A QUANTITATIVE DESCRIPTIVE STUDY OF THE IMPACT BIBLE READING HAS ON THE LIVES AND LEADERSHIP OF AMERICAN EVANGELICAL CHURCH PASTORAL LEADERS

Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree Doctor of Education

by

Andrea M Tom

Liberty University, Lynchburg, VA
2021
A QUANTITATIVE DESCRIPTIVE STUDY OF THE IMPACT BIBLE READING
HAS ON THE LIVES AND LEADERSHIP OF AMERICAN
EVANGELICAL CHURCH PASTORAL LEADERS

by Andrea Michelle Tom

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Education

Liberty University, Lynchburg, VA

2021

APPROVED BY:

Gary J. Bredfeldt, Ph.D., Dissertation Supervisor

Jason Waters, Ed.D., Second Reader
ABSTRACT
The purpose of this quantitative descriptive research was to ascertain both the amount of time spent reading the Bible and the perceived impact of regular reading on the lives and leadership roles of American Evangelical Christian church pastoral leaders. The central assumption guiding this study was that the Bible is a vital source for Christian leaders that provides many benefits to its readers, including leadership guidance that biblical and historical leaders have diligently applied. Because these leaders serve as role models, the theoretical foundation guiding this research was Albert Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory of Development, which has linked learning to observing role models. As Timothy's mentor, Paul told him to remember, "all Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness" (2 Timothy 3:16, English Standard Version). Despite these positive aspects of God's Word, it has been found that ninety-one percent of Americans do not read the Bible, and, out of the Protestant population, only thirty percent do (Clark, 2020; Earls, 2019). There were, however, no current studies describing the Bible reading habits of contemporary Christian leaders. This study aimed to describe both the amount of time spent reading the Bible and the perceived impact of regular reading on the lives and leadership roles of American Evangelical Christian church pastoral leaders. This quantitative descriptive survey study found that most National Association of Evangelicals pastoral leaders have prioritized regular bible reading and have also found regular Bible reading has positively impacted their lives and leadership roles. Most NAE leaders also believe there is a value in observing biblical and biblically-centered leadership role models.

Keywords: Bible-reading, Christian Leadership, Modeling, Leadership Empowerment
# Table of Contents

ABSTRACT.................................................................................................................................3

Copyright ......................................................................................................................................4

List of Tables ...............................................................................................................................9

List of Figures .............................................................................................................................11

List of Abbreviations ..................................................................................................................13

CHAPTER ONE: RESEARCH CONCERN ......................................................................................14
  Introduction ...............................................................................................................................14
  Background of the Problem ......................................................................................................15
  Statement of the Problem .........................................................................................................16
  Purpose Statement ....................................................................................................................16
  Research Questions ..................................................................................................................17
  Assumptions and Delimitations ...............................................................................................18
    Research Assumptions ............................................................................................................18
    Delimitations of the Research Design ....................................................................................18
  Definition of Terms ...................................................................................................................18
  Significance of the Study ..........................................................................................................19
  Summary of the Design ............................................................................................................21

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW ....................................................................................25
  Overview .................................................................................................................................25
  Theological Framework for the Study ......................................................................................26
  Theoretical Framework for the Study .......................................................................................49
  Related Literature .....................................................................................................................56
Rationale for Study and Gap in the Literature ......................................................... 118
Profile of the Current Study ................................................................................. 119

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY ................................................. 121
Research Design Synopsis .................................................................................. 121
The Problem ........................................................................................................ 121
Purpose Statement .............................................................................................. 123
Research Questions ............................................................................................ 123
Research Design and Methodology ................................................................. 124
Population ........................................................................................................... 126
Sampling Procedures ........................................................................................ 128
Limits of Generalization .................................................................................... 130
Ethical Considerations ....................................................................................... 131
Instrumentation .................................................................................................. 133
Validity .............................................................................................................. 134
Reliability ........................................................................................................... 135
Research Procedures ......................................................................................... 137
Data Analysis and Statistical Procedures ........................................................ 141
Data Analysis ..................................................................................................... 141
Statistical Procedures ....................................................................................... 142
Chapter Summary ............................................................................................. 144

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS ............................................................................. 145
Overview .......................................................................................................... 145
Research Questions ......................................................................................... 145
Null Hypotheses .............................................................................................................. 146
Compilation Protocol and Measures .............................................................................. 146
Demographic and Sample Data ....................................................................................... 147
Data Analysis and Findings ............................................................................................ 148
    Research Question One .............................................................................................. 148
    Research Question Two .............................................................................................. 155
    Research Question Three .......................................................................................... 162
    Research Question Four ............................................................................................. 169
    Research Question Five ............................................................................................. 176
    Research Question Six ............................................................................................... 183
Evaluation of the Research Design .................................................................................. 190

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSIONS .................................................................................... 192
    Overview .................................................................................................................... 192
    Research Purpose ....................................................................................................... 192
    Research Questions .................................................................................................... 192
    Research Conclusions, Implications, and Applications ............................................. 193
    Research Limitations ................................................................................................. 200
    Further Research ....................................................................................................... 203
    Summary .................................................................................................................... 203
REFERENCES .................................................................................................................. 206
Appendices ..................................................................................................................... 223
    Appendix A: Preliminary Joshua 1:8 Questionnaire (JQ) ........................................... 223
    Appendix B: Follow Up Questionnaire for Panel Reviewing JQ ............................... 229
Appendix C: Introductory Letter to Participants ................................................................. 236
Appendix D: Consent Form ................................................................................................. 237
Appendix E: Reminder Letter to Participants ................................................................. 239
Appendix F: Thank You Letter to Participants ................................................................. 240
Appendix H: Table Linking RQs and JQs ................................................................. 242
Appendix I: NAE Permission Letter ......................................................................................... 244
List of Tables

Table 1 Example Table for Data Analyzed for RQ1, JQ Question 1 ..............................................143
Table 2 Example Table for Data Analyzed for RQ1, JQ Question 2 ..............................................143
Table 3 Example Table for Data Analyzed for RQ1, JQ Question 3 ..............................................143
Table 4 Example Table for Data Analyzed for RQ1, JQ Question 3 ..............................................144
Table 5 RQ1, JQ Question 1 Survey Statistics ........................................................................152
Table 6 RQ1, JQ Question 2 Survey Statistics ........................................................................153
Table 7 RQ1, JQ Question 3 Survey Answer Percentages .........................................................154
Table 8 RQ1, JQ Question 3 Survey Statistics ........................................................................154
Table 9 RQ2, JQ Question 4 Survey Answer Percentages .........................................................158
Table 10 RQ2, JQ Question 4 Survey Statistics ........................................................................159
Table 11 RQ2, JQ Question 5 Survey Answer Percentages .........................................................160
Table 12 RQ2, JQ Question 5 Survey Statistics ........................................................................160
Table 13 RQ2, JQ Question 6 Survey Answer Percentages .........................................................161
Table 14 RQ2, JQ Question 6 Survey Statistics ........................................................................161
Table 15 RQ3, JQ Question 7 Survey Answer Percentages .........................................................165
Table 16 RQ3, JQ Question 7 Survey Statistics ........................................................................166
Figure 20 RQ3, JQ Question 8 Survey Responses ................................................................166
Table 18 RQ3, JQ Question 8 Survey Statistics ........................................................................167
Table 19 RQ3, JQ Question 9 Survey Answer Percentages .........................................................168
Table 20 RQ3, JQ Question 9 Survey Statistics ........................................................................168
Table 21 RQ4, JQ Question 10 Survey Answer Percentages ......................................................173
Table 22 RQ4, JQ Question 10 Survey Statistics ......................................................................173
Table 23 RQ4, JQ Question 11 Survey Answer Percentages ......................................................... 174
Table 24 RQ4, JQ Question 11 Survey Statistics ........................................................................ 174
Table 25 RQ4, JQ Question 12 Survey Answer Percentages ......................................................... 175
Table 26 RQ4, JQ Question 12 Survey Statistics ........................................................................ 175
Table 27 RQ5, JQ Question 13 Survey Answer Percentages ......................................................... 179
Table 28 RQ5, JQ Question 13 Survey Statistics ........................................................................ 180
Table 29 RQ5, JQ Question 14 Survey Answer Percentages ......................................................... 181
Table 30 RQ5, JQ Question 14 Survey Statistics ........................................................................ 181
Table 31 RQ5, JQ Question 15 Survey Answer Percentages ......................................................... 182
Table 32 RQ5, JQ Question 15 Survey Statistics ........................................................................ 182
Table 33 RQ6, JQ Question 16 Survey Answer Percentages ......................................................... 187
Table 34 RQ6, JQ Question 16 Survey Statistics ........................................................................ 187
Table 35 RQ6, JQ Question 17 Survey Answer Percentages ......................................................... 188
Table 36 RQ6, JQ Question 17 Survey Statistics ........................................................................ 188
Table 37 RQ6, JQ Question 18 Survey Answer Percentages ......................................................... 189
Table 38 RQ6, JQ Question 18 Survey Statistics ........................................................................ 189
# List of Figures

Figure 1 RQ1, JQ Question 1 Split-Half Correlation ................................................................. 149  
Figure 2 RQ1, JQ Question 2 Split-Half Correlation ................................................................. 150  
Figure 3 RQ1, JQ Question 3 Split-Half Correlation ................................................................. 151  
Figure 4 RQ1, JQ Question 1 Survey Responses ................................................................. 151  
Figure 5 RQ1, JQ Question 2 Survey Responses ................................................................. 153  
Figure 6 RQ1, JQ Question 3 Survey Responses ................................................................. 154  
Figure 7 RQ2, JQ Question 4 Split-Half Correlation ................................................................. 156  
Figure 8 RQ2, JQ Question 5 Split-Half Correlation ................................................................. 156  
Figure 9 RQ2, JQ Question 6 Split-Half Correlation ................................................................. 157  
Figure 10 RQ2, Split-Half Correlation .................................................................................. 157  
Figure 11 RQ2, JQ Question 4 Survey Responses ................................................................. 158  
Figure 13 RQ2, JQ Question 6 Survey Responses ................................................................. 160  
Figure 14 RQ2, Survey Responses ..................................................................................... 162  
Figure 15 RQ3, JQ Question 7 Split-Half Correlation ................................................................. 163  
Figure 16 RQ3, JQ Question 8 Split-Half Correlation ................................................................. 163  
Figure 17 RQ3, JQ Question 9 Split-Half Correlation ................................................................. 164  
Figure 18 RQ3, Split-Half Correlation .................................................................................. 164  
Figure 19 RQ3, JQ Question 7 Survey Responses ................................................................. 165  
Table 17 RQ3, JQ Question 8 Survey Answer Percentages ...................................................... 167  
Figure 2 RQ3, JQ Question 9 Survey Responses ................................................................. 167  
Figure 22 RQ3, Survey Responses ..................................................................................... 169  
Figure 23 RQ4, JQ Question 10 Split-Half Correlation ............................................................. 170
List of Abbreviations

Joshua 1:8 Questionnaire Instrument (JQ)

Personally Identifiable Information (PII)

National Association of Evangelicals (NAE)

Amplified Version (AMP)

English Standard Version (ESV)
CHAPTER ONE: RESEARCH CONCERN

Introduction

The Bible is a text authored by God Himself (2 Timothy 3:16). The psalmist wrote that the man whose “delight is in the law of the Lord, and on His law [His precepts and teachings],” would be “like a tree firmly planted [and fed] by streams of water, which yields its fruit in its season; its leaf does not wither; and in whatever he does, he prospers [and comes to maturity]” (Amplified Version, 2015, Psalm 1:1-3). The psalmist also noted that this man would "[habitually] meditate day and night” on God’s Word (AMP, Psalm 1:2). In the account of Joshua, he was told, at the inception of his leadership, to "meditate…day and night" on "the Book of the Law" (English Standard Version, 2016, Joshua 1:8). This command was coupled with a promise that if Joshua did indeed obey this command, he would be "prosperous, and…have good success" (ESV, Joshua 1:9).

The Bible is a source from which leaders can and should be drawing. The Word of God will allow leaders to understand who God is and His desires (Stanley, 2015). By reading the Bible, a supernatural change would happen inside the leader (Buchan & Roux, 2012; Dollar, 2020; McConnell, 2011; Needham, 2017; Wetherell, 2016; 2 Thessalonians 2:13). The Bible will equip and empower leaders to lead well at home, with their families (Kroff et al., 2018; Resolution, n.d.). It will equip and empower leaders to lead well in a godless world (Dollar, 2019; Franklin, 2018; Krejcir, n.d.). The Bible is also an essential text for leaders because it contains leadership advice and leadership role models (Cheek, 2010; Howell, 2003; Woolfe, 2002). John Piper (1995) said that actively reading and meditating on the Scriptures is vital for Christian leaders, and the results of not doing so are that a leader’s “faith will grow weak, and his love will languish” (sec. 3).
Background of the Problem

Choosing to read the Scriptures will result in success, spiritual power, and nourishment (Hebrews 4:12-16; Joshua 1:1-9). Reading the Bible is an essential practice for Christian leaders (Krejcir, n.d.; Olsen, 2019; Piper, 1995; Sibley Towner, 2002). The Bible is a text which reveals God to the reader (Graham, 1984; Spurgeon, 2017). The Bible reveals information regarding leadership by presenting role models, which can be observed while also imparting God's life-giving power for the leaders' lives and leadership callings (Adeoye et al., 2014; Graham, 1984; Hebrews 4:12; Sibley Towner, 2002; Spurgeon, 2017).

Even though the reading of God's Word is vital for Christians, research shows many Protestant Christians in America, as well as Americans as a whole, do not regularly read the Bible (Clark, 2020; Earls, 2019). In 2019, a study found seventy percent of Protestant Christians in America do not read their Bibles regularly (Earls, 2019). A 2020 study revealed 91 percent of Americans surveyed do not read the Bible (Clark, 2020). While studies like these reveal current data regarding the time Christians read their Bibles, this researcher could not locate studies undertaken explicitly to describe the Bible reading habits of today's Christian leaders.

Understanding that the Bible is a text vital to Christian leaders, the principal focus of this research was to describe the current number of American Evangelical pastoral leaders who were or were not regularly reading the Bible. The study also focused on the perceptions these leaders have on the impact regular Bible reading has on their lives and leadership roles. There have been leaders throughout history who remained dedicated to the reading of God's Word throughout their Christian lives, and some of these led their followers during chaotic and turbulent times (Benson & Anthony, 2008; Bredfeldt, 2006; Rau, 2011; Roszak & Vijgen, 2015; Torrey, 1923). Today, Christian leaders in America also live in a turbulent and chaotic time (Barna Group,
Amidst the turmoil, the church is no longer viewed as being a trustworthy institution by many (Barna Group, 2017). During this time, a key to effective leadership may be leaders dedicated to reading the Word of God, just as many other leaders of the past (Dollar, 2019; Graham, 1984; McConnell, 2011).

**Statement of the Problem**

Research shows that, as a whole, Protestant Christians in America do not regularly read the Bible (Earls, 2019). While this study describes how little time Christians spend in the Bible, there is seemingly no current data revealing how much time Christian leaders, specifically, spend in God's Word and how regular reading is perceived to impact leaders’ lives and leadership practices. This gap is significant for several reasons. Bible reading is essential because the Scriptures provide biblical leadership role models that can be observed by reading. Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory postulates that growth and learning occur by observing role models (Bandura, 2006; Adeoye et al., 2014; Yount, 2010). Bible reading is essential for Christian leaders because it has many benefits, such as providing leadership guidance (Adeoye et al., 2014; Woolfe, 2002). The Bible is also essential because it is a living and powerful truth viewed as being vital for biblical and historical Christian leaders of the past (Adeoye et al., 2014; Graves, 2017; Gutek, 1995; McConnell, 2011; Piper, 1995; Rummel, 2017; Woolfe, 2002).

**Purpose Statement**

The purpose of this quantitative descriptive research was to ascertain both the amount of time spent reading the Bible, as well as the perceived impact of that reading on the lives and leadership roles of American Evangelical Christian church pastoral leaders. The central assumption guiding this study is that the Bible is a vital source for Christian leaders that provides many benefits to its readers, including leadership guidance that has been diligently applied by
biblical and historical leaders. Because these leaders serve as role models, the theoretical foundation guiding this study is Albert Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory of Development, which links learning to the observation of role models.

**Research Questions**

**RQ1.** Excluding reading for vocational purposes (such as sermon or teaching preparation), how much time do Christian leaders spend in regular Bible reading for personal growth and development?

**RQ2.** What perceived impact, if any, do Christian leaders identify that Bible reading has on their personal lives?

**RQ3.** What perceived impact, if any, do Christian leaders identify that Bible reading has on their family lives?

**RQ4.** What perceived impact, if any, do Christian leaders identify that Bible reading has on their leadership approach and behaviors?

**RQ5.** What is the perception Christian leaders have on the link between Bible reading and their understanding of God?

**RQ6.** What perceived impact, if any, do Christian leaders identify that biblical and historical, Bible-centered role models have on their leadership approach and behaviors?

These RQs were designed to answer the questions regarding Bible reading and its perceived impact on leaders. In answering RQ1, the data revealed that many American Evangelical pastoral church leaders regularly read the Bible. This data was compared to the national average of only 30% of American Protestant Christians who regularly read the Bible (Earls, 2019). The study's results revealed that most American pastoral leaders who identify as part of the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE) have regularly read the Bible. RQs 2-6 were designed to provide richer data on the perceived impact of Bible reading has upon leaders' lives and leadership roles. These questions follow the positive impacts on Bible reading outlined in the literature review. This research revealed most American NAE senior pastors find that regular Bible reading positively impacts their lives and leadership roles.
Assumptions and Delimitations

Research Assumptions

This study began with the following assumptions:

1. The participants, who had been pastoral leaders for more than three years, should have been able to reflect fully on the impact Bible reading has had upon their lives and leadership.

2. The participants view the Bible as an authoritative source.

3. The participants value the Bible's impact; however, life's distractions can inhibit regular reading.

Delimitations of the Research Design

This study began with the following delimitations:

1. This study looked into the Bible's impact upon American Evangelical pastoral church leaders' lives and leadership roles. Because this study focused on pastoral leaders, Christian leaders from other organizations (even other Christian organizations) were omitted. The reason for this delimitation is that the researcher felt the data collected was more easily studied and verified when sourced from a pool of people with a similar life purpose and calling.

2. Entry-level leaders were omitted because the data was gathered from those who have actively held a pastoral leadership position for more than three years.

3. This study was also delimited to studying Bible reading as a spiritual exercise and excluded other spiritual disciplines such as prayer frequency, worship, fasting, etc.

4. No pastoral leaders of the churches that were a part of the NAE were a part of this study (Appendix G). By narrowing the leaders’ affiliations to the NAE, this researcher intended that the like-mindedness of those who are a part of this particular group provides more relevant data.

Definition of Terms

The following words and phrases were included to clarify their meanings as used in this research study.

1. Christian Leader: There are many theories on leaders and leadership in the world today (Northouse, 2016). Piper (1987) said, Christian leaders are those who “exert more or less Christian influence in Christian ways. Or to put it another way, to the degree that you shape others toward the image of Christ you are a Christian
leader” (para. 13). This particular type of leader will also be one who, according to Bredfeldt (2006), teaches God's Word "with clarity, in its original context, and in a way that is relevant" (p.15).

2. **Regular Bible Reading:** For this research, regular Bible reading is defined as “reading the Bible personally every day,” or at least “a few times a week” (Earls, 2019, para. 5).

3. **Observation and Modeling:** For this research, the concept of observing role models was based on Bandura’s Theory of Cognitive Development. According to Bandura (2003), “in abstract observational learning, observers extract the principles or standards embodied in the thinking and actions exhibited by others. Once they acquire the principles, they can use them to generate new instances of the behavior that go beyond what they have seen, read, or heard” (p.169).

4. **Role Models:** Considering the above definition of modeling, the role models that this study references were either biblical or historical. Biblical role models are those whose lives can be observed through the pages of the Bible. Historical role models are other leaders from biblical times forward.

**Significance of the Study**

As established earlier, the Word of God is a powerful, life-giving text that reveals the truths of God intended for His created ones (Romans 10:17, Psalm 119:105, 2 Timothy 3:16). Joshua’s account in Scripture provides a scenario in which the intake of the Word gave a leader the guarantee of leadership success (Joshua 1:1-9). In Paul’s letter to the Ephesians, he tells them to “take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day” (ESV, Ephesians 6:13). One of the pieces Paul lists as being a part of this armor is “the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God” (ESV, Ephesians 6:17).

Thirty percent of American Protestant Christians are reading the Bible regularly (Earls, 2019). Those people are gaining daily access to the life-giving Word of God (as discussed above). It is worth considering if, taking into account those powerful life-giving aspects, this could mean seventy percent of America’s Protestant Christians are not receiving those gifts from Bible reading daily. This study was centered explicitly upon American Evangelical pastoral church leaders. This study was not correlative research on the lack of Bible reading and problems
in a Christian leader's life. However, it could prompt pastoral leaders to take stock of their Bible reading to see if they are receiving the promises associated with it (Ephesians 6; Joshua 1:1-9; Romans 10:17; Psalm 119:105; 2 Timothy 3:16).

This study was descriptive; it did not seek to prove but to discover how much time American Evangelical pastoral leaders spend reading their Bibles and if they have any perceived impacts on their lives and leadership roles because of regular reading. It could cause pastoral leaders to reflect on their connection to the Word to ensure they receive the fuel they need to live faith-filled lives and be faith-filled leaders (Romans 10:17; Piper, 1995). An example of how this research could impact leaders is that the study revealed leaders have been reading the Bible regularly and have also found their reading has positively impacted their lives and leadership. A Christian leader living a life marked with power loss and admits they do not partake of the Bible regularly enough to be fueled could commit to reading the Word faithfully. This study could also encourage and remind pastors they have a responsibility to lead people to experience "the life-changing power of God" through His Word (Bredfeldt, 2006, p.15).

America today is a nation currently seeing violence and upheavals (Davidson, 2020; Willingham, 2020). Many reject the truths God set into place and those institutions that uphold such truths (Barna Group, 2017; Mohler, 2019). It is even believed contemporary events are a threat to Christianity itself (Dreher, 2016). According to Franklin Graham (2018), those who do not have a worldview based upon God’s truth no longer have “clear definitions of right and wrong” (para. 15). Today, American Christian leaders lead in an anti-God, secularized era (Gundersen, 2019; Mohler, 2019). Graham (2019) said, "we need a return to God's Word,” which is “mankind’s only sure guide to life eternal and abundant" (paras. 15-16). In an era struggling for truth, it seems it would be vital to have pastoral leadership that is thoroughly grounded in the
truth found within the Word of God. This research could be significant by having the power to revive pastoral leaders' hearts and cause them to ask God to give them an unquenchable thirst for His Word.

**Summary of the Design**

**Research Population**

This study looked into the perceived importance of God's Word in American Evangelical pastoral church leaders' lives. The population included pastoral church leaders from a variety of Evangelical Christian denominations. The leaders of these Evangelical denominations were located through the home page of each denomination listed (Appendix G) on the NAE website (Denominations, n.d.). The reasoning behind the choice to include leaders from these various church denominations is that this researcher was interested in how God's Word is viewed and valued by leaders across the Evangelical portion of the church.

