain about doing good, is to be doing bad
 - b. At best you negate the work, at worst you are spreading an ungrateful, demonic attitude of grumbling
 - c. **Numbers 17:10** – God says, *This will put an end to their grumbling against me, so that they will not die.*
 - d. **John 6:43** – Jesus commands His disciples, *stop grumbling among yourselves*

Back to **2 John 5-6**

- *And now, dear lady, I am not writing you a new command but one we have had from the beginning. I ask that we love one another. And this is love: that we walk in obedience to his commands. As you have heard from the beginning, his command is that you walk in love.*
- Again we see, John's focus is not on the action of hospitality first; it is the love for one another that produces the action
 - As we have been studying over the last few weeks
 - The acts of service, in this case hospitality, begins in the heart
 - It may require a level of vulnerability
 - Some throw themselves open to whatever needs to happen
 - Others are more cautious
 - The questions remains, what is in your heart?

- Are you available?
 - Are you approachable?
- It is this new revelation of unconditional love, brought first through the life and ministry of Jesus Christ, that still calls us to love everyone, even our enemies (Matt 5:43-47)
 - What does that look like?
 - It means you...
 - Err on the side of love, not caution
 - Err on the side of giving, even to those who would take advantage
 - Err on the side of sacrifice, even for those who do not merit such treatment
- That is what Jesus demonstrated in His life
 - Do you think Jesus did not know on that Palm Sunday that those eager faces He saw crying out Hossanah were going to be the same ones screaming Crucify Him 5 days later?
 - Yet, He still healed them, still fed them, still loved them
- David Wilkerson – was a pastor and evangelist who felt a call of God to reach out to NY City gangs in the late 50s’ and 60s’
 - Founder of Teen Challenge – drug recovery
 - Started Times Square Church in NYC
- Nicky Cruz – leader of the Mau Mau street gang
- A relationship made famous by the 1970 movie *The Cross and the Switchblade*
- Cruz once told Wilkerson that he would cut him up the next time he saw him and Wilkerson responded by saying, “You may cut me into a thousand pieces, but every one of those pieces will still say “I love you””

Appendix G

Servanthood

Week 5

3 John

“The Blessing of Hospitality”

We are in the middle of a series focused on servanthood and serving others

- Why is that something we need to spend this amount of time looking at?
- Because it is the visible expression of Jesus Christ in your life and the change that has been made
- It is also what Jesus lived as an example for us
- (Matt 20:28) - ...*the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.*

The second and third epistles of John are two of the shortest books in the Bible, yet they speak a great deal regarding hospitality which is an act of service

- Two weeks ago we looked at 2nd John and the heart of hospitality
- Our actions are born out of the love in our hearts

READ – 3 John

At the time of the writing of these letters, John is the last surviving original disciple of Jesus

- This brief letter is one of only a few written to an individual
- It is addressed to Gaius who was likely part of, or perhaps a leader, of one of the new community churches that had begun to meet throughout Asia Minor
- Written from Ephesus between 85 and 95 in the latter part of John’s life

Like his second letter, John is writing because the kindness, care, and servant’s heart of Gaius has been brought to his attention

- Just as the “chosen lady and her children” from the second letter are commended, Gaius has become well known among the traveling ministers for his abundance of kindness
 - How are you known?
 - If those who knew you were told to write one word, one sentence, one paragraph to describe you – what do you think they would say?
 - “If you were to be put on trial for being a Christian, would there be enough evidence to convict you?”
 - The same for serving and loving the people around you
 - Or would you be known as someone who is aloof, distant, or detached?
 - There are fathers who may be described that way
 - Is the act of hospitality more difficult for men due to wrongly set expectations of our behavior?
 - Thinking that hospitality is for women to provide
 - Gaius was known to the people as being a man of generosity, service, and kindness
 - Are you? Am I?