**Sampling Techniques**

The quantitative research sample consisted of American Evangelical pastoral church leaders from varying denominations (Appendix G) within the NAE (Denominations, n.d.). The original goal was to send out surveys to pastors from arbitrarily selected NAE churches until 381 responses were obtained. The sample size was calculated, beginning with the number of churches that were, at the time of this research, a part of the NAE being 45,000 (Evangelicals, n.d.). Considering there would be a lead pastor of these churches, the population was assumed to be 45,000 pastoral Evangelical church leaders. The sample size would have been 381, calculating for a 95% confidence level with a sampling error of plus or minus 5% (Sample Size Calculator, n.d.). However, this researcher could not meet this goal because of a low response rate. 1252 surveys were sent to pastors from arbitrarily selected NAE churches, but only 120 completed
them. This sample size has an 80% confidence level with a sampling error of plus or minus 5.84% (Sample Size Calculator, n.d.).

The stratified sampling technique was selected as it allows for a "sampling in which the population is divided into two or more groups (strata) according to one or more common attributes" (Dudovskiy, 2015, para. 1). The strata being studied were the different denominations identified as a part of the NAE (Appendix G). Invitations to participate were sent to approximately the same number of participants from each denomination, despite the size of those denominations. This allowed for leaders of each of the NAE denominations to be studied without using the data collected from only a majority of pastors from large denominations. The only time where this was not the case was with small denominations, such as The Royal House Chapel denomination, whose church numbers were much smaller than other NAE denominations.

**Methodological Design**

Quantitative studies use statistical analysis in a study of variables identified to describe answers to the research problem (Creswell, 2018; Gall et al., 2015; Lee, 1992; Roberts, 2010). The research method was useful because it allowed this researcher to describe "facts…of human behavior" (Roberts, 2010, ch. 12). The method is structured so that the information being studied can be collected and analyzed objectively (Gall et al., 2015; Lee, 1992). This researcher was interested in this objectivity and being able to design and execute a study that can be considered both reliable and valid (Lee, 1992).

Descriptive survey research was the quantitative method of research used for this study. Descriptive research can be used when quantitative researchers have the goal of describing aspects of a population. Researchers use descriptive research because this method allows researchers to be able to "highlight a problem of practice and bring it to the attention of the
general public [and] in some cases, this attention results in actions to find solutions to the problem" (Gall et al., 2015, pp. 205-206). Descriptive research allowed this researcher to "create a quantitative representation of behavior [and] opinions" as it relates to Bible reading among the population which was studied (Gall et al., 2015, p. 210). The data gathered from this type of research method can be used to “develop a generalizable, statistical representation of a sample behavior or personal characteristics with respect to predetermined variables” (Gall et al., 2015, pp. 210-211). This method was a good fit for this particular research because the participants were a “representative sample” of the population of American Evangelical pastoral church leaders from which conclusions from the data could be applied to the entire population (Gall et al., 2015, pp. 204, 210-211).

One way of conducting descriptive research is through survey research, which gathers data from sample populations (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005). Survey research can be used by those conducting quantitative research to study the particular variables they are examining (Gall et al., 2015; Rockinson-Szapkiw & Spaulding, 2014). This method has been defined as "the systematic collection of data about participants' beliefs, attitudes, interest, and behavior using standardized measures such as questionnaires" (Gall et al., 2015, p. 207). The collected data helps researchers understand "human activity" (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005, p. 141). This researcher used the survey method as she created surveys, disseminated them, collected them, and analyzed the data to understand Bible reading habits and connected beliefs through the participants’ answers (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005).

A benefit of survey research that was appealing is that many people can be examined through survey research without actually gathering data from the entire population of American Evangelical pastoral church leaders (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005). Instead, a smaller, representative
sample who participates in a survey described the “characteristics, opinions, attitudes, or previous experience” of the broader population (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005, p. 141). As the data is collected and analyzed, this researcher was able to study a cross-section of participants and variables that would describe a particular snapshot of the American Evangelical pastoral church leaders (Lee, 1992). The description the data of this study made was that the pastoral leaders surveyed do read the Bible regularly and have personally seen positive effects on their lives and leadership roles from doing so.

The Bible is an essential text to Christian leaders. The Word of God allows these leaders to learn about God and his relationship with humanity. It is also vital to them because there are life and power within the pages of Scripture. Unfortunately, despite this truth, few Protestant Christian people have been reading the Bible regularly. Those who do not read it consistently neglect their access to the gift of God's Word. How do Christian leaders align with numbers that are showing so few Protestants are reading the Bible? Are American Evangelical pastoral church leaders refusing to partake of this gift like the majority of Protestant America, or are they standing out as leaders who are regularly engaging in God's Word? This study sought to describe these answers from the data collected from American Evangelical pastoral church leaders.
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Overview

Christian leadership is wholly informed by scripture. It provides role models to follow that could help leaders learn how to lead in a more God-glorifying way. Joshua's leadership style was informed by the commitment to study the words of God given through Moses (Joshua 1:1-9). The Bible "is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart" (ESV, Hebrews 4:12). Though the Bible is available for all Christian leaders, they are responsible for actively engaging with it (Piper, 1995). Although there are promises for leaders regarding the Word of God, some disregard those promises by neglecting the Bible altogether (Olsen, 2016; Spurgeon, 2017). Joshua's story shows that success is possible when one follows God's advice regarding the Scriptures (Billings, 2013; Joshua 1:1-9; McConnell, 2011).

The Bible is also essential to leaders because it provides many different leadership role models that can be observed through the reading of their accounts. Observing role models is a significant aspect of Albert Bandura's Theory on Cognitive Development (Bandura, 2006; Yount, 2010). This type of development is a factor in spiritual growth because people can grow spiritually as they assimilate what was learned and use it to create conceptual ideas that add to their spirituality (Bandura, 2003; Hanson, 2018; Lavinsky, 2017; Morrow, 2016; Mullins, 2006; Rummel, 2017; Yount, 2010). The Bible is not the only source Christian leaders can go to find spiritual role models that can be observed. Throughout history, there have been leaders who were dedicated to reading the Scriptures and left lasting leadership legacies behind them (Benson & Anthony, 2008; Graves, 2017; Gutek, 1995; Rau, 2011; Roszak & Vijgen, 2015; Torrey, 1923).
Theological Framework for the Study

Joshua’s account makes it evident that the reading of God’s Word is an essential element of successful Christian leadership (Joshua 1:1-8). Joshua was a man who was “strong, courageous, lived a life of faithfulness to the Lord, and became one of Israel’s most prosperous and successful leaders” (McConnell, 2011, para. 1). The book opens with Joshua stepping into the highest possible leadership position of the Israelites (Adeoye et al., 2014; Joshua 1:1-2; McConnell, 2011). Joshua was chosen by God Himself to carry on with Moses’ leadership role (McCarthy, 1971; McConnell, 2011). Beginning this leadership role would have been challenging for any leader, but Joshua did this during a time of significant change as the people stepped into their inheritance (Adeoye et al., 2014; Earl, 2010; McConnell, 2011).

During this transition, God spoke to Joshua about his leadership position (McConnell, 2011). His words serve as the cornerstone of this review. God spoke to Joshua, saying:

Moses, my servant, is dead. Now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, you and all this people, into the land that I am giving to them, to the people of Israel. Every place that the sole of your foot will tread upon I have given to you, just as I promised to Moses. From the wilderness and this Lebanon as far as the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites to the Great Sea toward the going down of the sun shall be your territory. No man shall be able to stand before you all the days of your life. Just as I was with Moses, so I will be with you. I will not leave you or forsake you. Be strong and courageous, for you shall cause this people to inherit the land that I swore to their fathers to give them. Only be strong and very courageous, being careful to do according to all the law that Moses my servant commanded you. Do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may have good success wherever you go. This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success. Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go. (ESV, Joshua 1:1-9)

Joshua 1 shows God had a plan and purpose for Joshua's leadership (Joshua 1:2). It was also clear that Joshua would be starting his leadership role with God at his side (Joshua 1:5). Despite the very promise of God's continual presence, Joshua had a part to play in the successful
completion of his role as a leader (Billings, 2013; Earl, 2010; Joshua 1:8). God told Joshua that his success was tied to his continual contemplation of God's instructions (Earl, 2010; Joshua 1:8; McConnell, 2011). Joshua is promised success in a covenant-like manner but had to do his part by staying focused on the Book of the Law, words from God Himself (Earl, 2010; McConnell, 2011). In thinking of this in mathematical terms, "Knowledge of God's Word + Obedience to God's Word = Prosperity and Success" (McConnell, 2011, sec. 2).

Paul was another biblical leader who recognized the importance of reading scripture. This can be seen in how he instructed Timothy to continue living according to the scriptures he had learned because they are not just mere words—they are the very thoughts of God. John 14:6 explains God is truth. The One Who is Truth, Jesus, “taught that absolute truth is knowable,” and “that truth is found in the Word of God” (Bredfeldt, 2006, p. 69). With this understanding, coupled with the knowledge that God authored the Bible, one can see the Bible is a source of pure truth (2 Timothy 3:16). Scripture is made up of the words of God himself, and this truth has great power and influence when brought into the mind of the believer (2 Timothy 3:14-17). When a group of people begins to dismiss the importance of the Bible, they will cease to access the truths contained within (Perkins, 2011).

The Bible is Essential to Christian Leaders’ Lives

The Bible is essential to the lives of Christian leaders for several reasons. First, the Bible is a book given to us that tells people about God so they can be in a relationship with Him (Cole, 2007; Graham, 1984; Needham, 2017). Second, the Bible is more than pages in a book. It is so powerful that it changes people, so they become closer and closer to the likeness He planned for them (Buchan & Roux, 2012; Dollar, 2020; McConnell, 2011; Needham, 2017; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; Wetherell, 2016). Third, the Bible is an essential element for a thriving family life, which is
sometimes a struggle for Christian leaders (Kroff et al., 2018; Resolution, n.d.). Fourth, the Bible can provide information Christian leaders can use to live in a secular world (Graham, 1984; Dollar, 2019). Finally, the Bible can be a source for leadership training (Raiger, 2017; Woolfe, 2002).

**The Bible Reveals God**

God's Word reveals the quintessence of God and His desires for the world (Stanley, 2015). The Bible is a precious gift from God that He gave humanity so people could know Him intimately (Cole, 2007; Graham, 1984; Needham, 2017). As people read God's Word, they will find out all they need to know about God: who He is, what He is like, and how He thinks (Stanley, 2015). If God did not give us the gift of the Bible, it might be challenging to come to know Him; thus, the same result could be expected from those who do not read it (Bontrager, 2016; Stanley, 2015). Regularly reading God's Word is also essential to a Christian's life because, through it, one can learn to hear the voice of the Lord with more clarity (Sibley Towner, 2002). God's Word also teaches how to interact with Him through worship, an essential part of a relationship with Him (Stanley, 2015).

When leaders think of Bible reading, they may either think of it as a source of intimacy and rejuvenation or with a sense of boredom and dread (Stanley, 2015a). Because God is the ultimate author behind the words in the Bible, it is an essential book (Graham, 1984; Stanley, 2015). The Bible teaches readers that it is crucial to know the scriptures because it opens the door to understanding God's ways (Bontrager, 2016; Krejcir, n.d.; Stanley, 2015a; Wetherell, 2016). As the Word is taken in, it will allow the reader to know each member of the Godhead (Cole, 2007).
Without an understanding of scriptures, there is a genuine possibility that not only will people not grow in an understanding of God but can actually develop a distorted and reduced view of Him (Bontrager, 2016; Stanley, 2015a). The Christian leader who does not read the Bible will also not be able to walk in the fullness of the relationship God desires for people to have with Him (Cole, 2007). The relationship can turn into an item to check off the daily to-do list (Cole, 2007). Scripture is the vital source one can go to because it is the only unchanging, eternal truth (Cole, 2007; Stanley, 2015a; Wetherell, 2016).

Not only does the Bible inform on specific attributes of God, but it also provides a holistic view of Him through the way He interacted with people within those pages (Needham, 2017; Wetherell, 2016). It has been said that just as one should “never judge a book by its cover,” so can “none of us can know God sufficiently without traversing the whole of his very Word” (Wetherell, 2016, sec.1). By reading the Scriptures, people can also understand Jesus' role in the redemption story because the Bible is a story of Jesus (Wetherell, 2016). When people behold God's Word, they see Jesus; when they see Jesus, they see God (Bontrager, 2016). Deductive reasoning revealed, then, that not taking in God's Word will result in not knowing the author of it (Bontrager, 2016).

Many Christian leaders understand this and genuinely believe in and honor the Bible as God's very Word (Kroff et al., 2018). If the Apostle Paul, as a leader, needed to know God, how much more do other leaders need an understanding of Him (Cole, 2007; Philippians 3:8-14). Christian leaders need God, and, thus, they need God's Word so they can know Him (Needham, 2017). The intake of scripture guarantees that when people have "a rich vocabulary of God's Word," their relationship with Him will be "more living and active" (Needham, 2017, sec.5).
Source of Truth and Power

Of course, today, God's Word encompasses much more than the Scriptures of which biblical leaders had access. A study looking into the benefits of reading God's Word will show the Bible itself reveals the benefits of doing so. Though these reasons may not be pointed as directly to leadership as Joshua's example, considering all Christian leaders are Christian people, the verses on the Bible's importance to people relate to the lives of the leaders as well. It is essential to know the scriptures because they are filled with truth and power (McConnell, 2011). God's Word is a life source for those who consume it (Matthew 4:4; McConnell, 2011). This life source is so powerful that it can build up the faith of Christian leaders (Romans 10:17). The Bible is where Christian leaders can gain insights necessary for life from God's very thoughts (2 Timothy 3:16; Psalm 119:105).

Knowing the scriptures within the Bible's pages is equivalent to wielding a sword for the spiritual battles Christian leaders will encounter in this life (Buchan & Roux, 2012; Ephesians 6:17). Paul felt so strongly about the power of God's Word that he named it the weapon that could be yielded to "stand against the schemes of the devil" (ESV, Ephesians 6:11,17). Angus Buchan, a South African pastor, made famous in the film Faith Like Potatoes, has personally found much power in reading God's Word, knowing it, then speaking it out (Buchan & Roux, 2012). To him, it is a vital and powerful weapon that can and should be used by the people of God (Buchan & Roux, 2012). One story he shares to illustrate this point is as follows:

Last week I visited a town called Middleburg…It was absolutely incredible what God did. I spoke to a group of about a thousand people...at the end of the meeting, we were reminded that the maize farmers in that area were experiencing the plight of a dry spell. They asked us to pray for rain. We prayed together as a group and applied the Word of the Lord…The following day the international weather report…forecast that there would be no rain anywhere in South Africa. However, as soon as I arrived home, I received the most beautiful phone call to say that close on 25 mm of rain had fallen on the farms in the Middleburg area! (Buchan & Roux, 2012, Sec. 10 January)
This sword-wielding power can be seen in the interchange between Jesus and Satan (Matthew 4). When being tempted in the desert, Jesus told Satan that God's Word could be a source of complete sustenance (Buchan & Roux, 2012; Matthew 4:4). It was the Word of God Jesus used to stop the devil during each of the three temptations (Buchan & Roux, 2012; Matthew 4:4). One could reason that for leaders to use God's powerful Word, they must first know it; to know it, they must read it (Romans 10:17).

Changes people from inside out

One of the purposes is that the words of God will do His work inside His people (Buchan & Roux, 2012; Dollar, 2020; McConnell, 2011; Needham, 2017; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; Wetherell, 2016). The work of scriptures within the hearts of the believers is “living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart” (ESV, Hebrews 4:12). By accessing truth, God's people will understand how best to live; thus, the Christian leader, not unlike Joshua, will gain an understanding of the best ways to lead (Spurgeon, 2017; Woolfe, 2002). The Holy Spirit will open eyes and impart understanding into the truths of scripture (Stanley, 2015). These truths seep into our beings and enlighten our minds (Dollar, 2018; Needham, 2017; Sibley Towner, 2002; Wetherell, 2016). Because God's Word is true, it is vital for the Word to be read (Dollar, 2020).

Commitment to regularly reading God's Word is essential because:

Our thoughts are powerful, and they can influence our entire lives. If we think positively, we’re more likely to follow up with actions leading to a positive outcome. If we think negatively, destructive behavior can follow. God doesn’t want us to struggle with wrong-thinking, which is why He gave us guidelines to help us develop a godly way of thinking. Our mindsets and attitudes shape our thoughts; therefore, it’s important to be aware of what goes into our minds through our eyes and ears. We don’t live in a vacuum, and plenty of good and bad influences compete for our attention. We ultimately control which
thoughts and ideas we embrace and which ones we reject. We become what we believe, so aligning our thoughts to agree with the Word of God keeps our minds safe. (Dollar, 2020, paras. 1-2)

As Christians move forward from in their spiritual journeys, the regular intake of God's Word will aid in the growth of their faith (Dollar, 2020; McConnell, 2011; Stanley, 2015). Learning the significance of studying the Bible can help people understand the importance of regular reading and help their faith grow stronger (Richard, 2016). Christians who read God's Word can also receive peace from God (McConnell, 2011; Stanley, 2015). This lifestyle of peace, intimacy, and worship would undoubtedly be desirable to Christian leaders. A transformation will occur as Christian leaders, filled with the Holy Spirit, faithfully encounter scripture (Dollar, 2020; Perkins, 2011). Rejection of this powerful, life-giving Word has consequences and can result in people struggling with darkened thinking or even depression (Dollar, 2018). The fact that God’s Word is true must also be the core of Christian leadership because it can be a vital source of truth (Bredfeldt, 2006; Woolfe, 2002).

**The Bible Provides Aid to the Christian Leaders’ Family Relationships**

Being a Christian leader can be hard on a leader’s family (Resolution, n.d.). This may be because “Christian leaders live in highly stressful situations which make it very difficult to meet the emotional needs of their families, including those of their spouses” (Resolution, n.d., para. 3). These stresses can wreak havoc on families, but God’s Word can bring light into these situations (Kroff et al., 2018; Resolution, n.d.). Families of Christian leaders who engage in God’s Word are marked by having more positive relationships than those who do not (Kroff et al., 2018). God’s Word can be the center of their families because they see the Bible as a way to learn how to live by following the advice from God, Himself (Kroff et al., 2018). Going to the Bible to learn how to operate as a leader and family member can yield life to the family unit (Frere, 2019;
Mostert, 2014). Christian leaders can lead their families by initiating family Bible studies, so the whole family is gleaning from God’s Word (Frere, 2019). This approach to Christian family leadership is biblical. It can be found in God's instructions to the Israelites, where they are told to keep God's Word at the forefront of their families' lives continually (Deuteronomy 6:7-9; Fowler, 2018).

This aspect of family leadership will help the entire family see God's Word as vital to life and allow the entire family to glean from its life-giving words (Mostert, 2014). If the entire family is continually in the Scriptures, that means, deductively, they will all reap the benefits discussed thus far in this chapter. In addition to this, the leader will have a tangible way of preventing common conflict that families of Christian leaders have (Kroff et al., 2018; Resolution, n.d.).

**The Bible Shows Leaders how to Live in a Secular Society**

The Bible is also essential because it will help leaders live in a secular society without compromising their faith (Dollar, 2019; Franklin, 2018; Krejcir, n.d.). Besides teaching people about God, scripture is also essential to Christians because it will help them solve the problems they are presented with within this world (Dollar, 2019; Graham, 1984). Therefore, those who regularly read God's Word are saturated in truths and can live without being tricked by the world's deception (Colossians 2:8; Dollar, 2019). They will learn how to live, and they will gain the wisdom needed to live well as they embrace the full lives God desires for his children (Krejcir, n.d.). Living according to worldly thinking can result in a life marked with discord and not peace (Dollar, 2019). The ways of God's kingdom do not align with the ways of this world; therefore, Christian leaders must make sure they are leading according to biblical truths to live and lead in a world hostile to the things of God (1 Cor. 2:14; Dollar, 2020; Romans 8:7).
The Bible Informs on and Has Leadership Role Models that can be Observed

Earlier in this chapter, Joshua was discussed as a leader who became a successful leader because he chose to be obedient to God and meditate on His Word continually (Joshua 1:1-8, 24). In this instance, Joshua was given a guaranteed formula for leadership success, but Joshua's story is only one among many that informs readers on aspects of leadership. It has been found:

The depth of character within the people of the Biblical stories is astounding. They faced significant challenges and overcame them with faith and endurance. For leaders in business today, there is much to learn from these ordinary people who made decisions that transformed them into extraordinary legends. Organizational leadership is in dire need of that level of conviction and determination. The characters of the Bible can teach us a great deal. (Raiger, 2017, para. 2)

This statement shows much is to be learned about leadership within the Bible’s pages (Woolfe, 2002). The Bible is full of case studies on leadership that leaders can study and learn from (Faulkner, 2014).

One leadership concept that can be found within the pages of God’s Word is servant-leadership (Blanchard et al., 2016; Howell, 2003). Successful Christian leadership exhibits love (Howell, 2015). This love in action is seen as leaders make “the daily choice to sacrifice one’s personal preference for the welfare of others” (Howell, 2015, p. 296). Jesus, the ultimate servant-leader, said it was those who chose the positions of a servant (the lowliest) that would gain importance (Flaniken, 2006; Mark 9:35). Jesus established this when he told his disciples that “if anyone would be first, he must be last of all and servant of all” (ESV, Mark 9:35). Perhaps the most poignant example of this was when Jesus washed his disciples’ feet (Matthew 26:14-39; Raiger, 2017). In this part of Jesus’ actions while on earth, he took on the role of a servant and then told his disciples they were to lead the same way (Matthew 26: 14-39; Raiger, 2017).

Servant-leadership is rooted in a core concept that the Bible also teaches a critical idea to help leaders lead well and in Jesus' name: love (Cincala, 2016). This love in action is seen as
leaders make "the daily choice to sacrifice one's personal preference for the welfare of others" (Howell, 2015, p. 296). The serving leader will be attentive to the concerns of their followers, empathize with them, and nurture them (Northouse, 2016). Servant leaders "put followers first, empower them, and help them develop their full personal capabilities" (Northouse, 2016, p.228). Leaders can guide others in a leadership style as seen in the Trinity: developing relationships through love, developing those they lead, and making paths straight for their followers (Cincala, 2016). This is important because love is a vital part of Christianity, and guiding others toward godly ideas is an integral part of leadership (1 Cor. 13; Flaniken, 2006). These leadership aspects can all be seen in how Jesus led his disciples (Flaniken, 2006; Raiger, 2017).

One can also learn leadership skills from Jesus’ recorded time on earth by examining his communication techniques. He stayed in continual communication with His Father through prayer (Cheek, 2010; Luke 5:16). Leaders must ensure they stay in communion with God because, to lead well, one must have and maintain a profoundly intimate relationship with Him (Cheek, 2010). This communion will be maintained as the person keeps a spiritually disciplined life and keep open communication with God at all times (Cheek, 2010). Jesus also had solid communication skills for all of the different people he encountered during his journey on earth (Woolfe, 2002). Jesus was such an excellent communicator that:

he was able to cogently communicate new and revolutionary ideas using parables instead of direct explanation, and he was able to answer Pontius Pilate’s loaded questions without appearing a traitor to Rome or a posturer to his own people. The Sermon on the Mount is a beautiful example of motivational communication, which influence not just the small assembly there but millions of people in millions of assemblies since. His work with the disciples was some of the most astute team-building ever accomplished. And his mastery of the symbolic act gained him the largest following of any leader before or after him. (Woolfe, 2002, pp.ix-xi)

Jesus’ accounts are perhaps the best place to look for leadership advice because He is the Word (John 1). Jesus may be the one we most want to emulate, but His story is one of many that can
provide leadership tips and advice for Bible consumers (Woolfe, 2002). Leadership information can be found in the accounts of many who were leaders in both the Old and New Testament Periods.

Daskal (2012) suggests "everything you need to know about life and leadership you can learn from Noah’s ark” (para.1). Perhaps one significant lesson to learn in Noah’s account is that one should be committed to doing the right things, according to God’s standards, even when the entire world is doing the opposite (Genesis 6:5; Raiger, 2017). Another leadership lesson that can be garnered from this story is that leaders need to be people who will follow God even when God’s commands do not make sense to them (Daskal, 2012; Hebrews 11:7). As a man, Noah "found favor in the eyes of the Lord,” and as a leader, he became the leader of the entire world with a mission to rebuild the population (Genesis 9).

Just as Noah was a leader who was obedient to God, so was his descendant Abraham (Genesis 6:22, 12:4). Abraham was also a leader who was obedient, through faith, to orders that were uncomfortable to follow (Raiger, 2017). Despite the uneasy feeling such orders may invoke, Abraham, and leaders like him, follow such orders out of faith in the future promise (Hebrews 11:8-10; Raiger, 2017). This is undoubtedly a way of living that leaders of any age can gain wisdom from emulating (Raiger, 2017). Abraham had the advantage of effective communication with God that developed into a close relationship to the point that God Himself ate dinner with him and actually took his opinion into account (Byassee, 2009; Genesis 15). God trusted Abraham and chose him to be the one who would become the great patriarchal leader (Byassee, 2009; Hebrews 11:12).

Joseph became the leader of the entire nation of Egypt—answering only to the pharaoh (Genesis 41:38-46). One lesson that can be gleaned from the account of Joseph's life and
leadership is the need for leaders to have spiritual endurance through the hard and even terrible seasons of life (Genesis 37:28; 39:20; 40:23; Raiger, 2017; Woolfe, 2002). Like Joseph, "leaders [should] have a vision that sustains them through difficult times" (Raiger, 2017, sec. 3). Joseph did not give up, and God used him to manage Egypt during a terrible time and save the Hebrew people from total annihilation (Genesis 42:6, 45:5-8). Today, leaders may not be used so dramatically, but they will inevitably have hard seasons. Endurance by staying focused on the vision can help them to lead successfully (Raiger, 2017).

Although Joseph led well, time erased the knowledge of the impact of his leadership, which eventually led to an entire people group becoming enslaved (Exodus 1:8-11; Woolfe, 2002). Studying the leader's story, Moses, who was appointed to lead the Hebrews out of slavery and into a new life, can still impart an understanding of leadership. One leadership lesson to be found in this account is leaders can become significant in their leadership roles while remaining humble (Wellman, 2015). The Scriptures inform us that "Moses was very meek, more than all the people who were on the face of the earth" (ESV, Numbers 12:3). Meekness was a core characteristic that qualified Moses for his leadership assignment (Wellman, 2015). In his meekness, Moses initially tried to talk his way out of receiving the position God Himself was offering (Exodus 4:10; Raiger, 2017; Woolfe, 2002). After losing his argument with his Creator, Moses accepted the assignment and became Israel's leader.

During Moses' leadership, he was able to, despite the opposition from his followers, stay the course because his eyes were fixed upon the God-delivered vision (Faulkner, 2014; Woolfe, 2002). His followers' opposition would stretch out his leadership role for an additional forty-year span (Numbers 14:33; Woolfe, 2002). In dealing with the hardships of his role, Moses seemed to have both faith-filled and faithless reactions (Faulkner, 2014). His faithful reactions to the
hardship of leading such a group can be seen when Moses stood in the gap and, although acknowledging wrongdoing, he begged for God to relent his anger upon the people (Exodus 32: 11-14; Number 14:13-19).

Moses was also a leader who lost his temper due to leadership stresses and paid a penalty of not being allowed to lead the people into the land of promise (Faulkner, 2014; Numbers 20:11). Despite not being allowed to complete his mission by getting Israel settled into the Promised Land, Moses’ story did not end in the wilderness (Numbers 20:12). Moses, a leader who was a friend of God Himself, was seen again, generations later, meeting with Jesus upon the Mount of Transfiguration (Luke 9:29-35; Exodus 33:11). It would seem that, although he did not get into the earthly Promised Land, he certainly was a citizen of the heavenly one (Luke 9:29-35). This can be a great encouragement to leaders who also struggle to remain faith-filled in their leadership roles (Faulkner, 2014).

Joshua's leadership and the connection to the regular intake of and meditation on the Scriptures have already been discussed. In this section, Joshua's story will be revisited with a look into leadership lessons that can be applied today. The first leadership lesson that can be gleaned from Joshua's story is that it is crucial for retiring leaders to plan successful succession (Joshua 1; Wolfe, 2002). In this case, successful succession was in the works from an early time in even Moses' leadership career. In Exodus, Joshua, serving as Moses' assistant, was the only one who accompanied Moses up the mountain to meet with God (Exodus 24:13). Through experiences like this, Moses would have come to see that Joshua was a man who would be more than competent as the leader of Israel (Faulkner, 2014). With this as his beginning, Joshua grew into one who is considered "a great and inspiring leader to replace Moses and lead the Israelites into the Promised Land" (Wolfe, 2002, p.x).
Not only does Joshua serve as a model of godly behavior, but he also works to help his followers understand the implications of either emulating his behavior or choosing to live their own way (Joshua 24:19-20; Raiger, 2017). In this, he led the people to make the better choice of following God and then provided them with accountability so they would remain faithful to that choice (Joshua 24:16-27; Raiger, 2017). Joshua’s leadership even inspired an entire country to commit to following God’s ways (Raiger, 2017).

After Joshua and those who followed him died, "there arose another generation after them who did not know the Lord or the work that he had done for Israel" (ESV, Judges 2:10). Despite their unfaithfulness, God provided people to lead Israel (Judges 2:16). One such leader's story provided leadership lessons that can be relevant for leaders today. Deborah was a great leader during challenging times (Judges 4-5; Layhee, 2020; Wellman, 2015). She was a leader who operated entirely out of the authority she held as a judge and was courageous, even in the face of national turmoil (Judges 4-5; Layhee, 2020; Wellman, 2015). Deborah's courage to go into battle shows her leadership was utterly dependent upon God (Wellman, 2015). Leaders today can emulate her dependence upon God and be courageous leaders (Layhee, 2020).

God sent many judges to lead Israel until the people requested to be ruled by a king instead (1 Samuel 8). The second of these kings was David. Many leadership lessons can be learned from David's lengthy time as a leader-king. David's life reveals that, when God anoints them, the promises given will be promises fulfilled (1 Samuel 16:13; 2 Samuel 5:3-5). Younger leaders can also remember that there is a growing process of becoming a leader. David went from a shepherd to becoming "a supreme leader and the greatest king that Israel ever had" (1 Samuel 16:11; 2 Samuel 7:8-9; Wellman, 2015). His kingship came after beginnings marked by
total dependence on God (Raiger, 2017). Following David's example, younger leaders can succeed even when it seems impossible or when the promise is yet to be fulfilled (Raiger, 2017).

Governmental rulers are not the only type of people who led Israel. Much can be learned about leadership through the accounts of some of Israel's prophets. From Elijah's story, leaders can learn the importance of mentoring/coaching and being bold despite opposition (Faulkner, 2014; McGuire, 2018). Because of Elijah's close relationship and dependence upon God, he was readily bold and courageous (Faulkner, 2014; 1 Kings 17:1; 1 Kings 18:36; 1 Kings 18:40). For leaders to follow Elijah's leadership footsteps, they must understand that "effective leaders have the courage to speak even when it is unpopular to speak because they speak the truth with love" (Faulkner, 2014, sec. 6). Despite Elijah's very active ministry, he was obedient to God's call to take on an apprentice (1 Kings 19:16; McGuire, 2018). From that point on, in his leadership, he led with Elisha by his side (1 Kings 19- 2 Kings 2; McGuire, 2018). From this, leaders can understand the importance of being committed to growing those who will follow after them in business or ministry (McGuire, 2018).

There are aspects of prophetic leadership that are relevant for today's leaders, the account of Isaiah's life reveals that leaders should be obedient to God's call when He calls (Isaiah 6:8-10; Raiger, 2017). Leaders should be quick to respond to the things God is asking them to do (Raiger, 2017). They will be people who "shun inaction and are always ready to take the plunge at a moment's notice" (Raiger, 2017, sec. 7). Another prophet who was obedient to God's will was Daniel (Daniel 1:8; Daniel 6:10; Raiger, 2017). Daniel understood he was utterly dependent upon God as a man and a leader and would live his life and lead others according to that relationship (Forrester, 2019; Raiger, 2017). Just as Daniel did, leaders today should recognize
all their power to lead comes from God Himself and be willing to follow Him despite possible consequences (Forrester, 2019; Raiger, 2017).

Nehemiah was also a leader who was willing to be bold despite the consequences (Nehemiah 2:2-5; Nehemiah 6:3). He tackled a significant building project despite many obstacles (Wellman, 2015). This project was only possible because of his initial bold move to ask the Persian King Artaxerxes for permission to go back to his homeland and lead the people to rebuild (Nehemiah 2:2-6). Once given his commission, he, through his faith in God, led the people to successfully complete the wall rebuilding project in record time (Faulkner, 2014; Nehemiah 6:15; Wellman, 2015). During this rebuilding, Nehemiah worked diligently to be a motivational, courageous leader and used his authority for the people's good (Nehemiah 4:14; Wellman, 2015). Leaders who face tremendous challenges or need to motivate their followers could learn from Nehemiah's leadership example. His was just one account in the Old Testament full of leadership examples and information leaders can use today.

Leadership is a topic that continues into the New Testament, where we see leaders who boldly took the lead in new and turbulent times. One of these was John the Baptist, a man set apart from birth to be a leader when significant kingdom transitions were beginning to occur (Luke 1:76-78). The mission of John the Baptist, given many years before his birth, was to bring people into a true understanding of God in such a way that would open doors for Jesus' ministry (Greene, 2015; Isaiah 9:2). A key to John's leadership was that he was an excellent communicator (Greene, 2015). He spoke the message entrusted to him and did not back down despite the opposition (Raiger, 2017; Greene, 2015). His truth-filled speech was not always met with acceptance, but he stayed the course and spoke the truth wherever he went (Raiger, 2017; Greene, 2015). Because of John’s dedication, Jesus, Himself, publicly praised him (Luke 7:25-
28). Jesus said that "among those born of women, there is no one greater than John" (ESV, Luke 7:28).

John was chosen to be a leader who was preparing the way for Jesus' ministry to begin. Peter was a leader who was to have a significant role in developing the Christian faith after Jesus returned to the Father (Galatians 2:8; Matthew 16:18; Wellman, 2015). One leadership lesson that can be learned from the accounts of Peter's life is that of being resilient (Faulkner, 2014). Despite his discouragements and failures, Peter kept going, growing, and leading (Luke 22: 54-62; Faulkner, 2014; Matthew 14:28-30; Matthew 16:23; Raiger, 2017). It has been said, "resilience may be the cornerstone of effective leadership" (Faulkner, 2014, sec. 7). If this is true, Peter can be seen as having become a highly effective leader because of his resilience alone (Faulkner, 2014). Because of his resilience, Peter led the new church so that there was much growth (Raiger, 2017; Wellman, 2015). Leaders who want to follow his example should remember that "leaders don't become discouraged when they fail. They don't wallow in self-pity and give up due to the mishap. They pick themselves back up and continue on" (Raiger, 2017, sec. 11).

There are many positive lessons on leadership one can glean from the account of Barnabas (Faulkner, 2014; Piper, 1987). Barnabas was a leader who was willing to lead from the back without being publicly recognized for his leadership (Faulkner, 2014). He led quietly through encouragement, modeling, standing up for followers, and taking risks (Acts 4:36; Acts 9:27; Acts 15:36-39; Faulkner, 2014; Piper, 1987). Barnabas was also the type of leader who actively engaged in developing others to become leaders (Acts 9:27; Piper, 1987). This is seen, particularly, in how he took a considerable risk on Paul and guided him such that Paul became
the great leader he was destined to be (Acts 9:27; Piper, 1987). He never sought out his own fame but was content to develop Paul so he would be equipped to lead the church (Piper, 1987).

Of course, Paul did step into a role of leadership and became a significant leader in the development of early Christianity (Faulkner, 2014; Piper, 1987; Raiger, 2017; Wellman, 2015). As a leader, Paul was committed to complete obedience to God and being obedient to His will (Faulkner, 2014). Out of this unrelenting obedience, Paul led Jesus' followers into living the Christian life (Faulkner, 2014). He accomplished his mission even though there were tremendous obstacles in his way (Faulkner, 2014; 2 Corinthians 11: 23-29; Wellman, 2015). As a leader, Paul "thought of himself as nothing in the total scheme of things. He was thoroughly subservient to the will of God, and he was committed to a specific, meaningful mission" (Faulkner, 2014, sec. 1). Leaders who wish to emulate Paul today can commit to total obedience to God and operating out of complete faith in Him (Faulkner, 2014). The wisest king of biblical history once said nothing happens that has not happened before (Ecclesiastes 1: 4-11). This wisdom can also be applied in the field of leadership; therefore:

it should come as no ‘revelation’ that the traits and skills of successful Bible leaders are also those exhibited by the most successful modern leaders: honesty and integrity, purpose, kindness and compassion, humility, communication, performance management, team development, courage, justice and fairness, [and] leadership development. (Woolfe, 2002, p.xi)

This is one reason why knowing God's Word is essential for leaders, especially if they wish to lead in a godly way. The portion of this chapter was by no means exhaustive, but the stories reviewed provided a glimpse showing that the Bible is full of advice informing on leadership. By shunning the reading of God's Word, leaders are, by default, not able to see God's will for the leadership position He has placed them in (Krejcir, n.d.). Leaders, therefore, are responsible for committing to the reading of God's Word.
Leaders Have a Responsibility to Read God’s Word

Having a love of God's Word is vital to the Christian leader (Sibley Towner, 2002). Many Christians declare they believe the Bible is essential. This is the correct paradigm for a believer because reading God's Word allows them to learn about Jesus, grow closer to the Godhead, and grow into vibrant relationships with other believers (Barnes, 2018). Many Christians understand this and yearn to have a copy of the Bible in their language so they can read it (Franklin, 2018). It is, therefore, vitally important for Christians come to understand that the Bible should be read regularly and to make a commitment to do so (Graham, 1984; Krejcir, n.d.).

The Bible is the true and accurate Word of God. Joshua's story shows he had to take the action step of reading the Scriptures to access the benefits promised (Joshua 1:1-8). An essential aspect of Biblical literacy is that there is a "motivation of people to read the Bible," along with gaining an accurate understanding of its contents (Perkins, 2011). Because of the supernatural aspect setting the Bible apart from other books, hunger for the Word is developed the most when the Christian leader actively engages with the Word (Olsen, 2019). John Piper (1995) believes one aspect that sets spiritual leaders apart is that they are dedicated to understanding scripture. Piper (1995) said:

> When we hear God's Word, especially the preaching of Christ in whom all the promises of God have their Yes (2 Corinthians 1:20), we are moved to trust him — but this does not happen automatically. We must pray that our eyes be open to the real significance of the Word of God in Scripture. So, the spiritual leader must be a person who meditates on the Word of God and prays for spiritual illumination. Otherwise, his faith will grow weak, and his love will languish, and no one will be moved to glorify God because of him. (sec. 3)

If Leaders have such a great responsibility, why would they allow Bible reading to go to the wayside? Why would they choose to forsake a spiritual gift that can impart purpose into their lives (Krejcir, n.d.)? One reason is that a leader can dismiss devotional reading scripture times
because they may feel overwhelmed with other undertakings (Olsen, 2016). Leaders who have spent much time in the pages of the Bible may also be tempted to talk themselves out of the reading on the basis that much of God's Word was written for others and to read it, one risks taking it out of context and applying it to their own story (Olsen, 2016). A Christian leader, for example, could ask themselves:

   Doesn't the idea of reading one little chapter this morning encourage an atomized ‘thought of the day’ when the whole point is the one large story it tells about God in Jesus Christ? Yes! And since I already know that story, do I really need to read a bit from 1 Corinthians again this morning? (Olsen, 2016, para. 6)

The results of both attitudes are that the Christian leader will dry up spiritually (Buchan & Roux, 2012).

   There is also the problem that despite knowing the truth about God's Word, some treat the Bible as unimportant. They do this by ignoring the Bible altogether (Spurgeon, 2017). Some even have a deeper understanding of the things of the world than they do of the scriptures (Spurgeon, 2017). Christians who do not read their Bibles are living without one of the very shreds of evidence of being believers at all (Spurgeon, 2017). In essence, they live as Bible illiterates by not being motivated to read the Bible (Perkins, 2011).

   Barnes (2018) found that people in the church have only an elementary understanding of the Scriptures. Actually, many Christians have tried to read the Bible through and stopped early; others have never tried at all (Why is reading, 2012). Some of these people believe it is the responsibility of someone else to reveal God's Word to them instead of their responsibility to read it themselves; thus, negating their responsibility of engaging with the Bible (Barnes, 2018). Christian leaders are responsible for helping those they lead to understand the importance of regular Bible reading (Barnes, 2018; Sibley Towner, 2002). How can they accomplish this if they are also Biblically illiterate?
Christian leaders, especially pastors, must be thoroughly grounded in scripture (Barnes, 2018). May all leaders remember that “through God’s constant encouragement, God’s Word, and God’s presence, Joshua became one of the strongest and most courageous leaders not only in the history of Israel, but in the history of the world! I hope we will follow in Joshua’s footsteps” (McConnell, 2011, sec. 3). By committing to lead with the regular empowerment of scripture, leaders will be saturating their minds and hearts to all of the truth and power they need to thrive as leaders (Buchan & Roux, 2012; Dollar, 2018).

Theological Framework Summary

At the beginning of this chapter, Joshua's leadership was noted as a cornerstone of this review. This was one account in scripture where the reading and meditation on God's Word is linked directly to successful leadership (Earl, 2010, p.121; Joshua 1:8). The rest of the book of Joshua reveals how successful he was as a leader. One area revealing evidence of Joshua's success is found in the fact that, during his leadership, the nation of Israel was faithful to God (Angel, 2009; Billings, 2013). This level of success was something even his predecessor could not achieve (Angel, 2009; Exodus; Leviticus; Numbers; Deuteronomy).

In this respect, Joshua can be seen as one of the only leaders in Israel's Biblical history who achieved such a feat (Angel, 2009; Billings, 2013). The only rebellion incident was when Achan disobeyed God, and the Israelites lost a strategic battle (Joshua 7). Joshua found out about this sin, and, once Achan was dealt with, the army was victorious (Joshua 7:25). Joshua led the tribes of Israel as they fought and settled the land promised to them (Joshua 24:11-13). He was a faithful leader for all of his days (Billings, 2013). Because of his faithfulness:

Israel under Joshua is, in some sense, an ideal generation, a model for later readers of their forays into the land of promise. The generation under Joshua lacks the rebellious spirit that doomed the wilderness generation that preceded and sired it; likewise, it avoids the laissez-faire attitude of the generations under the judges, which treat YHWH as little
more than a rescuer who can be counted on to bail out His people when they fall to foreign oppressors as a consequence of their sin. Instead, the generation under Joshua seeks to serve and obey the Lord, entering the land in serene obedience, keeping the commanded observances that had been neglected, and carefully following the peculiar divine instructions for the conquest of Jericho. (Billings, 2013, p.130)

It would have been possible for Joshua to disregard God's suggestion of keeping focused on His law (Joshua 1:8). Still, his ultimate success reveals that he followed God's advice after all (McConnell, 2011). Joshua did not forsake the reading and meditation of the Book of the Law for all of his days. He chose to walk in continual obedience to what God told him at the beginning of his leadership (McConnell, 2011). At the end of his life, still a faithful leader, Joshua led the people into a covenant renewal (Billings, 2013; Joshua 24). Not only was Joshua able to lead well, but his personal life must have been saturated with the things of the Lord. At the end of his life, he still spoke to the people to remind them of the truths of who God is (Billings, 2013; Joshua 24:19-20). Perhaps it can be concluded that it was because of his faithfulness and obedience to God and to the reading of God's Book of the Law that Joshua was able to truthfully say, he and his family were dedicated to the Lord (Billings, 2013; Joshua 24:15).

Leaders today can choose to read God's Word, just as Joshua did faithfully (McConnell, 2011). This theological framework postulates that the Bible is honored because it is made up of God's very words. It also suggests that, as Christians have access to the Bible, they have a responsibility to read it regularly. A Christian who regularly reads the Bible will receive the gift of knowing and understanding God and their relationship to him. They will also be blessed with wisdom and discernment as they live their lives in this world. Christians who read the Word have a blessing, and those who do not read it are missing a vital component to life. Christian leaders
are responsible for making this component understood by teaching about it and living according to its promise.

If the Word of God is a fuel source to Christians, are Christian leaders getting filled regularly? The intake of the Word of God is vital for Christian leaders (Faulkner, 2014; Krejcir, n.d.; Kroff et al., 2018; Stanley, 2015). Although it may be assumed Christian leaders depend on God's Word for wisdom, insight, fuel, and battle tactics, is that the case? Research has revealed many are not accessing the sourcebook for these benefits (Clark, 2020; Earls, 2019). Recent studies revealed ninety-one percent of Americans and seventy percent of Protestants are not regularly consuming God's Word (Clark, 2020; Earls, 2019). Arguments were presented as to why some Christian leaders have not read the Bible regularly.

The disregard of the reading of God's Word seems like a travesty amid the promised good it can do for a Christian leader. With the ideas of the power of God's Word being seen through scripture and in the literature, one can see God's Word is essential to the life of the Christian leader. Joshua's account could be enough to show leaders they have a responsibility to stay focused on God's Word. This covenant is no empty drudgery but contains a promise for successful leadership. The Word is a powerful and impactful book, and it must be consumed to be useful in the life of the Christian leader. Regular Bible reading is a means of gaining positive spiritual health, which will, therefore, allow leaders to lead well. McConnell (2011) asks leaders to consider Joshua's story and understand that:

the same thing is true for us today. When we know God's Word, we know what he wants us to do. And when we obey God's Word, we do what he wants us to do. Then he blesses us with success and prosperity. Just as it did for Joshua, God's Word gives us the strength and courage to overcome our fears. His Word sustains us in times of doubt and despair. His Word gives us wisdom and guidance to make wise decisions. His Word empowers us amid an uncertain future. How well do you know God’s Word? Are you meditating on it day and night? How well are you obeying God’s Word? Are you following it right down the middle? God gives us strength and courage through his Word. (sec. 2)
Theoretical Framework for the Study

In the theological section of this review, the Bible was shown to be a power source for Christian leaders. However, this power source can only be activated when leaders are actively accessing it through the reading of the Bible. In the spiritual realm, this is possible because “all Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work” (ESV, 2 Timothy 3:16). God did not only create the spiritual realm, but he also created the physical (Genesis 1). Scientific research:

assumes that the world is a law-based mechanism existing without Maker or Lawgiver. Despite these limitations, particularly from a Christian perspective, the scientific method—the methodology by which science gains knowledge—is valid and in many ways superior to other, more subjective approaches. Honest scientific knowing, based on specific data from the natural world, can provide precise information about how our world works. Honest science builds a knowledge base in a neutral, unbiased manner, intentionally controlling sources of personal and subjective bias. (Yount, 2010, p. 39)

With this truth in mind, is it possible there are scientific reasons that the regular reading of scripture can benefit a Christian leader?