- And so, while second John warns against supporting untrustworthy ministers in their work, third John commends those who had shown them hospitality

Let's look at how John approaches Gaius and the circumstances of that church –

V 5 – *Dear friend, you are faithful in what you are doing for the brothers even though they are strangers to you.*

- A serving heart that offers hospitality is faithful to the command that, as followers of Christ, we love one another (**John 13:35**)
 - Serving others is a physical demonstration of the love of Jesus Christ
 - Serving within the church is to work for the furthering of God's Kingdom
 - What we do here at RLC, great or small, is for the Kingdom of God
 - That means that the size or presentation of an event or activity is not what matters most

V 6 – *They have told the church about your love. You will do well to send them on their way in a manner worthy of God.*

- Serving God well and consistently needs to be seen and heard by others
 - Servanthood is desperately needed in a time when “me first” is most prevalent
 - Seeing that God's people serve one another demonstrates to the world the difference of the heart in a Christian
- Following your time of ministry and service to others
 - Bless them when you are done
 - Let me ask an important question
 - Is blessing someone when you are done more difficult if you feel that you have been properly thanked or recognized?
 - Does the need to be appreciated rob us of what we should be doing?
 - Why is it important to send them on their way with blessing?
 - So that they can then carry their blessing with them to share with others in the same way
 - Pay it Forward was not developed by Hollywood to make a movie, it is a biblical concept

Vv 7-8 – *It was for the sake of the Name that they went out, receiving no help from the pagans. We ought, therefore, to show hospitality to such men so that we may work together for the truth.*

- We all serve the Name of Jesus Christ
- Those that worked in that time to spread the word had to rely on fellow Christians to provide for them
 - This, once again, demonstrates the love of a follower of Jesus in a tangible way
 - It is also why unity and not division in the church is so important
 - Can you do you still love those you disagree with?
 - Is the volatile political climate of today dividing the church?
 - Christians must differentiate themselves from the ungodly and the worldly
 - If we act no differently, can we claim that we are different?

- Just as in John's day, to support and participate in the work of the church today is to work for and spread the truth of the Kingdom of God

What prevents us from having a heart that loves to serve?

- The vast majority of the time, it is pride
- John makes this clear as he writes of Diotrephes a man in the church who "loves to be first"
 - Pride prevents a heart from desiring to serve because it is preoccupied with self
 - This same pride also breeds division
 - Diotrephes came against John's authority and refused to receive fellow brothers in the Lord
- A church filled with people who are only looking to enjoy the fruits of the church's labor rather than participating in the act of serving, is a church filled with or struggling with division
 - It becomes like a house filled with children bickering over whose turn it is to wash the dishes
 - "I did them last time"
 - "I helped at the last event we had"

John summarizes the actions of both Gaius and Diotrephes

- **V 11** - *Dear friend, do not imitate what is evil but what is good. Anyone who does what is good is from God. Anyone who does what is evil has not seen God.*
- To serve one another through a heart of love is from God
- To refuse to serve others out of pride or selfishness is not from God

We all have a responsibility to serve God through His church

- But is it an obligation?
- Or is it a joy, a privilege, and an honor?
- That is answered by the outpouring of what is in your heart

Serving God and His church, through any opportunity you are given, is an act of love and service to God

Appendix H

Servanthood
Week 6
Mark 6:32-44
“Beginning with Compassion”

As we begin to move toward the conclusion of this series on servanthood

- This morning and next week we will focus on two familiar stories of serving found in the New Testament
- Both, as you might imagine, center around Jesus – who was the greatest example of servanthood who ever lived
 - The circumstances are as different as they can be
 - The setting, participants, the reasons
 - But they show us, yet again, that serving others is not dependent on the circumstances, but on the heart of the individual

One of the most well-known stories of the Bible is the feeding of the 5000

- It is the only one of the 35 miracle of Jesus found in the New Testament recorded in all 4 Gospels

READ – Mark 6:32-44

- This was not the only time Jesus performed this miracle of provision
 - He also fed a crowd of 4000 as recorded in **Matt 15** and **Mark 8**
 - Not with 5 loaves and 2 fishes but with seven loaves
 - Why does the Bible specify the type of bread?
 - In several translations we are told it was bread made of barley
 - It was the bread of the common man
- In both accounts, the number (5000/4000) only counted the men, not women and children
 - Both numbers could have easily been 3 or 4 times that
 - NOTE – in both accounts we are told that everyone ate their fill
 - When Jesus served, it fully and completely met the need of the individual

The reason I point this out is that it is not always done that way

- When doing things for God in the church, a weak or half-hearted effort is no effort at all
- No heart is present when it is only a token effort – why?
 - Because your effort is a reflection of your heart
 - That is true about all that you do in your life
 - That is the very theme of this series

What is it that motivates your action?