Secular cognitive studies may add to the understanding of what happens when a Christian leader engages with regular Bible reading. The intention was not to use human wisdom to understand spiritual things but, instead, to see where those ideas can add to that understanding (Colossians 2:8). The basis for this assumption is that, like Thomas Aquinas, a leader known for his faithfulness, believed, truth is a concept found in God alone (Caluag, 2019; Benson & Anthony, 2008). If a truth, for instance, about how God made our physical beings to develop cognitively, can reveal a truth regarding regular Bible reading, then that is worth investigating (Yount, 2010, p. 38).
What This Review Will Not Investigate

Some within the body of Christ will not go to secular educational psychology as a resource because they "fundamentally disbelieve the modern psychologies, taking them to be systematic pretenders" (Powlison, 2007, p.272). These people will view the correlation between secular sciences and psychology with Christian ideals as a conflicting idea (Collicutt, 2012, p.1). The idea that "all of truth is God's truth" must be tempered with Jesus' statement that "whoever is not with me is against me" (Mathison, 2012, para. 4; ESV, Matthew 12:30). In an extended search for research into how cognitive development may inform the importance of Bible reading, one can find quite a few articles wholly based upon evolutionary theory. Examples of this were seen in a book by Oxford authors Watts and Turner (2014) and their book *Evolution, Religion, and Cognitive Science: Critical and Constructive Essays*. Also, Lone and McCorkle Jr.'s (2019) text entitled *The Cognitive Science of Religion: A methodological Introduction to Key Empirical Studies*.

Some secular scientists and psychologists see their work as the means to deliver "intellectual support for the village atheists among" themselves (Kihlstrom, 2008). Cognitive scientists have used their studies to show there is no God (Kihlstrom, 2008). Beliefs that have come from these scientists include the perception that "belief in God is a delusion—a disorder of cognition" (Kihlstrom, 2008, sec. 4). A search for literature in the area of spiritual development also revealed a foundation based on evolutionary theory. There is tension between the secular scientific world and the theological one, perhaps, because of these findings (Collicutt, 2012). However, there were sources on cognitive development that were found to be in line with the truth of scripture (Adeoye et al., 2014).
Cognitive Development

While there are secular psychological studies investigating spiritual matters, such as the psychology of human response to sacred texts, there are others that, on the surface, may not seem to correlate but, upon further inquiry, do truly inform on the topic (Collicutt, 2012). This is because learning is “the effective engagement of human heads, hearts, and hands for the goal of growing in the Lord” (Yount, 2010, p. 28). Cognition relates to comprehension and how humanity acquires and uses the knowledge they have comprehended (Kihlstrom, 2008). Albert Bandura sought to understand how people develop cognitively through social means and developed the Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 2006; Yount, 2010). This theory reveals information regarding observational learning and modeling. This theory also investigates how cognitive development can be linked to other areas of human development people progress through (Bandura, 2006; Yount, 2010).

Observational Learning

The portion of Bandura’s theory focused on observational learning has been considered to be “groundbreaking” by some (Adeoye et al., 2014, p.193; Yount, 2010, p.215). Bandura found this to be the vital way of learning that is inherent in all humanity (Bandura, 2006; Yount, 2010). Observational learning was also found not to develop independently but that people must cultivate it as they mature (Bandura, 2003; Yount, 2010). This cultivation occurs as people interact with the world around them (Adeoye et al., 2014; Yount, 2010).

This interaction comprises “four cognitive-mediational sub-processes” (Adeoye et al., 2014, p.193). These sub-processes are attention, symbolic representation, transformation to action, and motivational incentive (Adeoye et al., 2014; Davidson, 2003). As people move through the attention process, they will watch a model’s demonstration (Adeoye et al., 2014;
Davidson, 2003). Next, in the symbolic representation process, the learner will practice the model’s demonstration (Adeoye et al., 2014; Davidson, 2003). Third, in the transformation to action process, the learner will replicate the model’s demonstration (Adeoye et al., 2014; Davidson, 2003). The process of motivational incentives is vital because motivation will spur people to practice what they learned (Adeoye et al., 2014; Davidson, 2003).

**Modeling**

Part of Bandura’s theory focuses on the part modeling plays in cognitive development (Bandura, 2006; Yount, 2010). When he began his work, the prevailing thought was that learning was explained with behavioral theories (Bandura, 2006; Yount, 2010). Bandura disagreed with this line of thinking because he observed that humans truly learn as they model what they observe in a social context (Bandura, 2006). Where behaviorist believed learning was linked to a punishment or reward system, Bandura found even children have the “ability of imitating a behavior even when no reward or reinforcement is attached,” and this imitation leads to a great deal of learning (Adeoye et al., 2014, p.194; Yount, 2010, p.432).

Modeling is a powerful concept because:

modeled activities thus convey principles for generative and innovative behavior. In abstract observational learning, observers extract the principles or standards embodied in the thinking and actions exhibited by others. Once they acquire the principles, they can use them to generate new instances of the behavior that go beyond what they have seen, read, or heard. (Bandura, 2003, p.169)

Modeling also gives a person the ability to learn as they model what they see in spiritual matters (Bandura, 2003; Yount, 2010). People can grow spiritually as they take in what they learned through modeling and use it to create conceptual ideas that add to their spirituality (Bandura, 2003; Yount, 2010). Within this spirituality, people can then transfer their spiritual understandings to others (Bandura, 2003). Although modeling can impact learning and
spirituality in these capacities, none can occur if a person does not engage in the modeling process (Adeoye et al., 2014).

**How Elements of Cognitive Theory Can Be Seen in Light of Biblical Truths**

Just as Bandura’s theories suggest how learning occurs, the church has harnessed the power of observational learning to spur on spiritual learning and development (Adeoye et al., 2014; Oman & Thoresen, 2003; Yount, 2010). Bandura’s concepts on observation and social modeling fall in line with Biblical truths and can be seen in how the church has lived according to those ideals throughout its history (Oman et al., 2009; Yount, 2010). Spiritual modeling is the term expressing the fact that people grow as they watch the lives of others who live their lives according to Biblical principles (Oman & Thoresen, 2003). People see examples of modeling and observational learning because they have uplifted ideals such as following biblical and historical examples of people whose examples were seen as good (Oman et al., 2009). This concept has also been seen in how seeking out people who would be considered to be good company is an ideal that has been a part of Christian communities (Oman et al., 2009).

Although modeling is known as being a powerful tool in spiritual development, it is not a tool often used (Oman & Thoresen, 2003). This may be because modeling is a concept that requires interaction such that a person is not only watching another but practicing what they see that person doing (Adeoye et al., 2014). When not used, Christians reject the wealth of knowledge and understanding available to them through the model (Adeoye et al., 2014). Those missing out on these critical life lessons may be the same who keep replicating life’s mistakes (Adeoye et al., 2014).

Intentionality is essential to using modeling for cognitive and spiritual growth (Oman & Thoresen, 2003). One area where this is seen in scripture is in the book of Deuteronomy. In this
text, the Israelites were told to “love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might” (ESV, Deut. 6:5; Adeoye et al., 2014, p.198). This shows God expects people to be entirely intentional in learning and doing what is necessary for spiritual success (Adeoye et al., 2014). Intentional observational learning occurs when one learns the abilities and actions needed to grow spiritually (Oman & Thoresen, 2003).

Entirely intentional is a phrase that could probably best describe how Hebrew families learned through modeling and observation (Adeoye et al., 2014). This intentionality can be seen in the Shema prayer found in a Book of Moses that reads:

> and these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates. (ESV, Deuteronomy 6:6-9; Adeoye et al., 2014, p.198)

This admonition was taken earnestly by the Jewish people and can be seen in how they followed these scriptures by being obedient to model their faith (Adeoye et al., 2014). Jewish families have continually discussed these things with the following generations (Adeoye et al., 2014). They also exemplify this portion of scripture by wearing “phylacteries and called tefillin worn during prayers;” items that hold the truths they were instructed to always remember (Adeoye et al., 2014, p.198).

In the book of Proverbs, there is a call for the youth to give their full attention to the parent in observation (Adeoye et al., 2014; Proverbs 23:26). Modeling is also evident in instructions found in the book of Jeremiah with the instruction to “stand by the roads, and look, and ask for the ancient paths, where the good way is; and walk in it and find rest for your souls” (ESV, Jeremiah 6:16; Adeoye et al., 2014, p.198). In this verse, modeling is not necessarily one-
on-one with another person but shows modeling can include truths, people, and characters from times before (Adeoye et al., 2014).

Of course, as Christians, the ultimate model to follow is Jesus (Adeoye et al., 2014). The writer of the book of Hebrews instructs us to observe our model, Jesus (Adeoye et al., 2014; 2 Cor. 3:18; Yount, 2010). Jesus is the most powerful model we can follow because, by observing Him, we are “transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit” (ESV, 2 Cor. 3:18; Adeoye et al., 2014, p.201; Yount, 2010, p. 228). The Apostle Paul followed this model and then became a role model for others to follow (1 Cor. 11:1; Adeoye et al., 2014; Yount, 2010). In these examples, we see the Bible itself is filled with role models that can be observed today. In order to observe them, God’s Word must be read (Adeoye et al., 2014).

**Summary of Theoretical Framework**

This portion of the literature review began by looking at secular science and a few ways it has developed and studies theories on spirituality through the lens of evolution (Kihlstrom, 2008). Thus, the secular sciences and psychology correlation with Christian ideals seems to be a conflicting idea (Collicutt, 2012). In the case of Bandura's theory on cognitive development, some links, while few, have been found to the spiritual (Adeoye et al., 2014; Bandura, 2003; Oman et al., 2009; Oman & Thoresen, 2003).

The link is evident, especially in Bandura's theory on social observation and modeling (Adeoye et al., 2014; Oman et al., 2009; Oman & Thoresen, 2003). Bandura believed modeling was essential to learning and development (Bandura, 2006, 55). This fundamental nature of modeling is also seen in the scriptures and shows it is vital to spiritual life (Adeoye et al., 2014). Modeling includes looking to the Bible to provide role models to observe and emulate, including
Jesus Himself (Adeoye et al., 2014). It was also asserted that a key to modeling and observation is committing to making those observations (Adeoye et al., 2014).

This portion of the literature review shows that gaining benefit from biblical role models requires making observations of them intentionally. Biblical role models cannot be observed if Christian leaders do not open their Bibles and read about them. The theological portion of this review pointed out the Bible is where one goes to learn about God. Tragically, if one is not observing God through scripture, how will one follow His model? In understanding the vital role of observation and modeling in learning, we can conclude reading the Bible will result in learning. A Christian leader can find out how to lead like Jesus by observing the account of Him in the pages of scripture. Bandura's may not be a distinctly Christian theory, but it does contain God's truths. Modeling and observing align with and are spoken of in the pages of scripture. To understand them, one must commit to reading the Bible (Adeoye et al., 2014).

Related Literature

Thus far, in this review of the literature, theological and theoretical aspects pertinent to the importance of Bible reading for Christian leaders have been studied. The theological section revealed there is life-giving power available to leaders who choose to read it regularly. The theoretical section showed learning occurs as people observe role models. The Bible has role models that can be observed, but thousands of years of history have followed the last penned page of God's Book, and each age had leadership examples that can be observed. From the early church to those leading today, some Christian leaders can be role models to leaders today in how they viewed the importance of Bible reading. The following section will review the literature on these various role models.
Bible-Based Leadership in the Early Church

Jerome and Origen were two men who were among those who were leaders during the early church (Ayer, 1913). Following the Biblical age, church leaders made it a point to obey Jesus' mandate and share the gospel message to the world (Benson & Anthony, 2008). This was because they knew their lives were forever changed from their salvation moment and indwelling of the Holy Spirit (Veronis, 2015). These leaders had the advantage of having an awareness of the Scriptures supported by their proximity along the historical timeline and recorded events (Graves, 2017). They saw those portrayed in the Scriptures, especially Jesus, and decided they would model their lives to match them as best they could (Veronis, 2015).

Those who were a part of the body of Christ at that time saw themselves truly as a part of the body—a true family made up of Christians (Sprinkle, 2019; Veronis, 2015). Their communities were marked by family-like love and helpfulness—the type of family bond common amongst Middle Easterners of the period (Sprinkle, 2019; Veronis, 2015). This family, which was made up of a myriad of people groups, greatly valued learning how to live their Christian lives according to the truths of the Scriptures (Sprinkle, 2019). One way the truths of God’s Word were spread was through The Didache, which means, “The Teaching of the Lord through the Twelve Apostles” (Leonard, 2005, sec. 2). Through the use of this document, people could come to understand how they should live as followers of Christ (Leonard, 2005).

Another way believers learned was through an intense "corporate study of the Bible" (Sprinkle, 2019, sec.4). Christian leaders of the time mandated that their communities maintain "a rigorous, communal study of the Bible" (Sprinkle, 2019, sec. 4). Correspondence from believers at the time has revealed there were numerous "direct quotations from the Old Testament but also many subtle allusions (brief phrases) that were expected to be understood by
the reader” (Sprinkle, 2019, sec. 4). Early Christians truly believed the Word of God was their Bread of Life (Matthew 4:4; Veronis, 2015). To them, believers could not be transformed without the power of God’s Word; therefore, they would spend their community time reading and hearing its powerful truths (Romans 10:17; Sprinkle, 2019).

Perhaps, because of the Holy Spirit's empowerment and their dedication to their Christian family, they were able to live like Jesus did while on the earth (Veronis, 2015). They were people who:

- tried to live out the Sermon on the Mount, which Jesus taught them. They lived under the radical reign of the Kingdom of God, which has an entirely different standard than that of the world. That is why they would sell their possessions and share with those in need. That is why they would risk their lives to travel the world over to share the Good News of Christ's Resurrection and the presence of God's Kingdom on earth here and now! They lived their lives as if Jesus had changed their lives! The fact was that their lives had been changed by their encounter with the risen Christ. (Veronis, 2015, para. 6)

They succeeded in living out the truths of Scripture, but as fallible human beings, there were bound to be differences in how they approached scriptural truths (Allen, 2004; Veronis, 2015). Some early church leaders understood Scripture through their lens and what was happening in their worlds (Allen, 2004). Because of this, the seeking for the true understanding of some scriptures, especially from the Old Testament, was not something they actively engaged in (Allen, 2004). Others saw Scripture as a non-literal allegory (Allen, 2004; Ayer, 1913). This opened the door for personal interpretations—interpretations passed onto others as truth (Allen, 2004).

Christians of this era sought to pass on their knowledge of God's truths by creating and operating schools designed to instruct new believers in the realities of their faith (Ayer, 1913; Benson & Anthony, 2008). New believers were educated on the scriptures, what their new lives should look like, and other doctrinal information (Ayer, 1913; Benson & Anthony, 2008). Some
believe one of the first schools was created, along with a church, by Mark (Benson & Anthony, 2008). This school, located in Alexandria, continued after Mark's death under others' leadership and was most valuable to the Christian faith (Ayer, 1913; Benson & Anthony, 2008).

Under the leadership of Pantaenus, Clement, and Origen, the school in Alexandria became intermixed with the philosophies of the worldly culture around them (Benson & Anthony, 2008). The leaders may have believed they had good motives for this intermixing, such as being relevant to their culture. Despite their purposes, their actions were harmful to the faith and had lasting consequences, such as a continued battle with humanistic ideals (Benson & Anthony, 2008; Graves, 2017). The intermixing of worldly ideas with Scripture's truths was not the only problem the early church was facing.

The early church was born into a global rule that became, for a time, “bent on the wholesale destruction of the Christian faith” (Benson & Anthony, 2008, p. 112). Christian leaders needed to be strong enough to withstand both the internal (worldly philosophies) and external (Roman rule) assaults on the faith (Benson & Anthony, 2008). These leaders led physically, through pastoral duties, or remotely, through correspondence (Benson & Anthony, 2008; Graves, 2017). No matter the Christian leader's position at the time, they shared the same burden of "explicating and defending Christian doctrine, encouraging proper worship, maintaining church order and discipline, and providing spiritual edification” (Graves, 2017, xiv). They may not have realized it at the time, but each of these leaders had a hand in shaping the entire history of the Christian faith (Benson & Anthony, 2008).

One of these leaders was Origen. He was born in 185, and his early life was marked with a comprehensive education on those subjects seen as necessary for his era (Graves, 2017). Once his education was complete, much of his time was spent going to different locations to speak on
Christianity's truths (Graves, 2017). He was the leader of the school in Alexandria for almost thirty years (Ayer, 1913). Under his leadership, the school in Alexandria came to be “viewed as one of the finest Christian institutions of higher learning in its day; it earned a reputation as a premier place of Christian scholarship” (Benson & Anthony, 2008, p. 110).

His leading success was coupled with his drive to know Scripture (Graves, 2017). Origen was one of the first leaders to conduct in-depth studies of the entirety of the Scriptures (Graves, 2017). This is seen through his writings that expound on Scripture from many different canonized books (Ayer, 1913; Graves, 2017). He believed the Scriptures were so vital to life that they and they alone should be used to seek the truth (Slick, n.d.). These writings impacted Christianity's history, primarily because they were used in later times as extra-biblical resources (Graves, 2017). He spent much time reading and teaching God's Word to others (Allen, 2004).

Although his leadership led others to study God's Word, many of his ideas were shunned by some in the church (Graves, 2017). Unfortunately, despite the amount of time given to studying God's Word and his great faith, his biblical interpretation methods negatively impacted the Christian world (Allen, 2004; Ayer, 1913). His method was in seeing the Bible as an allegorical text (Ayer, 1913). The reason behind this was that Origen encouraged the inter-mixing of the Christian faith and philosophies prevalent during his time (Benson & Anthony, 2008). Origen "taught that Scripture has three different, yet complementary meanings: a literal or physical sense, a moral or psychical sense, and an allegorical or intellectual sense" (Allen, 2004, ch.4). He believed "much of the Bible, if read literally, was intellectually incredible or morally objectionable. An allegorizing interpretation was used to make objectionable passages palatable" (Allen, 2004, ch.4).
His was a dangerous way of approaching Scripture because it gives the reader the authority to interpret the Scriptures according to their ways of seeing the world (Allen, 2004). His teachings caused "absurd and aberrant theological teachings spread throughout the church. The result was a destructive sense that Scripture had lost its ability to impact people's lives" (Benson & Anthony, 2008, p. 110). Because of this mixing of truth with what many considered to be heresies, there was later an "official condemnation of Origen at Constantinople in the sixth century" (Graves, 2017, p. 68). The impact of his teachings on biblical interpretation did not die with him and were still being used in the Medieval era (Allen, 2004).

Jerome was also a well-trained leader in Christian and worldly philosophies (Benson & Anthony, 2008; Graves, 2017). Unlike others of his day, who were intermixing Christian and worldly ideas, Jerome turned from the world to have a singular focus on the ways of Christianity (Benson & Anthony, 2008; Graves, 2017). The reason for his decision was that he came to believe worldly ideas could not mix with the truths he found in the Scriptures (Benson & Anthony, 2008). Because of this belief, Jerome was one of those who came to reject the teachings of Origen (Ayer, 1913).

Jerome's life was wholeheartedly given over to the study of the Scriptures and extrabiblical material such as commentaries that deepened his understanding of God's Word (Ayer, 1913; Graves, 2017). He believed it was vitally important to the church that the truths of the Scriptures be separated from the traditions of men—traditions not entirely rooted in God's Word (Slick, n.d.). His devotion to the Scriptures led to the composition of "biblical reference works…and the Latin ‘Vulgate,’ a combination of his translated Old Testament and Gospel books" (Graves, 2017, p. 168). To compile the work and write the preface, he read as many manuscripts as possible to both understand them and to be able to deduce which ones were not
accurate translations (Ayer, 1913). He believed it was up to Christian scholars to study the oldest possible manuscripts because others may have errors due to "the blundering alterations of confident and ignorant men" (Ayer, 1913, p. 532). Because of his passion for the Scriptures, he is seen as one of his time's preeminent leaders and is still remembered today (Ayer, 1913; Graves, 2017).

**Bible-Based Leadership During the Medieval Era**

Saint Bede and Thomas Aquinas were leaders during the Medieval era. This period began with the end of the Roman Empire and lasted until the fifteenth century (Benson & Anthony, 2008; Gutek, 1995; Little, n.d.). It was not an easy time for people to live in, primarily because of the myriad of power-hungry leaders (Benson & Anthony, 2008). Many of these waged wars upon others because of the vacuum of authority left behind at the breaking of the Roman empire (Benson & Anthony, 2008; McCleary et al., 2011). Along with the void of power also came an almost entire period without creativity and discovery (Benson & Anthony, 2008). It was a period with a power vacuum soon to be filled by the church itself.

Despite a supposed absence of ingenuity in worldly matters, there was one thriving area during this time: Christianity (Benson & Anthony, 2008; McCleary et al., 2011). It has been noted that Christianity was a significant influence in Europe during this time (McCleary et al., 2011). The Christian faith grew from its persecution and relative obscurity to become the power of the medieval world (Benson & Anthony, 2008; Gutek, 1995; Mark, 2019). The church's power was religious, economical, and political (Little, n.d.; Mark, 2019; McCleary et al., 2011). The church leaders used their positions to achieve church goals (McCleary et al., 2011). Their power was such that it held influence over the lives of people of all classes (Mark, 2019). They claimed their authority was given to them from Jesus, through Peter, and, therefore, was "the
manifestation of God's will and presence on earth, and its dictates were not to be questioned, even when it was apparent that many of the clergy were working far more steadily toward their own interests than those of their God” (Mark, 2019, para. 2).

Because of the increase of the church's power, church leaders created institutions and hierarchies that could aid in its rapid growth (Benson & Anthony, 2008; Gutek, 1995; Mark, 2019). From top to bottom, this hierarchy was ordered accordingly: Pope, Cardinals, Bishops and Archbishops, Priests, and those who gave their lives to the monasteries (Mark, 2019). This organization of the faith required a formalization of its organizational leadership (Benson & Anthony, 2008; Gutek, 1995). The more formal the church structure became, the further leadership moved away from the simplicity of the Gospel message and even God Himself (Benson & Anthony, 2008). Church leaders, instead, embraced a desire for power over the lives of others (Benson & Anthony, 2008). Although there was a shift from the ideas of God's kingdom to those of this world, there were still leaders who embraced the Bible as being the source of truth (Gutek, 1995). Because of the power the church held over education, the truth of the Bible was taken throughout their world (Benson & Anthony, 2008; Gutek, 1995).

The Bible was seen as a "handbook on how to live according to divine will and gain everlasting life in Heaven upon one's death" (Mark, 2019, para. 6). Although they felt such a reverence for God's Word, there was a problem in that they believed only those who were a part of the church should have access to its contents (Mark, 2019). Church leaders knew the biblical mandates, and they sought to fulfill Jesus' directive to reach the world with the Gospel message (Acts 1:8; Benson & Anthony, 2008). They used their authority to provide opportunities to obey this commission from Jesus, and church leaders set up plans and programs to complete this mission (Benson & Anthony, 2008). Because the church walked away from the simple truths of
the gospel, they sought to obey the great commission without obeying the commandment to love (Benson & Anthony, 2008; John 13:34; Mark, 2019). This lack of love is seen in the fact that leaders attempted to physically force people to convert by threatening them (Benson & Anthony, 2008). Once they converted, they had no personal knowledge of the Bible and were forced to rely on the church for truth; yet the church did not stick to the pure truth of God's Word but added to it to suit their needs (Mark, 2019).

Despite those around them who did not operate out of the pure gospel, some leaders separated themselves by living as those who were faithful to God's Word (Benson & Anthony, 2008). Some of these chose to live apart from humanity; others decided to live only amongst those of like-minds (Benson & Anthony, 2008). The latter formed monasteries to be isolated from worldly practices while also being able to train other church leaders (Benson & Anthony, 2008; Mark, 2019). The monks who chose to separate themselves in this way were dedicated to living lives of "harsh manual labor, long hours of Bible reading, vesper services, and community service" (Benson & Anthony, 2008, p. 138). As the church realized many of their leaders did not have an in-depth understanding of God or the scriptures, they also developed "cathedral" schools (Benson & Anthony, 2008, p. 147). The basis of this church training for leaders was focused on the truths of scripture (Gutek, 1995).

One leader of the time was Thomas Aquinas (Benson & Anthony, 2008). He is remembered as being "the greatest theologian and philosopher of the Middle Ages" (Benson & Anthony, 2008, p. 149). Aquinas is also remembered as a leader who thoroughly understood the Scriptures (Roszak & Vijgen, 2015). He taught it was essential to read all of the Scriptures and then understand what was learned and apply it to one's life circumstances (Roszak & Vijgen, 2015). Although he had a thorough understanding of God's Word, he also believed "all truth was
God's truth," whether it was in the Scriptures or not (Benson & Anthony, 2008, p. 150). He did not believe the sacred and the secular should be separated because peoples' lives are not separated (Benson & Anthony, 2008; Roszak & Vijgen, 2015). Instead, Aquinas taught that people needed to bring the sacred into the secular to truly live out Christian principles (Benson & Anthony, 2008; Roszak & Vijgen, 2015). This was possible because, as he believed, all people had in common what he called "freedom of conscience," whereby God had given people a conscience and, no matter their faith, they had to follow their conscience (Little, n.d.). His beliefs did not only shape the way his contemporaries understood the Scriptures but are still influential on Christian education today (Benson & Anthony, 2008).

Saint Bede was another medieval leader and historian who believed in the importance of God's Word (Benedict XVI, 2009; St. Bede the Venerable, 2020). His legacy lies in his numerous writings, where he even outlined the church's history (Benedict XVI, 2009; Stone, n.d.; Thurston, 1907). Today, he is remembered as someone with whom "there is no writer comparable…in all Europe no contemporary matches his talents and influence" (Brown, 2009, p. 1). He was not educated in the great schools of his day; actually, he was a self-taught man who was a part of monastic life from an early age (Benedict XVI, 2009; Brown, 2009; Senz, 2016; St. Bede the Venerable, 2020). Despite this, he taught himself using the Word of God and other texts from church fathers (Brown, 2009).

Bede believed no other text could compare with the bible in the hierarchy of importance (Benedict XVI, 2009; Gutek, 1995). Bede, himself, said he spent his life "wholly applied…to the study of Scripture; and amidst the observance of the monastic Rule and the daily charge of singing in church, [taking] delight in learning, or teaching, or writing" (Benedict XVI, 2009, para. 1). Bede's monastic life allowed much time to study God's Word and other Christian
writings since he had ready access to such documents (Benedict XVI, 2009; Thurston, 1907). He believed the whole of scripture was a text that could lead one to understand Jesus (Benedict XVI, 2009).

The Bible was the center of Bede's life; he felt it should be studied and applied to one's life (Brown, 2009; Thurston, 1907). Bede did not only see the Bible as being a source to be studied for its "academic, philological, or abstract theological analysis" (Brown, 2009, p. 34). He also saw the value as "the edification and development and maintaining of the spiritual life and...for the reformation of the individual and the Church" (Brown, 2009, p. 34). Bede's ideas on God's Word can be seen in his writings, such as his commentary that follows the Bible in its entirety (Brown, 2009). In studying the Bible, Bede would spend time in an in-depth study on a text and then seek to learn what the text was saying (Benedict XVI, 2009; Thurston, 1907). As a theologian, he wrote many commentaries on the Bible widely read throughout Europe (St. Bede the Venerable, 2020; Stone, n.d.). His commentaries reveal Bede viewed the Bible as being a "symbolic" text full of "deeper meanings" (St. Bede the Venerable, 2020, para. 4). He taught that biblical scholars were responsible for studying and preserving the Scriptures (Benedict XVI, 2009). Bede did so himself, and, as far is known today, he was the first to translate any portion of the Scriptures into the English Language (Stone, n.d.).

Bede believed the Bible was also crucial for church leaders to understand so they could pass God's truths to others (Benedict XVI, 2009). Bede was a scholar in the writings related to the church's history (Benedict XVI, 2009; Senz, 2016). He composed an entire work on that very history (Senz, 2016). Countless people from the medieval period to today's era have read his writings (Brown, 2009). He worked on his biblical scholarly pursuits until he died in 735 (Benedict XVI, 2009; Thurston, 1907).
Bible-Based Leadership During the Renaissance

Erasmus and John Wycliffe were both leaders during the time of the Renaissance. During this period, there was a significant shift in the way people viewed the world and their part in it (Benson & Anthony, 2008; Gutek, 1995). This was because the world was moving from the “stifling control of the church over the affairs of mankind to a general sense of freedom for man to control his own destiny” (Benson & Anthony, 2008, p. 159). There was a sense of newness of life as people began embracing and exploring, and living out their creativity (Benson & Anthony, 2008; Gutek, 1995). They were experiencing life in a way that had lain dormant for the entire medieval period, but this era was also marked by church dominance and church failures (Benson & Anthony, 2008; Editors of Encyclopedia Britannica, 2020; Loconte, 2018).

This period's name is translated to the word rebirth, as undoubtedly this time may seem to have been after the hardships of the Medieval period (Benson & Anthony, 2008; Editors of Encyclopedia Britannica, 2020; Loconte, 2018). The rebirth is seen chiefly in the growth of arts, science, culture, and inventiveness (Editors of Encyclopedia Britannica, 2020; Loconte, 2018). The people of the time seem to have rushed forth into these areas with a passion and vigor not seen in the period before (Editors of Encyclopedia Britannica, 2020). Art and humanism were both significant factors in the development of Renaissance ideals (Loconte, 2018). Humanism was a leading philosophical movement of the era (Editors of Encyclopedia Britannica, 2020; Loconte, 2018). It was a movement started and perpetuated by the intelligentsia of the age (Editors of Encyclopedia Britannica, 2020).

The importance of the type of people behind this movement is significant because, before this, those who were recognized as scholars were also people who were a part of the church, whereas this new form of scholarship did not require such a link (Editors of Encyclopedia Britannica, 2020; Loconte, 2018).
Britannica, 2020). Despite this, the era was not thoroughly secularized, as many assume (Loconte, 2018). The humanists undeniably continue to study theological matters and the other studies they were engaged with (Editors of Encyclopedia Britannica, 2020). This movement's outcomes were that there was a "recovery of biblical concepts of human dignity and how they helped to unleash artistic, social, and intellectual genius. The scientists who emerged during this period…saw no contradiction between pursuing knowledge about the physical world and pursuing God's knowledge" (Loconte, 2018, para.1).

As another leading characteristic of the period, art was not a concept devoid of Christian concepts (Sorabella, 2008). It is believed, through the art of the time, the culmination of what the Renaissance was to be clearly seen (Editors of Encyclopedia Britannica, 2020; Loconte, 2018). This is because arts were seen as an intellectual movement born out of humanity's growth and their ability to explore the spiritual through their creative endeavors (Editors of Encyclopedia Britannica, 2020; Loconte, 2018).

Despite the push towards humanism, much of the arts focused on Jesus (Sorabella, 2008). There was a spiritual power in Renaissance art because:

images were valued both as lessons for the unlettered and as aids to worship. Scenes from Christ's life were thus desirable in churches, on frescoed walls and painted altarpieces, and in portable form, in illustrated books and small altarpieces suitable for private consumption. Images were meant to enhance the faithful's experience both in communal and individual worship, and devotional treatises gave instructions for how to use pictures to enter more fully into sacred history. In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, such pictures often occurred in series that allowed viewers to trace the progression of events. Still, the stories of Christ's life were also represented in independent easel paintings, especially in the sixteenth century and after. In late medieval and Renaissance Italy, theologians continually emphasized the humanity of Christ and the need for the faithful to lead lives modeled on Christ's own. This perspective welcomed visual images that stressed his human existence and particularly favored themes related to his earthly birth and death. (Sorabella, 2008, para. 2)
Even in an era marked by humanistic and artistic endeavors, some people were still wholly devoted to the things of God (Loconte, 2018). For some, the mixture of humanistic thought with biblical truths resulted in a Christianity marked by grace and compassion (Loconte, 2018).

In contrast to those growing in life and faith (both secular and spiritual), the church seemed to be stagnating in its unmoving doctrine and ways of life (Benson & Anthony, 2008). During the medieval period, aspects of the church included "crushing legalisms, inquisitions, heresy trials, and clerical hypocrisy" (Loconte, 2018, para. 9). The humanistic Christians were moving towards what they considered to be, "philosophy of Christ" (Loconte, 2018, para.7). In contrast, the church had replaced the life-giving nature of Christianity with works (Benson & Anthony, 2008).

The further into works the church went, the less Christianity became about one’s heart (Benson & Anthony, 2008). Still, even when the church's legalism repelled people, they did not walk entirely away from God (Benson & Anthony, 2008). In a radical swing away from all the church was, people began to turn to a new form of Christianity: mysticism (Benson & Anthony, 2008). This form of the Christian faith was based on a deep relationship with God but lacked the foundation of scriptural truths (Benson & Anthony, 2008). The Renaissance was also marked by people either mixing faith with humanism, seeking God without the confines of church doctrine, or seeking a life outside of the church and its tenants altogether (Benson & Anthony, 2008; Gutek, 1995; Editors of Encyclopedia Britannica, 2020; Loconte, 2018).

Despite these shifts away from church doctrine, there were still those who saw God's Word as the ultimate truth. John Wycliffe was such a person. He is remembered as "one of the most profound influences that preceded the Reformation" (Benson & Anthony, 2008, p. 177). Perhaps one of his most outstanding achievements is creating the first English language Bible
(Stone, n.d.). His leadership was so impactful that it stirred a "spiritual awakening in England" (Benson & Anthony, 2008, p. 177). He believed the core of the Christian faith was the Word of God, and, out of this core, Wycliffe had a desire to lead others into a thriving Christian life (Benson & Anthony, 2008; Lavinsky, 2017). He also felt that to have this type of Christian life, the church had to become in line with the Scriptures and be "meaningful to the masses" (Benson & Anthony, 2008, p. 177; Lavinsky, 2017, p. 11).

His belief in the importance of God’s Word over everything else caused him to counter the man-made doctrine of the church itself (Benson & Anthony, 2008). Wycliffe understood the Scriptures teach there are to be leaders in the church, but Wycliffe did not locate any place in God's Word where there was a position such as the pope's (Benson & Anthony, 2008). He felt this position clashed with scripture and took authority away from Jesus as head of the body of Christ (Benson & Anthony, 2008).

Wycliffe desired to see that the church was changed, not dismissed. He hoped to accomplish this with his translation of the Bible into the common language so all would have access to the truth in the Scriptures (Benson & Anthony, 2008; Lavinsky, 2017; Mark, 2019). His translation caused problems in the church because the people could then see that what they were taught was not necessarily true (Benson & Anthony, 2008). The existing church did not listen to his appeals for reform (Benson & Anthony, 2008). Because of this, Wycliffe eventually "called for England to establish a new state church, one that would view the Scriptures as the sole basis of church authority and in which the priests would demonstrate through their own lifestyles the teachings of Christ" (Benson & Anthony, 2008, p. 177). Wycliffe demonstrated that he sincerely regarded God's Word as an essential part of the church's foundation and the
Christian faith. His passion for the truth can be seen in his writings, which made up his Bible translation in the form of extra-biblical material (Lavinsky, 2017).

Desiderius Erasmus is also a notable leader of the Renaissance era—a leader who is believed to be the persona of all Renaissance thought (Benson & Anthony, 2008; Gutek, 1995; Rummel, 2017). He filled roles such as humanist, philosopher, scholar, monk, priest, Bible translator, and educator (Editors of Encyclopedia Britannica, 2020; Gutek, 1995; Rummel, 2017). Erasmus’ humanistic beliefs were laid out in his work Praise of Folly and are considered to be such that it "epitomized the moral essence of humanism in its insistence on heartfelt goodness as opposed to formalistic piety" (Editors of Encyclopedia Britannica, 2020, para. 5).

Though thoroughly a humanist, Erasmus did not see that as separate from his faith (Rummel, 2017). In a sense, then, he was the ideal Christian Humanist (Rummel, 2017). Erasmus taught that the Scriptures were vital to one's education (Gutek, 1995; Rummel, 2017). He regularly advocated for those who had skills in languages to read the Bible in its original languages and engage in Bible translation (Rummel, 2017). He believed "the main hope of the civil state was in educating youth. If youth were educated by gentle instructions in the teachings of Christ and in good literature, the state would benefit" (Gutek, 1995, p. 125).

Erasmus was a dedicated student of the Bible (Editors of Encyclopedia Britannica, 2020; Rummel, 2017). He was dedicated to the idea of being able to explain the scriptures in the ways the leaders of the early church did (Editors of Encyclopedia Britannica, 2020). He studied the Bible in its original languages and then penned a modern translation of the New Testament in Greek (Rummel, 2017). Erasmus held a passion for all people to read the Bible and, therefore, pushed to have it translated so that everyone could read it (Loconte, 2018). However, his contemporary church leaders did not share his passion and opposed him heavily (Loconte, 2018).
They saw him as one who was working to change the Bible inherently, but he believed he could fix translation errors that had occurred over time (Rummel, 2017). The church, however, did not accept his biblical work on the basis that he was not a proper theologian (Rummel, 2017).

To Erasmus, the Bible was vital to life, and he "urged readers to 'inject into the vitals' the teachings of Christ by studying and meditating on the Scriptures, using the spiritual interpretation favored by the 'ancients' to make the text pertinent to moral concerns" (Tracy, 2020, para. 8). Where some spent much time questioning the Scriptures, Erasmus approached the text with a view born out of his "simple faith" (Rummel, 2017, sec. 6). Just as church leaders did not share his desire to translate the Bible, neither was his manner of studying and understanding the Scriptures (Rummel, 2017). They assuredly did not appreciate his boldness showing where church tradition did not align with the Scriptures (Editors of Encyclopedia Britannica, 2020). Ironically, while the church refused to acknowledge his work, the humanists of his day were thrilled with it and saw "it as an exceptional achievement" (Rummel, 2017, sec. 1). As a leader, history shows Erasmus was a man wholly dedicated to reading and studying God's Word.

**Bible-Based Leadership During the Reformation**

Martin Luther and John Calvin were two leaders who played parts in a movement that changed Christianity and the world: The Protestant Reformation (Holcomb, 2012). During the Protestant Reformation, the world was in a state of significant flux in many different areas (Benson & Anthony, 2008). The Reformation was a culmination of many peoples and groups who worked to bring change into the church (Benson & Anthony, 2008; Holcomb, 2012). People knew the church had gone far from the picture the Bible paints of a life of faith (Gutek, 1995; Holcomb, 2012). They believed the pure essence of Christianity had faded away over time, and it was the time to reorient their faith (Holcomb, 2012).
In the time leading up to these calls for change, church leaders were more interested in wealth and power than in leading people as biblical shepherds should (Benson & Anthony, 2008; Holcomb, 2012; Mark, 2019). Being a church leader was not even seen as a wholly spiritual calling but a “political appointment” (Benson & Anthony, 2008, p. 190). Such unspiritual leaders were “known for their ignorance, barbarism, rudeness, drunkenness, personal coarseness, and lack of spiritual understanding” (Benson & Anthony, 2008, p. 190). The Reformation was such a powerful movement that it is seen as an event that thoroughly transformed Christianity by addressing the ills that had crept into church leadership and function (Holcomb, 2012).

The reformers wanted to bring the church back to a more Bible-based existence and not necessarily break off from the Catholic faith (Benson & Anthony, 2008; Gutek, 1995; Mark, 2019). Their efforts are recorded as being the:

historical syndrome of a transformative change of local, regional, territorial, or national churchdomes of the Latin West, which—initiated or safeguarded by the political rulers of the day—intervened in the existing ritual traditions, breaking openly with canon law, and challenged, revised, or abolished traditional ecclesiastical institutions according to the criterion of the Holy Scriptures and subordinated them to the worldly authorities. (Kaufmann, 2015)

These changes occurred with the spark that went forth from Martin Luther, beginning with his criticisms against the church's use of indulgences (Kaufmann, 2015).

The reformers' clarion call can be seen in the Five Solas that challenged church traditions, which began especially during the Medieval Era (Holcomb, 2012; Sproul, 1995). Two of the Five Solas were the key concepts they based their work upon "Sola Fide" and "Sola Scriptura" (Sproul, 1995, para. 3). When translated from Latin, Sola Fide is a Latin phrase meaning "justification by faith alone" (Holcomb, 2012, para. 5; Sproul, 1995, para. 3). The meaning of the phrase Sola Scriptura is "that the Bible and the Bible alone has the authority to bind the conscience of the believer" (Sproul, 1995, para. 3). The emphasis on the essential nature
of the Word of God can be seen in this phrase because, as it was spoken, it reminded people to have a dependence on God's Word, especially since it is a book given to humanity by God Himself (Holcomb, 2012).

The remaining Solas were spoken to remind people that "we are saved by grace alone," that "Jesus Christ alone is our Lord, Savior, and King," and that "we live for the glory of God alone" (Holcomb, 2012, para. 4). The reformers who led under the banner of these Solas were the same people who were able to end "the monopoly the church held on religious belief and practice" in such a way that resulted in much "spiritual freedom" (Mark, 2019, para. 28). This era began with the Medieval church that had dominion over the lives of the people and ended with people's ability to choose how they wanted to worship God (Holcomb, 2012; Mark, 2019). This was all accomplished through men's faith and bold leaders like Martin Luther and John Calvin (amongst others) (Holcomb, 2012).

Martin Luther, a name synonymous with the Reformation, is known for his role more than any other of the movement (Kaufmann, 2015). He was an influential leader who had deep roots in the things of the Lord. Even as a young man, Luther had a desire for closeness and intimacy with God (Benson & Anthony, 2008). Because of this desire, he committed to "excel in his religious instruction" and become the center point for the start of the Reformation (Benson & Anthony, 2008, p. 197; Kaufmann, 2015). He stayed true to his commitment and spent much time studying the Scriptures and other extra-biblical materials (Gutek, 1995). His views on the importance of reading God's Word are seen in his many writings (Marsh, 2017). These writings were meant to be instructional tools so people could read and interpret the Scriptures (Marsh, 2017). His core belief in how the Bible should be viewed was as a complete story focused solely on Jesus (Marsh, 2017).
The more Luther studied scripture, the more he saw there were "accidental textual corruptions and even some outright forgeries [that] had occurred" (Gutek, 1995, p. 137). Alongside these accidents due to transcription, Luther saw the abuse of power in the church—abuses that caused him to feel an outrage (Mark, 2019; Ocker, 2015). Luther believed that by exposing errors such as these, the church would be reformed (Benson & Anthony, 2008; Gutek, 1995). By producing the Ninety-Five Theses, Luther hoped the church would be able to take that information and begin the reformation process—a reformation that would bring the church back to what it would be if based on truth (Benson & Anthony, 2008; Mark, 2019; Ocker, 2015).

Although his actions began the Reformation and the split from Catholicism, this was not what Luther intended (Kaufmann, 2015; Mark, 2019). To Luther, his ideas would be a spark that brought internal Reformation, not the creation of Protestantism (Kaufmann, 2015; Mark, 2019).

The reformers' cry was that the Bible was the sole source of truth (Bredfeldt, 2006). Amid this period of change and desire for reform came the spark of true Reformation. On October 31, 1517, Martin Luther changed the church and the world as he posted his Ninety-Five Theses (Benson & Anthony, 2008). His actions marked him as both a figurehead for the Reformation and one of the most divisive persons in history (Kaufmann, 2015). His actions stirred up church leaders against him because, in essence, his words were against the leadership itself—especially the pope (Mark, 2019). By claiming people could access God through the reading of "the bible and prayer," Luther "not only undermined the authority of the Pope but rendered that position—as well as those of the cardinals, bishops, archbishops, priests, and others—ineffectual and obsolete" (Mark, 2019, para. 26). Thus, his ideas were thoroughly rejected by the church (Benson & Anthony, 2008; Sproul, 1995).
Some went as far as calling them "a cesspool of heresies" while calling Luther "a wild boar loose in the vineyard of Christ and as a stiff-necked, notorious, damned heretic" (Sproul, 1995, para. 2). His strong beliefs led him to become excommunicated and even made a church criminal (Mark, 2019). Despite the views people had of Luther and his ideas, they were the catalyst for change that affected all history (Benson & Anthony, 2008; Kaufmann, 2015). After being rescued from those sympathetic with his cause, Luther "immediately undertook the task of translating the Bible into the vernacular" (Sproul, 1995, para. 2). This translation was begun because Luther knew the Bible was vital, alongside prayer, for believers who wanted to be in a genuine relationship with God (Mark, 2019). Through this essential work, “his effort at reform became the movement which would break the power of the church” (Mark, 2019, para. 27).

John Calvin is another reformer who worked to bring changes to the church (Benson & Anthony, 2018; Bouwsma, 2020; Gutek, 1995). Calvin is regarded as "the leading French Protestant reformer and the most important figure in the second generation of the Protestant Reformation" (Bouwsma, 2020). Calvin's work began during a time of intense persecution against French Protestants—persecution that caused him to flee his homeland and work as a reformer in Geneva (Gutek, 1995; Sproul, 1995). His leadership resulted in Calvinism being a significant part of Protestant Christianity across all of Europe (Benson & Anthony, 2018; Holt, 2015).

Calvin saw the Bible as vital to the Christian's life (Bouwsma, 2020; Gutek, 1995). The seeds that initiated this belief were sewn as he studied previous leaders' works, like Erasmus, who highly valued the Bible (Bouwsma, 2020). The results of Calvin's studies of the Scriptures were the production of many commentaries, a Bible preface, and a book on his theological beliefs (Benson & Anthony, 2018; Bouwsma, 2020). He was a spiritual leader in the traditional
Christian ways, such as writing and preaching, but he was also a community leader (Benson & Anthony, 2018; Bouwsma, 2020). Calvin led the entire city of Geneva through "Ecclesiastical Ordinances" that dictated how they would conduct themselves (Benson & Anthony, 2018, p. 209; Bouwsma, 2020).