In both of the accounts in Mark (6 and 8) the same word is present

- It is a word of emotion, experienced by Jesus, as He looked out over the crowds of people

- Compassion – (6:34 and 8:2)

What is compassion?

- According to Webster, it is a *sympathetic awareness of someone else's distress along with a desire to alleviate it*
 - The definition of compassion comes in two parts
 - The first is to be aware of someone's distress
 - But the second part must be present as well, a desire to alleviate it
 - In other words, to do something about it
- Jesus' use of the word in **Mark 6:34**, in the original language (*splaugh-nee-so-mah*), means to be moved with compassion
 - It is a word that requires action
 - Not just feeling bad for someone but taking action to be part of the solution for them
 - James 2:16 – *If one of you says to them, "Go in peace; keep warm and well fed," but does nothing about their physical needs, what good is it?*
 - It must be more than words
- Many will talk about the needs of people they come across
 - But they are only words
 - "I really feel bad about what you are going through."
 - Really? What are you willing to do about it?

Serving is not always about dealing with the struggles or pain of another person

- Many times it is doing for them out of an act of random kindness
 - There is no reason you are doing it
 - There is no end-game in mind; there is no catch
 - It might even be done anonymous (the very best kind)

What might something like that look like?

- A random act of kindness to a young woman in need...

"I was in grad school and 70 miles from home when my car blew a gasket in a snowstorm. On a Sunday. No mechanic shops open, and no one would tow my car back to my place until the snowstorm lifted because of the dangerous roads. I was crying in a coffee shop on the phone, and a woman approached me and offered me a place to stay for the night. She did not know me at all, and she took me back to her house, where I ate dinner with her, her mom, and her kids and slept in borrowed pajamas in her office. The next day she drove me back to my car, and I got towed home. I will never forget what extreme kindness it must have taken to bring a stranger into your home with your kids like that."

Acts of kindness are the visible outpourings of compassion

- And like every aspect of servanthood, it begins in the heart
- Paul writes in **Eph 4:32** - *Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.*
- Kindness, compassion, and forgiveness are heart-issues that are then expressed by your actions

Appendix I

Servanthood
Week 7
John 13:1-15
“Serving out of Humility”

In biblical times there was a very set social caste system that was evident in the everyday lives of the people

- It was certainly present in their society
 - Wealth was the primary line of demarcation among the people
 - Those who “had” ruled, those who “had not” served.
 - And once you were identified with a particular group, there was little chance of moving to another
 - Especially from the serving group to the ruling
 - It was not a matter of choice, but of birth, station, and wealth
- And it was present in the family
 - The oldest male of the family was the undisputed head of the people
 - His first-born son was the second most important since he would be the one to inherit the family estate through his father
 - The father was tasked with making every important decision for the family
 - He would assign the work in order to keep the family environment healthy, happy, and running smoothly
 - He would be responsible for the health and well being of the entire family, including servants, livestock, and relatives, no matter how distant in relation
 - His word was law, and there was no such thing as debate or even discussion unless he requested another person’s input
 - From the highest to lowest, best to worse, leader to follower – it was all firmly set and had been that way since the beginning...

That was until Jesus arrived -

- Jesus began to teach a way of living and relating to other people that was completely foreign and, most likely, at first hearing, very confusing
 - In **Matthew 20**, Jesus concludes the parable of the workers in the vineyard with the words, “*So the last will be first, and the first will be last.*” (**Matt 20:16**)
 - In **Mathew 19** Jesus encounters the rich young man who cannot give up his wealth to follow Jesus
 - Jesus then says, *Truly I tell you, at the renewal of all things, when the Son of Man sits on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or fields for my sake will receive a hundred times as much and will inherit eternal life. But many who are first will be last, and many who are last will be first.* (**Matt 19:28-30**)

- Jesus wanted for them to understand that the wealth and value of this world is nothing when compared with the riches of heaven
- To sacrifice first place in this world is to be rewarded in heaven a hundred times more
- Jesus was also teaching that the things most valued here that make a person “first” (wealth, social standing, fame, power, etc) will not mean anything in the Kingdom of Heaven
- In fact, He says, those who sacrifice those things for the sake of following Jesus Christ will be first in heaven

Understanding first and last according to the Kingdom of God’s definition and living it here among other people requires a total shift in thinking away from the world’s definition

- Jesus states that the greatest demonstration of love is through an act of service
 - **John 15:13** - *Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends.*
 - Many understand this verse to mean that a person may give up their life, or die, for someone else
 - Lay down, in the original language, is *tith-ee-me*
 - It means to lay or set down
 - It also means to bend, kneel, or bow
 - IOW it is a physical posture of service, giving or doing for another person in humility
 - Therefore, within the definition of the original language, the verse can also read...
 - *Greater love has no one than this, to serve one’s friends.*

Jesus demonstrated the willing humility of service to other’s when He washed the disciple’s feet

READ – John 13:1-15

- We read in this account how Jesus assumed the position of the lowest servant
 - Washing the dirt of the street off the feet of a house guest was the work of a child-servant
 - It was considered the lowest action since it was washing the lowest and dirtiest part of the traveler’s body
 - It was unthinkable that the revered Rabbi of their group would physically, not to mention culturally, stoop so low
- But Jesus was not teaching a lesson in hygiene, it was a lesson in serving those around you regardless of your position, station, or standing seen by others or the way you see yourself
 - Jesus was demonstrating a Kingdom principle
 - To freely give of oneself is to demonstrate the love of God
- The disciples, understandably, were horrified at what they were witnessing, with Peter initially refusing to even permit it
- But Jesus clearly tells them that it is this type of servant’s heart that is required to be a part of His Father’s Kingdom

- It is not an optional behavior
- It is not one that you do based on your feelings at the moment

Jesus performed this act for three reasons

- First, to demonstrate to His disciples how much He loved them
 - Serving is an act of love
- Second, to foreshadow or foretell His self-sacrifice on the cross
- Third, to demonstrate the truth of His call and to provide a living example of how each of them (and us) are to serve others in humility

It should not be lost when we consider the act Jesus chose to use that the disciples had struggled throughout the ministry of Jesus with their desire and passion to be great

- In **Matthew 18**, they come to Jesus asking who is the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven (although Jesus would have known their heart and their motivation for asking)
- In **Matthew 20**, the mother of James and John ask for her sons to be placed in a prominent place in heaven
- In **Mark 9**, Jesus catches the disciples arguing among themselves who about was the greatest
- We read the same thing in **Luke 9**
- Again, He was using His own life as a testimony of His own words
 - **John 15:13** - *Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends*
- When was the last time you did something for someone solely for the reason of expressing your love for them?
 - That means it was not done out of obligation
 - Many times people – especially married couples - confuse the two
 - Not because you have to but only because you want to
 - What you did means it was done with no expectation of return
 - It was done without you ever reminding them that you did it
 - Pure love expects nothing in return and does not use their action as a bargaining tool later

The drive to always be first and be served by others is the promotion of self – the flesh

- Jesus said that to be first in the Kingdom of God is to be the least on earth
- Preacher, evangelist, and publisher D. L. Moody hosted a conference in the late 1800s for some of Europe's most well-known and prominent evangelists. Each evening, at the conclusion of that day's activities, the men placed their dirty shoes and boots outside the door, demonstrating the custom in Europe for a hall servant to clean and polish the shoes during the night. Well, no such tradition existed in the US, so Moody suggested to some of his ministerial students there that they might want to fill this need by doing the menial task of cleaning the shoes. His suggestion did not impress them and was met with very little enthusiasm. So later, when all had gone to bed, Moody collected the shoes and took them to his room to clean them himself. His act of servanthood would have never been uncovered except for the fact that someone happened to visit his room during the act of

cleaning. Others were told about it, and the rest of the week, there was no shortage of volunteers to do the shoe shining.