Calvin was a leader who was utterly dependent on God's Word (Bouwsma, 2020; Gutek, 1995). He believed the truths contained in God's Word were vital to people so they could understand their salvation (Bouwsma, 2020). Calvin believed that "the Bible was a self-sufficient authority in and of itself. The Old and New testaments had revealed that all that had to be and could be known about God and the human being's place in creation" (Gutek, 1995, p. 144). Just as Calvin engaged in a thorough study of God's Word, he expected his followers to do the same (Bouwsma, 2020; Gutek, 1995). Bible reading was an activity he demanded of the Calvinists because he saw those Scriptures as a direct revelation of God's truths (Bouwsma, 2020; Gutek, 1995). His leadership can be defined as being, among other things, one that was "highly scriptural" (Gutek, 1995).

**Bible-Based Leadership During the Enlightenment and The Great Awakening**

The period in which John Wesley and George Whitefield lived was one of opposing belief systems. Some fell away from the spiritual towards the rational, and others led The Great Awakening (Needham, 2018; Smith, 2018). There existed a great "paradox" between faith and reason in the eighteenth century, which left some questioning faith and others growing more faithful than generations before (Needham, 2018). The Enlightenment was an:

> era characterized by a continuation of Reformation humanism, whereby man was put at the center of the universe and allowed to be the supreme artisan of his destiny. It is marked by an emphasis upon the concepts of reason, science, progress, personal happiness, scientific inquiry, and the endowed rights of all humanity. (Benson & Anthony, 2008, p. 231)
The intelligentsia during this time looked so much towards humanity and its nature that they led people to look away from God (Benson & Anthony, 2008; Gutek, 1995). It was a time when the religious ideals people were taught to believe and obey blindly were thoroughly questioned (Abbey & Overton, n.d.).

People experienced a life where they realized they had the power to improve their circumstances, and, thus, they no longer needed to focus on what the church told them to think (Benson & Anthony, 2008; Gutek, 1995). It was believed that, with all of the power humanity possessed in itself, life could become a paradise on earth—with all of the negatives to disappear from existence (Benson & Anthony, 2008; Gutek, 1995). Although the promise was for an earthly paradise, this was not the experience of many who lived during this period because, for most, life was not easy (Ferandez, 2019).

Although history records much on the enlightenment's impact, the church was still alive during this time (Abbey & Overton, n.d.). It was alive but not wholly well because of the many internal conflicts experienced within the churches (Broadhead, 2015). These conflicts were no small thing, and many "suffered from major internal conflicts that, on occasion, spilled over into violence, bitter legal disputes, and the secession of members" (Broadhead, 2015, abstract). During this time, many leaders embraced the humanistic ideals of the Enlightenment (Benson & Anthony, 2008). Many people were also unhappy with the accepted rift between congregants' classes (Broadhead, 2015). Those amongst the lower classes were living in survival mode (Ferandez, 2019). These people, who perhaps needed the church the most, were often denied entry based on their appearance (Ferandez, 2019).

Despite the conflict and the moves away from God, the eighteenth century was the time of The Great Awakening in the American colonies and throughout Europe (Curta & Holt, 2016;
Great Awakening, 2003). The Awakening that occurred in the eighteenth century, not unlike the others that followed, was powerful enough to awaken many people who were then able to move closer to God (Curta & Holt, 2016; Nichols, 2018). This movement was so powerful that it had been seen as being "one of the most significant events in United States history" (Nichols, 2018, para. 10). This revival "swept across the landscape" and was led by both John Wesley and George Whitefield, among others (Curta & Holt, 2016, p. 804).

Ironically, one of the forces that began the Great Awakening was the Enlightenment itself (Great Awakening, 2020). The rational and scientific-based thinking that occurred amongst enlightened thinkers resulted in people who believed they could generate their own answers regarding life questions (Needham, 2018). The "arid rationalism" became the field within which the Great Awakening was harvested (Great Awakening, 2020). Some Christian leaders who engaged with rationality began to question the "spiritual value of human activity" (Curta & Holt, 2016, p. 804).

As Wesley and Whitefield "admonished the Church of England for its overly rational, mechanical, and seemingly detached approach to religiosity" (Curta & Holt, 2016, p. 804). In the place of this rationalistic thinking, the revivalists spoke on the essential nature of God's grace (Smith, 2018). The movement, as a whole, brought significant changes to life, including the way people worshipped, the inclusion of younger generations as well as women, and the physical expansion of the Church (Great Awakening, 2020; Nichols, 2018; Smith, 2018).

This is the world in which God placed John Wesley. He was a man who realized the masses needed the church; therefore, he took "the gospel to... their dingy workplaces, the muddy fields, and even the mines and, in doing so, would change their lives" (Ferandez, 2019). Wesley, who began his career as an Anglican minister, was the co-founder of Methodism, which later
became the basis of the Methodist Church (John Wesley, 2020). His break away from the
Anglican church began with seeds sown by a Moravian minister who helped him realize the
Christianity taught by the Apostle Paul and expounded upon by Martin Luther was a simple faith
in “justification by grace through faith alone” (John Wesley, 2020, para. 5).

After receiving this revelation, Wesley spent his life preaching the "good news of
salvation by faith" to all who would hear him (John Wesley, 2020, para. 6). The Anglican
Church disagreed with how he presented the gospel message, and he was no longer invited to
speak in those churches (John Wesley, 2020). It was on advice given by George Whitfield that
Wesley stopped seeking speaking engagements at churches and, instead, began to take the
church to the people (John Wesley, 2020). Before Wesley, it was not common to go to the people
and preach wherever they were (Ferandez, 2019). Wesley was looked down upon because it was
seen as entirely improper to preach to people in fields and other places outside the four walls of a
church building (Ferandez, 2019). Despite the objections against him, his preaching drew crowds
and drew many to the Lord (Ferandez, 2019).

As a man and a Christian leader, Wesley was a believer in the importance of the Bible.
He called himself a man of the Bible because he realized the vital role God's Word plays in
people's lives (Hanson, 2018). Wesley felt the Bible should be used to guide all of God's people
(Hanson, 2018). He led people towards reading the Bible every day (readings taken from each of
the Testaments) and also in being committed to reading God's Word in its entirety (Hanson,
2018; Maddox, 2011). Wesley believed the individual portions read from the Bible must be
understood as part of the entire text (Hanson, 2018). Wesley also led people to approach God's
Word with God through the Holy Spirit's leading (Maddox, 2011). He felt that this way of
approaching scriptures would allow people to understand its truths fully (Maddox, 2011). Wesley was thoroughly committed to reading God's Word and taught his followers to do the same.

George Whitefield, known as a leader of the Great Awakening, spent much time preaching to the masses in both the United States and England (George Whitefield, 2003; Needham, 2018). He even engaged in giving outdoor sermons, like Wesley, after other church leaders forbade him from the pulpit (Curta & Holt, 2016; George Whitefield, 2003; Smith, 2018). Whitefield was one of "the most well-known itinerate preachers" in the United States (Curta & Holt, 2016, p. 806; Nichols, 2018). He would teach people how to live lives marked with holistic freedom and the revival messages such as being saved through grace (Great Awakening, 2020; Lawson, 2014; Morrow, 2016; Smith, 2018). He was an excellent speaker; therefore, his preaching messages stirred many to come and listen (Smith, 2018). In one instance alone, an entire county's entire population amassed to hear his preaching (Nichols, 2018). The roots of his prolific leadership and preaching can be found in his love for God's Word (Lawson, 2014; Petersen, 2015).

George Whitefield was a man who was passionate about God's Word and saturated himself in it (Morrow, 2016; Rappazini, 2020). This passionate pursuit began well before adulthood. Whitefield would “spend hours upon hours devouring the Scriptures, in both English and in their original languages” (Rappazini, 2020, para. 1). His consumption of the scriptures was always accompanied by much prayer (Lawson, 2014; Rappazini, 2020). Through reading and prayer, Whitefield consumed God’s words as though they were vital sustenance for him (Lawson, 2014). This passionate love for God’s Word:

was established upon his immovable commitment to the Bible. Once he was converted, the Scripture immediately became his necessary food and fueled the fire in his soul for God. The more he immersed himself in the Bible, the deeper he grew in his dedication to
know God and to advance His kingdom. The flame in his soul spread quickly, setting his newly regenerated life ablaze in a relatively short period. (Lawson, 2014, para. 1)

Whitefield believed the Scriptures were vital for the Christian life (Whitefield & Gatiss, 2012). He believed that if Jesus used the Scriptures when facing the devil and in discussions with people, people assuredly need to know the Word also; it greatly upset him to see God's Word forsaken (Lawson, 2014; Whitefield & Gatiss, 2012). Whitefield believed it was a great wrong to discount the importance of studying the Scriptures (Rappazini, 2020). When he preached, he would remind his audience that it was God they were hearing since it was God's Word and, thus, needed to be listened to and acted upon (Morrow, 2016; Petersen, 2015). Whitefield truly loved the Bible because it was God's Word, and out of this love came a passionate desire to be what the Word said by living it out (Lawson, 2014).

We cannot stand under Whitefield's preaching today and take in his passionate pursuit for the Scriptures, but his passion can still be heard through his writings on the subject (Whitefield & Gatiss, 2012). His love for, dependence on, and reverence for God's Word can, perhaps, be best understood through his own words. Some select quotes upon the subject are as follows:

1. Hence, then arises the necessity of searching the scriptures: for since they are nothing else but the grand charter of our salvation, the revelation of a covenant made by God with men in Christ, and a light to guide us into the way of peace; it follows, that all are obliged to read and search them, because all are equally fallen from God, all equally stand in need of being informed how they must be restored to, and again united with him. (Whitefield & Gatiss, 2012, ch.37)

2. If we once get above our Bibles and cease making the written Word of God our sole rule both as to faith and practice, we shall soon lie open to all manner of delusion and be in great danger of making shipwreck of faith and a good conscience. (Lawson, 2014, para. 5)

3. I began to read the Holy Scriptures upon my knees…This proved meat indeed and drink indeed to my soul. I daily received fresh light and power from above. (Lawson, 2014, para. 3)
4. The fountain of God's revealing himself thus to man-kind, was our fall in Adam, and the necessity of our new birth in Christ Jesus. And if we search the scriptures as we ought, we shall find the sum and substance, the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and end of them, is to lead us to a knowledge of these two great truths. All the threats, promises and precepts, all the exhortations and doctrines contained therein, all the rites, ceremonies and sacrifices appointed under the Jewish law; nay, almost all the historical parts of holy Scripture, suppose our being fallen in Adam, and either point out to us a Mediator to come, or speak of him as already come in the flesh. (Whitefield & Gatiss, 2012, ch.37)

5. God by his word steps in, and opens to his view such a scene of divine love, and infinite goodness in the holy scriptures…he points out the way to what thou desirest, even how thou mayest be redeemed out of it by believing in, and copying after the Son of his love. (Whitefield & Gatiss, 2012, ch.37)

6. Let them but consult the lively oracles of God, and they cannot but see a remedy revealed for all their wants, and that the written word does as exactly answer the wants and desires of their hearts, as face answers to face in the water. (Whitefield & Gatiss, 2012, ch.37)

7. Have Christ, then, always in view when you are reading the word of God, and this, like the star in the east, will guide you to the Messiah, will serve as a key to everything that is obscure, and unlock to you the wisdom and riches of all the mysteries of the kingdom of God. (Whitefield & Gatiss, 2012, ch.37)

8. Fancy yourselves, therefore, when you are searching the scriptures, especially when you are reading the New Testament, to be with Mary sitting at the feet of the holy Jesus; and be as willing to learn what God shall teach you. (Whitefield & Gatiss, 2012, ch.37)

9. It is this application of all the doctrinal and historical parts of Scripture, when we are reading them over, that must render them profitable to us, as they were designed for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, and to make every child of God perfect, thoroughly furnished to every good work. I dare appeal to the experience of every spiritual reader of holy writ, whether or not, if he consulted the Word of God in this manner, he was not at all times and at all seasons, as plainly directed how to act, as though he had consulted the Urim and Thummim, which was upon the high-priest's breast. For this is the way God now reveals himself to man: not by making new revelations, but by applying general things that are revealed already to every sincere reader's heart. (Whitefield & Gatiss, 2012, ch.37)

10. Let me advise you, before you read the scriptures, to pray, that Christ, according to his promise, would send his Spirit to guide you into all truth; intersperse short ejaculations whilst you are engaged in reading; pray over every word and verse, if possible; and when you close up the book, most earnestly beseech God, that the words which you have read, may be inwardly engrafted into your hearts, and bring forth in you the fruits of a good life. (Whitefield & Gatiss, 2012, ch.37)
11. Read the scripture constantly, or, to use our Savior's expression in the text, "search the scriptures;" dig in them as for hid treasure; for here is a manifest allusion to those who dig in mines; and our Savior would thereby teach us, that we must take as much pains in constantly reading his Word, if we would grow wise thereby, as those who dig for gold and silver. The scriptures contain the deep things of God, and therefore, can never be sufficiently searched into by a careless, superficial, cursory way of reading them, but by an industrious, close, and humble application. (Whitefield & Gatiss, 2012, ch.37)

12. Search, therefore, the scriptures, my dear brethren; taste and see how good the Word of God is, and then you will never leave that heavenly manna, that angel's food, to feed on dry husks, that light bread, those trifling, sinful compositions, in which men of false taste delight themselves: no, you will then disdain such poor entertainment, and blush that yourselves once were fond of it. The Word of God will then be sweeter to you than honey, and the honey-comb, and dearer than gold and silver; your souls by reading it, will be filled as it were, with marrow and fatness, and your hearts insensibly molded into the spirit of its blessed Author. In short, you will be guided by God's wisdom here, and conducted by the light of his divine Word into glory hereafter. (Whitefield & Gatiss, 2012, ch.37)

These excerpts were included because they clearly show how this mighty leader of the Great Awakening viewed the very words of God. As addressed for today's leaders in the theological portion of this literature review, these words provide such power for leaders—power Whitefield tapped into regularly.

**Bible-Based Leadership During the Second Great Awakening**

The nineteenth century was marked by many tremendous changes that reshaped the American landscape (Benson & Anthony, 2008; Gutek, 1995). This change was brought about by a fresh infusion of different cultures and the development of the industrial world (Benson & Anthony, 2008; Gutek, 1995). Immigrants arrived in droves, leaving behind their European homelands to start new lives in America (Benson & Anthony, 2008). While the country's human make-up was changing, so was the engine that made it go (Damrosh & Pike, 2009).

"Industrial capitalism" was a force that moved the country to become a wealthy powerhouse—at least for some (Benson & Anthony, 2008, p. 315). Those who were the ruling class of this phenomenon ruled a system that provided a host of jobs inside their industrial
centers (Benson & Anthony, 2008). This ruling class also had “almost exclusive control over many of the natural resources across the land” (Benson & Anthony, 2008, p. 315). The industrialization of America resulted in the push for organized labor and a widespread call for evenhandedness (Benson & Anthony, 2008; Gutek, 1995). People wanted their lives to change just as the nation’s existence changed—seemingly for the better (Gutek, 1995).

As changes began to take shape, America began a new struggle—that of “an increasing degree of material prosperity” (Benson & Anthony, 2008, p. 326). While having more may not seem like a problem, in reality, it causes a shift from dependence upon God to dependence upon self (Benson & Anthony, 2008). The seeds of Darwinism were resulting in a belief “that the competition for survival was as natural in human society as it was among animal species and that, if not meddled with by governments, it would lead the evolutionary process of humankind” (Damrosh & Pike, 2009a, p. 9). The Bible was no longer the key text for society to live by because it had been replaced with science (Benson & Anthony, 2008). Because of this shift, many areas once under Christian influence, such as education, were placed under government rule (Gutek, 1995).

It was during this tumultuous time that the Second Great Awakening began. The cry for revival came out of the worldliness that had taken control of the nation (Benson & Anthony, 2008). The movement was a spiritually prosperous one in which revivals were springing up across the country, and many were returning to the church (Second Great Awakening, 2020). Along with a focus on salvation, those who were a part of the movement sought other areas to be improved in society, such as the temperance and women's suffrage movements (Second Great Awakening, 2020).
One result of the Second Great Awakening was that many Bible-based schools and training centers were created (Benson & Anthony, 2008; Second Great Awakening, 2020). This the era that "birthed the Bible college movement," which was important because many of America's colleges had stopped seeing themselves through a spiritual lens (Benson & Anthony, 2008, p. 315). People influenced by the movement were hungry to learn about the things of God and had a "thirst for biblical knowledge and understanding," which was quenched through schools with a total Bible-centered focus (Benson & Anthony, 2008, p. 321). The Second Great Awakening had a tremendous and lasting impact on America and American Christianity (Second Great Awakening, 2020).

During The Second Great Awakening, a significant leader was Charles Finney (Benson & Anthony, 2008; Charles Grandison Finney, 2020). Finney abandoned a lawyer's life and embraced an evangelist's role directly after he accepted Jesus (Benson & Anthony, 2008; Charles Grandison Finney, 2020). He led powerful revivals in both villages and towns throughout New York before taking his message throughout the United States and Europe (Benson & Anthony, 2008; Charles Grandison Finney, 2020; Second Great Awakening, 2020). With each group of people he spoke to, Finney was able to identify with his audience by using local dialects while preaching (Benson & Anthony, 2008). He was also different because he did not shy away from publicly praying for people by name (Benson & Anthony, 2008). These preaching methods were unique for his day, and because of that, he stirred criticisms from traditionalists (Benson & Anthony, 2008; Charles Grandison Finney, 2020).

Despite the criticisms received, Finney is seen as "a leading preacher of the second awakening" (Benson & Anthony, 2008, p. 316). The Word of God held a place in Finney's faith from the beginning of his faith journey. He said that, upon the purchase of his first Bible, he
consumed it more than he had ever done before (Charles Grandison Finney Quotes, n.d.). In speaking on the power of God's Word, Finney said, "the mind of man is often compared in the Bible to the ground, and the Word of God to seed sown in it, and the fruit represents the actions and affections of those who receive it" (Mullins, 2006, p. 6). He believed it was important for people to receive God's Word so that it would bring a harvest (Mullins, 2006). It did so under his own leadership and those he influenced.

D.L. Moody, another great leader during The Second Great Awakening, is a fixture in the fabric of Christianity worldwide whose impact has dramatically influenced many for the Kingdom of God (Torrey, 1923). In speaking of Moody, R.A. Torrey said:

After our great generals, great statesmen, great scientists and great men of letters have passed away and been forgotten, and their work and its helpful influence have come to an end, the work of D. L. Moody will go on, and its saving influence continue and increase, bringing blessing not only to every state in the Union but to every nation on earth. Yes, it will continue throughout the ages of eternity. (Torrey, 1923, para. 1)

This bold statement was spoken by a man who personally knew Moody and saw what impact his life would have upon others.

As a leader, Moody was highly influential in his evangelistic efforts and is even known as being the one "who set the pattern for later evangelism in large cities" (Dwight L. Moody, 2020, para. 1). He was an evangelist who spoke a message the people needed because of their desperate search for life's meaning (Benson & Anthony, 2008). After leaving his work as a successful salesman, he preached the Bible to those around him (Benson & Anthony, 2008; D.L. Moody, 2020; Dwight L. Moody, 2020). His first teaching post was at a YMCA in Chicago (Benson & Anthony, 2008; D.L. Moody, 2020; Dwight L. Moody, 2020; Halloran, 2013). The fact that he did not have a seminary education did not negatively impact his leadership, and he established what was to become the Moody Memorial Church (Benson & Anthony, 2008; D.L. Moody,
Moody, 2020; Dwight L. Moody, 2020; Halloran, 2013). Moody was such a popular preacher that he was invited by many international churches where, upon listening to his messages, multitudes gave their lives to Christ (Benson & Anthony, 2008; Dwight L. Moody, 2020; Halloran, 2013).

The sheer number of people accepting Christ gave Moody the desire for Bible-based education to be made available for new believers (Benson & Anthony, 2008; Halloran, 2013). Although Moody traveled across the country to speak, a primary focus of his was the Christian educational system (D.L. Moody, 2020). He reasoned that believers needed help to grow in their faith, and Bible-based education would accomplish this by developing students to be empowered to go out themselves and spread the gospel (Benson & Anthony, 2008; Halloran, 2013). He also created training centers for inner-city youth (D.L. Moody, 2020). This work paid off, and his training centers greatly prospered (D.L. Moody, 2020; Halloran, 2013). Inside a “converted saloon,” Moody taught and influenced “the lost youth of the city: the children with little to no education, less than ideal family situations, and poor economic circumstances” (D.L. Moody, 2020, sec. 4). Alongside this educational center, Moody also established a school for people to attend to have a Bible-based education (Benson & Anthony, 2008; Halloran, 2013). He believed these training centers produced “gap men,” which were people “who are trained to fill the gap between the common people and the ministers” (Benson & Anthony, 2008, p. 319).

As a Christian leader, Moody is considered "one of the nineteenth century's greatest American evangelicals" (Benson & Anthony, 2008, p. 319). His work was spurred on by his desire to see “the transforming work of the Holy Spirit in American life” (Benson & Anthony, 2008, p. 319). This transformation was experienced by people of different sexes, ages, and denominations (D.L. Moody, 2020). He even spent time teaching the Scriptures to soldiers from
both sides of the Civil War (Dorsett, 2011). Everyone who worked for his ministries "thrived under his leadership" because "God blessed the work that he did, and many of the fruits of his labor continue to this day" (Halloran, 2013, para. 5). One of the reasons that it is believed Moody’s work was so blessed was because of his solid foundation in God’s Word (Torrey, 1923; Halloran, 2013).

Perhaps there is no better way to explore Moody's passion for God's Word than through his own words and the words of one who knew him personally. R.A. Torrey (1923) believed God specially empowered Moody to accomplish God's plans because of Moody's determination to spend much time in God's Word studying it above all else. Moody believed Bible study was vital to Christianity because it had the power to impact both the reader and those they came into contact with (Moody, 1899). He was given the opportunity to share his biblical knowledge with many because it was through "his thorough knowledge of the Bible, and his practical knowledge of the Bible, that Mr. Moody drew such immense crowds" (Torrey, 1923, sec. 3). Torrey (1923) believed the crowds were drawn to Moody because "he did know the one Book that this old world is perishing to know and longing to know; and this old world will flock to hear men who know the Bible and preach the Bible as they will flock to hear nothing else on earth" (sec. 3).