- Even though the students did come around to understand the importance of their teacher's act
 - Do you see the truth that acts of service begin in the heart?
 - Yes, they participated but out of guilt rather than humility

Within the Kingdom of God, however, we come to understand that the most menial and quietest of tasks are those that will speak the loudest of who you truly are.

Appendix J

Servanthood
Week 8
Phil 2:6-8
“The Privilege of Serving”

- In this 8-week series on servanthood, we have examined the following:
 - It began with the understanding that serving begins in the heart
 - We then looked at the perfect servant: Jesus Christ
 - Then dealing with the excuses so often given when we don’t serve
 - We then talked about the heart of hospitality
 - Followed by the blessing of hospitality
 - We then looked at the feeding of the 5000 and serving out of compassion
 - Finally, Jesus washing the feet of the disciples and serving out of humility
 - We conclude the series this morning with the privilege of serving

Mark 10:45 - *For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.*

The life of Jesus could have been one of control, servitude by the masses, and unrivaled power.

- Instead, Jesus came as a humble servant
 - First, a servant of His Father
 - Then to those who He loved and His Father had entrusted to Him

Why is serving not always seen as a privilege?

- Because the life we live is one that contains struggle and turmoil
- The spirit nature in our lives is always battling with the flesh nature
- Paul writes a great deal to the churches regarding the spirit and the flesh
 - **Gal 5:16 -17** - *So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. For the flesh desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh. They are in conflict with each other, so that you are not to do whatever you want.*
 - **I Cor 15:50** - *I declare to you, brothers and sisters, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable.*
- IOW – there is no life in Christ without the Spirit of God in your life
 - Serving is not a substitute for surrendering your life to Christ
 - Goodness and kindness are not salvation
 - Only faith in Jesus Christ saves your soul
 - The kindness you show is an outpouring of His love given to you
- The flesh nature is focused on self-gratification, self-preservation, and self-promotion
- The Spirit is about humility, a loving heart, and serving others
 - But serving one another is not about concepts and the theology of it; it is doing it.

- The posture of humility and the change of heart in a person is not something taught in a church setting; it is experienced through action
- Master Sergeant Randall was faced with a choice. He could lecture and instruct his new army recruits about hypothermia from the comfort of a classroom. Or, he could take them to a pool filled with freezing water and share the experience with them. He knew that to fully grasp the condition's impact fully, they needed to feel and see hypothermia's effects, not just hear about them from a warm classroom.

To fully understand the privilege of serving means getting involved – you need to get in the pool

- Begin by asking God to present you with opportunities.
 - We have some here
 - But it is not about joining activities only; it is about creating them as well
 - What has God laid on your heart?
 - Few experiences present the privilege of serving like leading an activity yourself
- Keep your eyes open for that prayer to be answered
 - But the only way you can see those chances to serve is if you take your eyes off of yourself
 - Humility takes your attention away from self and puts it on others
- The privilege of serving comes from a heart that is filled with compassion
 - It is a life given to helping where needed – demonstrating hospitality where needed
 - It is refusing to make excuses when opportunities present themselves
 - It is wanting to serve with no expectation of recognition or reward
 - It is a willingness to abandon our consumeristic attitudes and become servants for God and His people

In Greek mythology, the story is told of Zeus and Hermes coming down to earth for a brief period of time disguised as poor slaves. They did this in order to hide themselves, and to get an understanding of the level of devotion people gave them. Once they found out what they wanted to know, they threw off their rags and revealed themselves in all of their Olympian splendor. The story is thought to be the precursor, and the inspiration for the creation of the Clark Kent revealed as Superman storyline. The mild outward appearance actually being a disguise.

But listen now to Paul's description of Jesus – not a mythological story by the truth of God's Word -

Who, being in the very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross! (Phil 2:6-8)

- Jesus did not merely take on the outward form or appearance of a servant
- In that passage, Paul uses the same term (the very nature) to describe both Jesus' servanthood and His Godhood.
 - The form; in the fashion

- Not just covered but became that very thing
- When Jesus came in the form of a servant, he was not disguising who God is. Rather, He was revealing who God is.
- Jesus did not serve in spite of the fact that He is God
- Jesus came to this earth as a servant precisely because He is God, and the presence of God in our lives creates in us a heart of love to then serve others just as He did.

Remnant Life Church Summer Picnic

November 1, 2020

SETUP AT 9:30 AM WITH CHURCH SERVICE AT 11:00 AM

VOLUNTEERS TO ASSIST WITH SET UP AND/OR TEAR DOWN:

NAME	PHONE NUMBER
Pete & Jane Swope	717-974-[REDACTED]
VANCE & Rex Crawford	717-279-[REDACTED]
Donna Kelly	717-695-[REDACTED]
Beth & Bill Rodolph	717-669-[REDACTED]
Faith Nicolz	717-350-[REDACTED]
D. Booth	717-943-[REDACTED]
M. Hubler	717-379-[REDACTED]
Jeff, Christy & Greyson	games
Katherine & Lorraine Swope	
Debt Will Eichenberger	
Gina Feaz (Melton)	717-884-[REDACTED]
Aaron Zuckinger	717-576-[REDACTED]
DAVE Nicola	

Church Leadership Survey

Name of Church/Parish/Synagogue - _____

Position Title of Participant - _____

1. In your estimate, what is the percentage of your total attendees who participate in the church's activities and functions outside of your primary weekly service?
 - a. Less than 10%
 - b. Between 10% and 20%
 - c. Between 20% and 30%
 - d. More than 30%
2. In the time you have served in your current position, do you feel that number has increased or decreased?
 - a. Increased
 - b. Decreased
 - c. I am not aware that a significant change has occurred
3. Knowing your congregants, when you provide activities or services, what is it that most often prevents them from participating or attending more than the primary weekly service?
 - a. Work
 - b. Social Commitments
 - c. Family obligations
 - d. I am not aware of the specific reasons
4. Is encouraging your people to become more involved in the life of your church something you and your leadership actively and purposefully address?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. Occasionally
5. (If yes to #4) What methods have you found to be effective in accomplishing that objective?
 - a. Email or direct mail
 - b. Face-to-face invitation
 - c. Teaching on various spiritual principles
 - d. Other (Specify): _____
6. (If no to #4) Have you ever felt a need to consider doing so?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No

7. Do you believe instruction or a teaching series from your sacred texts, explicitly addressing the topic of church involvement, would make a difference in the frequency of your attendees' participation?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. Unsure
8. What percentage of the activities of your church are generated or overseen by someone other than a staff member?
 - a. 0% (none)
 - b. 5%-10% (a few)
 - c. 20%-30% (several)
 - d. More than 30% (many)
9. Are you aware of the 80/20 principle when it comes to describing the work of the church? (80% percent of the work is accomplished by 20% of the people.)
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. I had heard something along these same lines before but in a different percentage.
10. Do you believe that the overall spiritual health of an individual is impacted by how often they are involved in the activities of their church?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. Unsure
 - d. There are too many variants impacting the spiritual life of an individual to assign one more importance over another.

Please indicate if you would like to receive either of the following:

- I would like to be contacted to discuss my answers in further detail – YES
- I would like to receive a copy of the conclusions and results of this study - YES

Phone number: _____

Best day/time to call: _____

LIBERTY UNIVERSITY

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

June 26, 2020

Re: IRB Exemption - IRB-FY19-20-286 Prioritizing the Christian Life for Service: Focusing on the Millennial Kingdom and Not the Things of the World

Dear David Di Raddo,

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

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

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

The information obtained is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that the identity of the human subjects can readily be ascertained, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects, and an IRB conducts a limited IRB review to make the determination required by §46.111(a)(7).

Your stamped consent form can be found under the Attachments tab within the Submission Details section of your study on Cayuse IRB. This form should be copied and used to gain the consent of your research participants. If you plan to provide your consent information electronically, the contents of the attached consent document should be made available without alteration.

Please note that this exemption only applies to your current research application, and any modifications to your protocol must be reported to the Liberty University IRB for verification of continued exemption status. You may report these changes by completing a modification submission through your Cayuse IRB account.

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

Sincerely,

G. Michele Baker, MA, CIP

Administrative Chair of Institutional Research Ethics Office