Moody saw God’s Word as sustenance that would nourish the souls of those who read it (Moody, 1899; Moody, n.d.). To him, no matter how much time he spent consuming God’s Word, God’s Word would never be emptied (Moody, 1899). Concerning this, Moody said, “the Bible is one that you can never finish with. It is like a bottomless well; you can always find fresh truth gushing forth from its pages” (Moody, 1899, para. 1). He went on to say, “I thank God there is a height in the Book that I have never been able to reach, a depth that I have never been able to fathom” (Moody, 1899, para. 1). Moody believed the whole Bible was to be consumed
because it is, in its entirety, God's Word (Moody, n.d.). To skip over portions such as the Old Testament, he believed, to be wrong because Jesus Himself spoke to people using those scriptural truths (Moody, n.d.). Moody saw God’s Word as a:

storehouse of whose contents no one can afford to be ignorant. It repays reading and study whether it be approached merely because of its literary value, or its ethical teachings, or its practical bearing on everyday life, as, for instance, in the Book of Proverbs. While such reading may bring a measure of blessing, however, in accordance with the Scripture—'Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy’ (Rev. 1:3)—I believe that God reveals His deeper truths to the eye of faith. Those who come to the Bible in a devotional spirit, seeking to know more of God and His will regarding us, are the most blessed. (Moody, n.d., para. 1)

This passion, evident from this portion of the literature review, reveals that a man empowered with God's Word can truly change hearts and create an everlasting legacy of God's power (Torrey, 1923).

**Bible-Based Leadership During the Twentieth Century**

The twentieth century was an era in America's history full of both life and prosperity, as well as death, conflict, and hard times (Damrosh & Pike, 2009a; Gillespie, 2018). Some believe many of the "radical seeds of change" sewn in the century before were "harvested" in the twentieth century (Benson & Anthony, 2008, p. 343). There was much advancement in knowledge, but that knowledge aided the death of multitudes throughout the century's wars (Damrosh & Pike, 2009a; Rosenberg, 2019). There were times of peace when people's lives were made better, yet there were also times of great conflict (Damrosh & Pike, 2009a; Fortson, 2020; Rosenberg, 2019). Although conflict has been present throughout the ages (as even seen in this brief historical overview), "few centuries in the history of humanity, though, can rival the magnitude, efficiency, and lethal intensity of the twentieth century's conflicts" (Damrosh & Pike, 2009a, p. 1).
The first half of the century was a time when those who living in America saw numerous challenges, such as the world wars, the depression, many social challenges, and ended with yet another war in Korea (Gillespie, 2018; United States, 2020). The beginning of the century saw the deaths of many of its citizens who were killed in the line of duty as they fought alongside other nations in the First World War (Fortson, 2020; Rosenberg, 2019; United States, 2020). After this war, there was a significant shift in America (Rosenberg, 2019; United States, 2020). Those who had lived through the war desired change and broke away from some of the traditions of the past (Rosenberg, 2019; United States, 2020). Young men who had fought overseas and young women who left homemaking for the working life felt it was time to break away from ways of life that were no longer relevant (Fortson, 2020; Rosenberg, 2019; United States, 2020).

The call for change was heeded, and, for a time, life was better and more prosperous (Gillespie, 2018; Fortson, 2020; Rosenberg, 2019). America, in the twenties, saw a shift towards “peace and prosperity,” at least amongst some people groups; this period became known as the “Jazz Age or Roaring Twenties” (United States, 2020, sec. 14). Life was easier for some, as working conditions improved dramatically, and people had time to enjoy leisure activities (Fortson, 2020; Gillespie, 2018; Rosenberg, 2019; United States, 2020). This prosperous time did not expand past the boundaries of the decade, but once the Great Depression hit, Americans were once again thrown into the seas of hard times (Gillespie, 2018).

The Great Depression left a lot of people unemployed and hurting (Gillespie, 2018). This decade-long time of darkness finally passed but was followed by another world war (United States, 2020). The conflict experienced in the Second World War was that of “horrific global destruction” (Fortson, 2020, sec. 4). Following this tragic period, Americans moved from actual war into the fears of the cold war (United States, 2020). Though the cold war years were marked
with fear as well as national success (Gillespie, 2018). The first half of the century was a time of significant changes in how people saw and experienced the world around them (Benson & Anthony, 2008).

When the second half of the century opened, and Americans found themselves sending troops to Korea. The Korean War, another in a line of Twentieth-century wars, marked the halfway point of the century for Americans (United States, 2020). This war, which resulted in the deaths of 142,000 servicemen, was followed by a time of relative "peace, growth, and prosperity" for Americans (United States, 2020). This was also a time of significant population growth for the country (United States, 2020). Despite the growth, another period marked with conflict began in the sixties (Rosenburg, 2019; United States, 2020).

The sixties were marked by another war and other violent upheavals across the nation (Rosenburg, 2019; United States, 2020). One major factor that influenced the second half of this century was race (Gates & Burton, 2011; United States, 2020). Race "became a central national concern for the first time since Reconstruction" (United States, 2020, sec. 15). One of the civil rights movement focuses was the practice of segregation, which was practiced in many places such as schools and public transportation (Gates & Burton, 2011; Martin Luther King, Jr., 2020; United States, 2020). The movement caused much change in the laws that had been promoting racism in the nation (Gates & Burton, 2011; Martin Luther King, Jr., 2020; United States, 2020). As the movement progressed, hundreds of thousands began to take to the streets in peaceful marches under the leadership of Martin Luther King, Jr. (Gates & Burton, 2011; Fortson, 2020; Martin Luther King, Jr., 2020; United States, 2020).

The backlash against the civil rights protestors was intense and often violent (Gates & Burton, 2011; Fortson, 2020; Martin Luther King, Jr., 2020; United States, 2020). Some
continued to respond peacefully despite the violence done against them (Fortson, 2020; Martin Luther King, Jr., 2020). Yet, other leaders called for violence, and this led to the "race riots" (United States, 2020, sec. 15). The riots continued violently across the span of 4 years until the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr. (Gates & Burton, 2011; Martin Luther King, Jr., 2020; United States, 2020). The hard work and endurance of the civil rights leaders eventually led to the passing of the "1964 Civil Rights Act, which outlawed discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, or national origin, was a significant step forward for racial equality in American society" (Fortson, 2020, sec. 5).

Another call for change came from the young people of the day who significantly shifted away from the principles which had existed previously (United States, 2020). Those who were a part of this movement rejected the way of life they saw in the older generations (Rosenburg, 2019; United States, 2020). The backlash against the Vietnam War also decried capitalism (Rosenburg, 2019; United States, 2020). The result of this change was a generation that embraced free sex, birth control, abortion, and illegal drug use (United States, 2020; Fortson, 2020). The sixties was the decade where courts legalized the murder of the unborn and the beginning of the LGBTQ movement (Fortson, 2020). These were radical movements that significantly changed the landscape of the American way of life, even entering in and being accepted by the church itself (Fortson, 2020; Rosenberg, 2019; United States, 2020).

As the century moved towards its close, the end was no less violent than the beginning (Damrosh & Pike, 2009a; Rosenberg, 2019; United States, 2020). Although the fear of the cold war had come to a close, Americans were next subjected to the fears produced by terrorism (Rosenberg, 2019; United States, 2020). During the end of the century, Americans saw terrorist attacks in their own land from international and domestic terrorists (Rosenberg, 2019; United
States, 2020). America's long conflict in the Middle East also began with the close of this era (Rosenburg, 2019; United States, 2020). Conflict at home was also a way of life for many as the "country was plagued not only by a sluggish economy but by violent crime (much of it drug-related), poverty, welfare dependency, problematic race relations, and spiraling health costs" (United States, 2020, sec. 15).

All of the changes discussed regarding this century significantly impacted both education and Christianity (Benson & Anthony, 2008; United States, 2020). Education was impacted because the people changed the way they viewed children and, thus, humanity as a whole (Benson & Anthony, 2008). Educators believed it was not sin that corrupts humanity, but the "distorted and corrupt society" (Benson & Anthony, 2008, p. 344). This belief caused children to be viewed as being inherently good and, therefore, it was the role of education to change society to protect that goodness (Benson & Anthony, 2008).

America was also significantly influenced by social Darwinism and the social gospel movement, which was a radical view of Christianity (Fortson, 2020). Proponents of this belief system rejected core tenants of the faith (or accepted them as being myths only) and, instead, adopted a belief system that was compatible "with modern science" (Fortson, 2020, para. 2). Social Darwinism was the belief that humans, just like animals, are subject to evolutionary processes and, thus, also the survival of the fittest (Damrosh & Pike, 2009a). Educators readily accepted these beliefs and began to shape the educational system accordingly, resulting in a highly progressive educational system (Benson & Anthony, 2008). These beliefs undermined the authority of God's Word and were present in "many American universities and seminaries, leading to tensions between liberals and conservatives in several Protestant denominations"
(Benson & Anthony, 2008, p. 346; Fortson, 2020). This was not only seen in secular education but was embraced by leaders of Christian education as well (Benson & Anthony, 2008, p. 346).

It was true that many in the church walked away from its core beliefs, yet many still did not waiver (Benson & Anthony, 2008; Fortson, 2020; United States, 2020). Some leaders refused to part with the truth of scripture and, thus, led people through the times of change without compromising their faith (Fawcett & Thompson, n.d.; Fortson, 2020). Many leaders stood fast in their faith because they held to the truths of the authority of scripture (Fortson, 2020). One of these leaders was Billy Graham, who brought together Christian world leaders for a conference to affirm that God's Word was the basis of truth and should be regarded as such (Fortson, 2020). Another result of this conference was that the leaders acknowledged all Christians have a duty to comply with the Great Commission (Fortson, 2020).

Because there were leaders who held fast to their belief in the truth of God's Word, neither Christianity nor America's education passed a point of no return regarding the things of God (Benson & Anthony, 2008; Fortson, 2020). At the end of the century, America's education was once again being influenced by Christianity (Benson & Anthony, 2008). The "evangelical voices were heard throughout the century. Their influence began much like a flickering candle in the midst of a voracious wind...[and] by the end of the century, they became the dominant force among religious educators" (Benson & Anthony, 2008, p. 361). Although there were many changes to the church, leadership ensured the church stood fast through all of the century's storms (Fortson, 2020).

One of these leaders was the Christian educator, Frank Gaebelein, an educational leader for forty-one years of the twentieth century (Evory, 1984; Fawcett & Thompson, n.d.). As it has already been noted, this was an era in which "secularists continued to identify society and
sociology as the basis of their educational philosophy" (Benson & Anthony, 2008, p. 364).

Despite the push to conform to the secular agenda, Gaebelin refused to give in to non-Christian ideas and walk away from the faith; his leadership became key to the standards of Christian education (Benson & Anthony, 2008). He said it was his duty "to give accurate teaching upon the Christianity of the Bible and demonstrate that this teaching belongs to...thorough scholarship and sound education" (Fawcett & Thompson, n.d., para. 10).

As an educator, he did certainly perform this duty and made sure the Word of God was central (Fawcett & Thompson, n.d.). A portion of his school's pamphlet shows how strongly he held to this belief. In it, he wrote that he was determined to provide an educational environment that was solidly based upon and infused with the Word of God (Fawcett & Thompson, n.d.). His desire to live by the truths in the Scriptures came out of his love for the Bible (Benson & Anthony, 2008; Fawcett & Thompson, n.d.). He was personally involved in many projects pertaining to the Bible; these ranged from writing commentaries to chairing for Bible translation committees (Fawcett & Thompson, n.d.).

Through his life’s work, one can see he had a “great love of Scripture,” and that it was one of his “lifetime passions” (Fawcett & Thompson, n.d., sec. 2). He believed that having such a reverence for the Word of God would result in having access to the ultimate truth; thus, people had the responsibility of reading it (Benson & Anthony, 2008; Gaebelein, 1958; Fawcett & Thompson, n.d.).

In writing on the depths of scripture, Gaebelein (1958) wrote:

we look next at ‘the drama of redemption,’ by which is meant the saving activity of God revealed in the Bible. To refer to this record of the redemptive history as ‘drama’ does not necessarily mean that it is mythical or fictitious; rather is it a vivid term for the divine acts leading up to and culminating in all that God did for man through the crucifixion and resurrection of His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. While to speak of these mighty works as ‘the drama of redemption’ may seem to avoid certain contemporary prejudices against
authoritative doctrinal and theological formulation, behind the phrase, there still remain the essential historical facts upon which Christian doctrine rests. (p. 392)

He believed that trust in God’s Word as merited in the fact that the Bible “is nothing less and none other than a Person, the living Lord” (Gaebelein, 1958, p. 394).

Another leader who led during the significant challenges of the century was Martin Luther King, Jr., who was a significant influence and integral leader to the Civil Rights Movement (Gates & Burton, 2011; Martin Luther King, Jr., 2020). His leadership was accredited to being the force that changed the laws critical to moving the country towards true equality (Gates & Burton, 2011; Martin Luther King, Jr., 2020). Undeniably, to this day, his name is most associated with the movement of his day—a period marked by extreme social unrest (Gates & Smith, 2014; Martin Luther King, Jr., 2020).

King stepped into his leadership role while serving as a pastor in Montgomery, Alabama (Gates & Burton, 2011; Martin Luther King, Jr., 2020). He was called to lead the people to stand against the practice of segregation on public busses (Gates & Burton, 2011; Martin Luther King, Jr., 2020). He accepted the position and exercised his leadership through "skillful rhetoric;" his leadership brought success to the mission, and the busses were desegregated (Gates & Burton, 2011, p. 577; Martin Luther King, Jr., 2020). During this time, his leadership was brought through horrific persecution as his own home, with his family, inside was attacked with a bomb (Martin Luther King, Jr., 2020).

Despite the situation, he did not falter in his leadership, leadership that will be discussed later as being based on God's love (Gates & Burton, 2011; Selig, 2015). Even from the porch of his destroyed home, King taught the crowd how important it was to love one’s persecutors (Selig, 2015). King did not wait for there to be protection to speak; he did not wait for security to preach the gospel (Selig, 2015). From places of persecution to even the inside of a jail cell, King
preached his message of love and nonviolence (Gates & Burton, 2011; Selig, 2015). This was because he saw the “nonviolent civil rights movement as a model of Christian action” (Gates & Burton, 2011, p. 601).

King was a dynamic leader who led through lecturing, preaching, television appearances, protests, and letters—all while remaining adamant that the protests stay nonviolent (Gates & Burton, 2011; Martin Luther King, Jr., 2020). He believed this wholeheartedly because he knew violence would only serve to create other problems for the civil rights movement (Gates & Burton, 2011). He organized the Southern Christian Leadership Conference that provided him with the means to speak to people from across the nation regarding civil rights (Martin Luther King, Jr., 2020). His leadership tactics drew many to him and into the movement—including two sitting presidents (Gates & Burton, 2011; Martin Luther King, Jr., 2020). Because of his leadership, the government passed the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which ended the law-based discrimination that the country had lived with throughout its existence (Martin Luther King, Jr., 2020; Gates & Burton, 2011).

King's leadership was powerful and dynamic, as seen above, but it was also leadership borne out of his love for and understanding of the Scriptures (Lull, n.d.; Rau, 2011). King's view on nonviolence was rooted in Jesus' Sermon on the Mount (Lull, n.d.; Rau, 2011). In this portion of the gospels, Jesus instructed his followers, saying:

> You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven. For he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? And if you greet only your brothers, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? You, therefore, must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect. (ESV, Matthew 5:43-48)
King believed wholeheartedly in this message from the Savior and often quoted it in his speeches (Lull, n.d.; Rau, 2011). He taught people that Jesus’ teaching on love was that “love is understanding, redemptive goodwill for all men, so that you love everybody because God loves them” (Rau, 2011, para. 5). He believed the love Jesus spoke of was the ultimate key to changing the nation (Selig, 2015).

Regarding love, King believed people should show love to others as God, Himself, as shown love (Selig, 2015). He also believed loving in this way would have redeeming results and bring change to the nation (Selig, 2015). This deep understanding of love came from King's understanding of the Scriptures (Rau, 2017). He saw the Bible as his "primary book source" and was wholeheartedly committed to it (Lull, n.d.; Rau, 2017). This is the "reason that so many of King's most famous speeches have packed the spiritual punch of sermons: many of them were sermons” (Rau, 2017, para. 2). King’s God-centered, Bible-based leadership truly transformed the lives of the people of America and brought about lasting change (Lull, n.d.; Martin Luther King, Jr., 2020; Rau, 2017).

**Bible-Based Leadership During the Twenty-First Century**

This brief survey of history has shown that, whether the ideas of a period are for God, against Him, or somewhere in the middle, there have been leaders grounded in God's Word. During this time of the early twenty-first century, America is considered by some to be in a time of significant change, a shifting of traditional values, and even a society that does not have its foundations built upon truth (Barna Group, 2017; Graham, 2019). Franklin Graham, Evangelical leader of this period, said that "these are alarming times" (Graham, 2019, para. 11). Truth itself is in danger of being dismissed (Shick, 2018). The lack of truth is seen in many of America's institutions, including the church (Barna Group, 2017). These institutions were trusted for
generations and believed in because people saw them as truth-givers, but no longer; instead, there is a growing distrust of them (Barna Group, 2017). Ideals important to older generations, such as patriotism, creating families, and religion, are no longer priorities for people (Graham, 2019). To Graham (2019), these trends show there is a "steady unraveling in the moral fabric of our nation" (para. 13).

Many see religions as a solely personal matter to individuals and are not considered a basis of truth (Graham, 2019; What do, 2018). America may still be a country where most of its citizens believe God exists, but many seek truth according to their own beliefs and ideas (Barna Group, 2017; Graham, 2019; Pipes, 2018). Most millennials believe truth is an individualistic notion and are, therefore, self-defining their religious status as being unassociated with any religion (Barna Group, 2017; Graham; 2019; Mohler, 2019). This way of thinking can lead to a decline in morality as people make their own choices regarding morality (Barna Group, 2017).

Another result is that, over time, these ideas can lead to the loss of the freedom of faith in America (Graham, 2019). This is what the possibility of living in a post-truth society can look like (Barna Group, 2017). It will be a time when "clear definitions of right and wrong are impossible to determine, having been replaced by cultural whims and situational ethics" (Graham, 2018, para. 14). This is because the Christian version, or God's version, of morality will no longer be the standard, and people will significantly push back against them (Mohler, 2019). This change is already seen in the disparity between the older people who believe the standards of right and wrong are set and younger generations who believe these standards are subject to change (Smietana, 2017b).

As the church is one of America's institutions suffering in a post-truth society, some people are beginning to question the truth of God and His Word (Barna Group, 2017; Mohler,
The church is reaping a harvest from seeds sown over the course of many years—a harvest that is a significant "threat to Christianity's integrity and resilience" (Dreher, 2016, para. 17). Many are openly rejecting biblical authority, which is tragic because the Bible is the transforming source of absolute truth (Graham 2018; Graham, 2019). The erosion of truth is also seen in the increased number of people who reject the Bible as the ultimate truth source. Barna Group (2017) found that there is:

- a decreasing number of people who believe the Bible is sacred;
- an increase in the number who say instead that it is merely a book written by men;
- a decrease in the belief that the Bible is a source for moral truth;
- a skepticism toward the role pastors and the church play in society;
- a decrease in church attendance;
- and, finally, a shift in how people view God.

Undeniably, some people completely reject the Bible as the source of truth (Pipes, 2018). Almost half of America believes the Bible is purely a mythological book and are quick to attack those who would use it to shed light on situations (Graham, 2017; Pipes, 2018).

When questioned, many cannot correctly answer basic questions regarding biblical information (Graham, 2017). Perhaps this is because few Americans have even read the Bible (Clark, 2020; Graham, 2017). The current beliefs and doubts over truth are not limited to those outside of the church, as some Christians are unsure what their beliefs are (Smietana, 2017c). Of those who say they are Protestant Christians, only thirty percent claim to read their Bibles regularly (Earls, 2019). Only half of America’s Christians say they have ever read it, and many will only hear God’s Word if it is spoken to them by someone else (Smietana, 2017a). Although so few Protestant American Christians read their Bibles today, this is not because their leaders do not urge it (Smietana, 2017a). Most pastors regularly give Bibles out and call their congregants to read the Word and even regularly send reading prompts and reminders to their congregations (Smietana, 2017a). Perhaps this is because, just as Americans have lost their faith in the church
institutions, they have also come to see pastors as ineffective leaders of the community (Barna Group, 2017).

Although "the saving power of the gospel of Jesus Christ remains as true as ever, even among who call themselves Christians, a new spirituality is becoming prevalent, one that is void of biblical truths” (Barna Group, 2017, p. 56). Another non-biblical belief that almost thirty percent of the Christians in America believe is that “all people pray to the same god or spirit, no matter what name they use for that spiritual being” (Barna Group, 2017, p. 57). As the spiritual fabric of America is changing, there is even the belief in almost a quarter of American Christians that there are many different paths one can take for salvation (Barna Group, 2017; Mohler, 2019). This data, coupled with the fact that church attendance is steadily decreasing, reveals the transformative change in America (Mohler, 2019). The reality born from these figures is tragic to America, mainly because "Christianity is not a theory – it is an encounter with a Person – the Alpha and the Omega. Christ is the end of all things” (Gundersen, 2019, para. 3).

The results of all of these dramatically changing trends in American thought are proofs of the process that has taken hold of and changed the nation: secularization (Mohler, 2019). Secularization is dangerous because it must be inherently anti-Christian and anti-God (Gundersen, 2019). In secularized America, the predominant culture will not listen to the truths Christians are speaking (Stetzer, 2015). If Christianity continues to back down to those who have determined to reject the truth, then the results will be "a post-truth culture" (Shick, 2018, para. 6). In a post-truth society, people will hear Christians speak and distrust them because they believe that what is being said is not the truth but is actually a lie (Iles, 2020). In this type of society, the church will not be regarded as relevant—at least to "political and social circles" (Stetzer, 2015, sec. 2).
There may be a great danger of America's loss of Freedom of Speech—at least for those who are attempting to speak the truth in a truthless society (Iles, 2020). It could also result in the loss of freedom itself (Gundersen, 2019). This type of culture is more than a what-if occurrence for the nation; it is certainly a transformation that is currently in process (Nothstine, 2015). The echo of Solomon's wisdom can be seen now when he wrote ages ago, "what has been is what will be, and what has been done is what will be done, and there is nothing new under the sun" (ESV, Ecclesiastes 1:9). This is because it is believed that "from the French Revolution to Russia’s October Revolution, this drama has played out again and again" (Gundersen, 2019, para. 5).

Perhaps none of the ideas discussed above concerning the secularization of America can be seen coming together with such force as that of the year 2020. This year "contained so many world-changing, paradigm-shifting developments that it’s getting hard to believe we’re not in a simulation that’s running every possible scenario at once" (Willingham, 2020, para. 2). Issues that are becoming the forefront of the reality of a secularized America are the prominence of the LGBTQ movement and the violence that swept the nation following the death of George Floyd in May 2020 (Graham, 2019; Willingham, 2020). These issues, coupled with the consequences being felt because of the COVID pandemic and political upheavals, have come together to make the beginning of the twenties quite explosive (Willingham, 2020).

Regarding the impact of the LGBTQ movement in this time, Franklin Graham said, "perhaps the greatest threat to our religious liberty right now comes from the frenzied LGBTQ agenda. The media elite and political progressives have joined together to advance and promote this immoral and unhealthy lifestyle as normal and acceptable" (Graham, 2019, para. 10). Graham went on to show his deep frustration with this movement's impact by saying, "I for one am sick and tired of these godless politicians trying to cram this down our throats. I hope every
Christian will go to the ballot box in this next election and stand against what is a godless, socialist agenda” (Graham, 2019, para. 10).

This is a hot topic between the church and the rest of society, and even within the Christian community (Dreher, 2016; Graham, 2019). Christians who submit to biblical authority believe homosexuality is clearly against God’s design and is even forbidden in the Scriptures—a belief accepted for thousands of years by Christians (Dreher, 2016). This belief is being challenged as outdated and is now an issue permeating many aspects of American life (Dreher, 2016; Graham, 2018; Mullarkey, 2018). For years, what was considered an accepted belief is now being challenged directly through bans of all opposition or indirectly as society makes changes necessary for this to be a completely acceptable way of life (Graham, 2018; Mullarkey, 2018).

The LGBTQ agenda is also making significant strides in its influence on children—that is, for the children modern America allows them to live without being freely aborted (Graham, 2019; Shick, 2018). This is important to note because, just as homosexuality is an act outside God's law, so is influencing children to engage in the world's sinful ways (Matthew 18:6; 1 Timothy 8:10). From libraries that are now full of books for children to read promoting the LGBTQ lifestyle to judges making decisions pushing children towards that lifestyle, children are impacted by this movement (Mullarkey, 2018; Shick, 2018; Warren, 2020). It has become so culturally ingrained that there are parenting books on the shelves designed to guide parents as they encourage and support their children who have decided to be another gender (Mullarkey, 2018). A telling sign that the nation is not walking in God's truth can be seen in the judicial decision reached where a father was ordered not to interfere (and finance) his child's sex change as the mother desired (Warren, 2020). These brief overviews are amongst many more stories
circulating the news at the time of this writing, revealing that many in America have rejected biblical authority on homosexuality (Graham, 2019).

In 2020, the nation was also significantly impacted by a tide of sweeping violence (Davidson, 2020; Willingham, 2020). Violence and murders that occurred towards African Americans sparked outrage and upheavals not seen since the civil rights movement (Davidson, 2020). The death of George Floyd was the spark that caused the eruption of violence that continued for months in some places (Davidson, 2020; Morris, 2020; Willingham, 2020). In the aftermath of these events, people called for reforms in American society's civil and cultural areas (Davidson, 2020; Willingham, 2020). The current time is marked with pain, violence, hate, murders, beatings, looting, fires, and property damage (Davidson, 2020; Willingham, 2020). A loudly heard rallying cry is to be rid of the police in the nation; to dispute this, or any other of the beliefs being disseminated by the violent protestors, is to be open to harsh consequences (Morris, 2020c). In the midst of all of this chaos, a telling sign of the rejection of biblical truth was perhaps best seen in the public display of burning Bibles in Portland, Oregon (Morris, 2020c).

This turmoil is taking place amid an earth-changing global pandemic (Willingham, 2020). For many, COVID 19 reshaped America and the rest of the world into an empty and fearful place (Willingham, 2020). The reaction to it affected the economies of the world, put people out of work, killed multitudes, caused government overreach, and opened the doors for what appears to be American persecution of the churches (Davidson, 2020; Morris, 2020a; Willingham, 2020; Urbanski, 2020; White, 2020). In such a time of upheaval, Christian leaders have the opportunity to shine brightly as our nation's landscape grows darker (Ephesians 5:8; Mohler, 2019).
The state of the nation should be a spark that causes Christians to be set ablaze for their faith and their God (Mohler, 2019). This must be so because Christianity is the hope of the world, both on the civil and religious fronts (Gundersen, 2019; Stetzer, 2015). This may be tough, especially for church leaders unsure of how to best engage in kingdom work in today's culture (Stetzer, 2015). Some leaders may choose different options because they "don't know if they're supposed to battle the culture, defeat it, slay it, withdraw from it, or embrace it" (Stetzer, 2015, para. 5).

Some leaders have decided to take the culture head-on for the cause of Christ (Morris, 2020a). This is vital to seeing God's Kingdom operating in the chaos, especially when leaders take the time to ask questions regarding their faith, such as:

- do we actually believe in the value of what we’re saying? Or do we need to resort to general principle arguments rather than fighting for the goodness of the message itself?
- Is it true or is it not? Is it the greatest need of the human race or is it not? Is it the message that God craves people to hear or isn’t it? Does it carry the answer to every darkness and pain and grief and evil that the world has ever seen or not? If the answer is yes, yes, yes and yes, it’s time we fought for it and showed the world that this is good and needs to be heard. It’s time we fought not just for freedom but for truth. (Iles, 2020, para. 19)

Christian leaders must be people who are “hungry for God’s Presence” (Baker, 2015, p. 42). This is because they are “in many ways the point men and women of the church. Whatever they set their faces to, those following set their faces to as well” (Baker, 2015, p. 42). Just as other periods reviewed revealed there are often passionate leaders even when their nations are not following God or following Him wholeheartedly, the same can be said today. Some genuine leaders are “hungry for God’s Presence,” and are thoroughly grounded in the truths of God’s Word, and are influencing people (Baker, 2015, p. 42).

During the chaos of both COVID-19, rioting, and governmental overreach, some church leaders have taken their message to the streets (Brody, 2020; Morris, 2020a). One such
movement that spread across many states was led by leaders, such as Sean Feucht and Jessi Green, who are determined to be bright lights in the darkness (Morris, 2020; Morris, 2020a; Morris, 2020b). These movements are truly shining brightly as people worship Jesus with all of their hearts while others are being saved and baptized on the spot (Morris, 2020; Morris, 2020a; Morris, 2020b). Though they face challenges, the darkness of the times has not been able to stop them (Morris, 2020; Morris, 2020a; Morris, 2020b). Even in violence-ravaged cities such as Portland and Seattle, the leaders led worshippers to praise God during the storm (Morris, 2020; Morris, 2020b). These leaders have succeeded in bringing unity through worship, even amid violent and Satanic blowback (Morris, 2020; Morris, 2020b). No matter the opposition, Feucht led in such a way that "the church refused to be intimidated and God kept pouring out" (Morris, 2020b, para. 10).

Another leader who has refused to be intimidated during this chaos is John MacArthur (Davidson, 2020). MacArthur, a pastor, teacher, writer, and public speaker, is a well-known voice in America today (John MacArthur, n.d.). As a pastor, his effective leadership resulted in a staff of people who have worked hard, bringing together thousands of people so they can impact the world around them (John MacArthur, n.d.). Because of COVID-19, the government of California banned church meetings; to defy the ban exposed church leaders to legal proceedings, leaving Macarthur's congregation without the ability to meet with one another (Brody, 2020). MacArthur took the bold step to publicly defy state orders, a move that was illegal in the sight of the government (Davidson, 2020). MacArthur’s explanation was:

we do not need the state’s permission to serve and worship our Lord as He has commanded...Freedom of worship is a command of God, not a privilege granted by the state…It has never been the prerogative of civil government to order, modify, forbid, or mandate worship…When, how, and how often the church worships is not subject to Caesar. Caesar himself is subject to God. (Davidson, 2020, para. 8)
MacArthur’s faith and uncompromising leadership may come from the fact that he is a man dedicated to the Word of God (Challies, 2018; John MacArthur, n.d.; MacArthur, 2014). Coming from a line of Bible-centered ancestry, it was natural for MacArthur to step into the profession he chose (Challies, 2018; John MacArthur, n.d.). His being a student of the Scriptures cannot be questioned, especially because he worked for years to complete a commentary and sermon series that discussed every verse of the New Testament (Challies, 2018; John MacArthur, n.d.). This feat took years to accomplish, which was all time spent saturated in the Scriptures (Challies, 2018; John MacArthur, n.d.).

MacArthur has made a clear goal to present the Bible so people could embrace it themselves (MacArthur, 2014). One who sits under MacArthur's leadership said, "it’s become very, very clear that John MacArthur knows the Word. He’s walked us through the most difficult passages, he’s stood boldly for the truth in the midst of controversy and he’s given us way more resources than one person could read in a lifetime” (Challies, 2018, para. 21). This person went on to say that “MacArthur hasn’t just reached our eyes and our ears and our minds, he’s also profoundly reached our hearts” (Challies, 2018, para. 21). Being able to reach his followers in such a way comes from MacArthur’s belief that:

the Bible is not difficult for the believing heart to understand. And the more I understand, the more unshakable is my conviction that the Bible is the living, authoritative, inerrant Word of God. It has this remarkable effect on me: the more I study it, the more I hunger to know. So God's Word not only satisfies my appetite, but also arouses an even deeper hunger for more. I want you to experience that hunger too. I want you to live in the joy of a genuine relationship with Jesus Christ that comes only through knowing the meaning of Scripture. (MacArthur, 2014, para. 2)

MacArthur believes the Bible is God's Word and, therefore, should be obeyed without question (MacArthur, 2014). This attitude has shaped his personal life and leadership to impact many (Challies, 2018; John MacArthur, n.d.; MacArthur, 2014). His Bible-based leadership has
also allowed him to stand firm for God's truths in a time when that is anything but popular (Davidson, 2020).

Franklin Graham is another influential Christian leader standing firm on the truths of God's Word in this post-truth era (Iles, 2020; Franklin Graham, n.d.). As can be imagined, Graham grew up with much exposure to the Bible under the leadership of his infamous father, Billy Graham (Iles, 2020; Fortson, 2020; Franklin Graham, n.d.). Graham is a leader whose organizations have brought hope, light, and life-saving measures to countless people worldwide (Franklin Graham, n.d.; Franklin Graham Biography, n.d.). Under his leadership, his organizations have "been instrumental in helping people impacted by crises including 9/11 and other terrorist attacks; civil war in Sudan; and natural disasters ranging from the Ebola outbreak in West Africa to earthquakes in Japan, Haiti, and China" (Franklin Graham Biography, n.d.). Along with his work with Samaritan's Purse, Graham spends much time traveling the world and telling people about Jesus, much like his father did (Iles, 2020; Fortson, 2020; Franklin Graham, n.d.).

Through this international speaking platform, Graham has been able to speak the truths of God's Word to many (Franklin Graham Biography, n.d.). In his speeches, he “regularly addresses current moral and social issues, calling Christians to stand for biblical values and challenging them to make a difference in the world for the sake of the Gospel” (Franklin Graham Biography, n.d., sec. 15). Because these are times when people do not believe leaders of God's Kingdom or scriptural truths, neither are many open to hearing what Franklin Graham has to say (Barna Group, 2017; Iles, 2020). His speaking engagements have become areas of conflict such that many have canceled his engagements all together (Iles, 2020).
Much of this has to do with Graham's refusal to give ground in the unbiblical LGBTQ issue (Iles, 2020). As of the date of this writing, a google search of his name revealed 122,000,000 results on Google, while his name, coupled with the word hate, results in 8,560,000 results! Although Graham stands firm on biblical truths, he makes it clear that he desires "to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and that the message he will bring is a good message that is needed by everyone, regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity or whatever attribute" they are identified by (Iles, 2020). He does this because the Good News "is a message for all" (Iles, 2020, para. 15). Despite the great things he does in Jesus' name, many choose only to see Graham as being someone who should be ignored and despised because of his truth-based message (Franklin Graham, n.d.; Franklin Graham Biography, n.d.; Iles, 2020). In this response to Graham, the words of Jesus saying, "you will be hated by all because of My name," have come to fruition (Iles, 2020; John 15:8).

Graham's love for, dependence on, and reverence for God's Word can, perhaps, be best understood through his own words. Some select quotes upon the subject are as follows:

1. I always appreciate going to a church where the pastor opens up and preaches from God's Word. I believe the Bible from cover to cover. Every Word. Thomas Jefferson once went through his Bible and actually cut out the portions he disagreed with. Some today try to do the same thing. They pick and choose what they want to follow. Some disregard the entire Old Testament, saying it's not relevant. (Graham, 2019, para. 3)

2. Well, the apostles preached from the Old Testament. Jesus quoted the Old Testament. There are hundreds of Old Testament quotations in the New Testament. Second Timothy 3:16 says that 'All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness.' I would encourage every pastor to open up the Word of God each Sunday and preach it, because the power of God is in His Word. 'For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes' (Romans 1:16). We're coming into an election year, and issues come and go, but God’s Word is the same. (Graham, 2019, para. 4)

3. God's Word encompasses every sector of living, teaching, instructing, correcting and rebuking. When a political party speaks about values but endorses abortion and same-sex marriage, they are entirely rejecting Scripture that speaks very clearly on these issues.
The Bible says we are knit together by God in our mother’s womb (Psalm 139:13). The Bible says that God has created us male and female, so that we might be joined to one another (Genesis 1:27). The Bible condemns homosexual behavior (Romans 1:26-31).

We need a return to God's Word. God’s Word is mankind’s only sure guide to life eternal and abundant. It is infallible in every subject area and brilliantly reflects the holy, unchanging character of God Himself. When God speaks, and He does so through Scripture, all of us should listen. Obedience to God’s Word brings blessing. Disobedience brings chastisement and ultimately eternal punishment in hell away from the majesty and presence of God. Everything we do at the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association is built on the integrity and authority of God’s holy Word. We preach it, proclaim it and live by it. We want to see many of the “religiously unaffiliated” discover, through repentance and faith, the vitality of a relationship with Jesus Christ. God’s Word is Truth. Authoritative Truth. Any so-called value system that contradicts it is founded on lies and deceit, and inevitably leads to disaster and ruin for individuals, cultures and nations. (Graham, 2019, paras. 15-18)

4. An individual with a Biblical worldview looks at the world and sifts all information through the lens of God’s Word. Scripture informs his thinking and behavior, guiding his intellect and moral determinations. The Bible is the bedrock that undergirds his entire life. First and foremost, the Biblical worldview says emphatically there is a God who has created all things in Heaven and earth. Think about it for a moment. The evolutionist is always searching for how to describe the origin and development of life in purely quasi-scientific or materialistic terms. He completely dismisses any notion of a Creator God, and thus is forced to come to ridiculous and preposterous assumptions, unsubstantiated by proof. (Graham, 2018, paras. 12-13)

5. The Biblical worldview says there is a God—One who is personal, powerful and caring—who created the world and everything in it. It states unequivocally that man is created in God’s image, living in essence as God’s co-regent over creation. Mankind—born and unborn, rich and poor, able and disabled—has intrinsic worth. Almighty God is a sovereign God, ruler over nations, states, empires and governments. He is to be worshipped and obeyed through the precepts and principles revealed in His infallible Word. He not only exists, but He is sovereign over all of history according to His wisdom and purposes, and He is intimately involved in every aspect of life. The Biblical worldview also asserts the existence and reality of sin and evil. “All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23). War, disease, violence, injustice and the myriad of problems that beset the world are the result of man’s rebellion against God. No amount of higher education, no enlightened political agenda or social program can cancel or remove the devastating consequences of sin. “The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick” (Jeremiah 17:9). The Biblical perspective also recognizes the active opposition of a personal adversary, the devil, who is constantly on the prowl to tempt and destroy. The devil aggressively opposes God and His people, wreaking havoc in virtually every arena. A deceiver, a liar and a murderer, he seizes every opportunity to carry out his diabolical schemes. Any attempt to create a utopian society, to permanently solve global problems, is doomed to fail. For now. But one day soon, as the Biblical worldview triumphantly proclaims, the Lord Jesus Christ will return to earth, meting out eternal
judgment to those who have rebelled against Him while gathering to Himself the saints, who will rule along with Him in a new Heaven and a new Earth. There will be no more sickness, no more death, no more disease, no more violence, for our enemy will be cast into an eternal lake of fire, and sin will be no more (Revelation 20:10). This is the only worldview that sees clearly, rightly and rejoices the heart for eternity. (Graham, 2018, paras. 14-24)

6. Think of it: 66 books written by more than 40 authors on three continents over a time span of some 1,500 years. All of it with a single, recurring, redemptive theme of a Savior who comes to rescue people from their sins through repentance and faith in Jesus Christ. Every single Word from Genesis to Revelation is God-breathed, as the Spirit of God superintended the minds and pens of men. "All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness" (2 Timothy 3:16). In virtually every sector of public life today, the veracity and relevance of the Scriptures is being questioned. Scholars and theologians constantly cast doubt. Most schools and academies can rarely bring up the topic of Scripture without the fear of legal action (though some are able to present the Bible as literature). Biased state and federal courts and hostile government mandates have served to practically ban any Biblical references in the public square. (Graham, 2017, paras. 14-16)

7. Many years ago, when I was a young boy, my mother taught me the importance of memorizing key Scriptures. To this day, I can recall many of them, and the promises of God’s Word have sustained and guided me through the years. I love the Bible. I love how the Lord speaks to my soul as I begin my days reading passages of Scripture. I love to preach its transforming truths in our Festivals and Crusades. That’s why it’s my fervent hope and prayer that we will have a resurgence of interest and esteem for God’s Word. Any renewal or revival movement must have the Bible as the centerpiece, for “faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ” (Romans 10:17). God saves us from sin, and He does so as the truth of God’s Word is clearly proclaimed. John Wycliffe, who will be featured prominently in the Museum of the Bible and who first translated God’s Word from Latin into the common English language of the mid-13th century, said: “Holy Scripture is the preeminent authority for every Christian. … Forasmuch as the Bible contains Christ, that is all that is necessary for salvation.” Men like William Tyndale have been burned at the stake for it. Men like Martin Luther have had to hide away in a castle while translating the Scriptures into the language of the people. And that is why there is no other book on earth that can even compare to this Book—the inspired, infallible, inerrant Word of God. (Graham, 2017, paras. 20-24)

One cannot help but understand that Graham’s dynamic, powerful, and enduring leadership is rooted and grounded in God’s Word (Iles, 2020; Fortson, 2020; Franklin Graham, n.d.; Graham, 2017; Graham, 2018; Graham, 2019). These, his own thoughts, ideas, and feelings
regarding the Bible reveal a man leading according to the truth (Iles, 2020; Fortson, 2020; Franklin Graham, n.d.; Graham, 2017; Graham, 2018; Graham, 2019).

Another contemporary Christian leader is Ken Blanchard. Blanchard is a leader of leaders and has had much influence today (Ken Blanchard, 2020). He is "a prominent, sought-after author, speaker, and business consultant…[who] is respected for his lifetime of groundbreaking research and thought leadership that has influenced the day-to-day management and leadership of people and companies throughout the world" (Ken Blanchard, 2020, para. 1). The reach of his influence can be seen in the fact that he has numerous books that have been bought by millions of people (Ken Blanchard, 2020). Blanchard acknowledges that Scripture contains the truths of who God is and provides the means to get to know Him (Blanchard et al., 2016). He also believes the Bible is the place where people need to go so they can understand their own identities as children of God (Blanchard et al., 2016). On top of gaining insight into both God and their identities, he believes Christians can go to the Bible to learn how best to live in the world (Blanchard et al., 2016). Blanchard acknowledges that these keys are unlocked when people actually consume God's Word (Blanchard et al., 2016).

As a leader who is reaching the world through his production company, Darren Wilson is also one who believes it is crucial to have a regular intake of God's Word (Our Mission, 2020; Wilson, 2013). Wilson's production company creates films that seek to answer questions people may have about God by filming moves of God around the world (Our Mission, 2020). They do this while standing on the firm foundation of God’s Word (Our Mission, 2020). Wilson believes this is important because the Bible is more than just any book; its contents are made up of words personally authored by God (Wilson, 2013). Wilson believes this so wholeheartedly that he says he “stakes [his] entire life on what is written on those pages” (Wilson, 2013, p. 15). He knows he
can do this without wavering because of the knowledge that God “took such care in giving His marvelous book to us, is so that we might know Him, forever and ever, as our devoted, loving, trustworthy friend” (Wilson, 2013, p. 22).

**Non-Leadership Dissertation Research Specific to the Bible’s Role in Lives of Christians**

Although this researcher could not find research on Christian leadership and Bible reading, she did locate dissertation research on Bible reading and how it relates to Christians in general. One such dissertation study conducted for The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary investigated the discipline of Bible study. The researcher, Theodore Richard (2016), opened the dissertation by giving a personal account about the essential nature of Christians being engaged in regular Bible reading. This eye-opening moment occurred while in seminary, as Richard (2016) realized he was training to teach scriptures but had not set aside any personal time for reading those very scriptures. The Literature Review for this study was a survey regarding the use of Scripture by biblical and historical figures (Richard, 2016). His research, conducted amongst participants from one church in South Carolina, assessed whether equipping church congregants to study the Bible and pray would positively affect their devotional times (Richard, 2016).

The study was conducted in phases: a questionnaire to gauge the participants' Bible reading, training participants undertook which was designed to teach them the importance of Bible reading, and a post-course survey to see if the training was successful (Richard, 2016). The research findings were positive in that the participants remarked that the study helped them either begin a regular study of scripture or have a more in-depth study experience (Richard, 2016). Through the process of writing his dissertation and conducting the study, Richard (2016) found
"it is futile to try and build local church ministry upon the lives of Christians who are failing to connect with the Lord on a daily basis" (p. 96).

Another dissertation study by Kevin Barnes (2018) was a “Bible study about studying the Bible” (p. 1). Barnes (2018) began his study out of a concern that there are Christians who do not regularly read the Bible. Barnes (2018) said that, in his personal experience, “finding an adult with working knowledge of Scripture is rare” (p. 2). He found evidence that some pastors feel their congregants have a third-grade level of understanding regarding the Word of God (Barnes, 2018). The researcher concluded that Christian people are not reading the scriptures, though many will attest to its importance (Barnes, 2018). Barnes (2018) postulated Christians need to read the Word because, through it, they will gain insight into Jesus, a deeper relationship with God, and also be able to have healthy relationships with others. The researcher believed that “teaching Christian adults the inductive style of studying the Bible” would result in a desire for them to study the Word of God (Barnes, 2018, p. 5). The participants for this research were chosen amongst a single congregation and underwent a 6-week Bible study designed to remove the intimidation people may feel about the Bible (Barnes, 2018).

Through this research, Barnes (2018) found the participants felt it was the job of their minister to teach them the Word and were hesitant to study the Bible on their own. Participants also indicated they were uncomfortable engaging with "interpretation of Scripture" (Barnes, 2018, p. 109). The participants also revealed they "show a tendency to avoid an understanding of the Bible conceptually" (Barnes, 2018, p. 112). However, they did feel more confident after his Bible study was completed (Barnes, 2018). An implication from this study was that there is a need for pastors to be thoroughly grounded in scripture and diligent in ensuring their congregations are reading God's Word (Barnes, 2018).
Another researcher conducted a study that found Bible literacy, though historically considered a cornerstone of the church, has dramatically declined in recent years (Reese, 2010). The purpose of this study was to gauge biblical knowledge amongst Churches of Christ in West Virginia, a traditionally Bible-centered denomination (Reese, 2010). The Literature review of this dissertation covered the Bible's use throughout history. The Literature review went into detail about the Bible's place among the people who lived during the early church, when Bishops came to power, catechetical schools, the Middle Ages, the Renaissance, the Reformation, and the Sunday School movement (Reese, 2010). The researcher also reviewed literature about the role of the Bible in American culture (Reese, 2010). This portion of the review revealed Americans no longer value the Word of God as they did during much of its history (Reese, 2010).

Using a survey method, the study questioned adult participants who were “Bible class adherents” to describe their understanding of the Scriptures (Reese, 2010, p. 118). The survey was made up of both Old and New Testament questions (Reese, 2010). The researcher found that, though Bible reading is declining, most participants did pass the Bible knowledge test given to them as a part of the study (Reese, 2010). This study implied that education leaders should emphasize Bible classes within the churches (Reese, 2010).

Elma Rhodes (2018) completed a dissertation that explored how the spiritual disciplines of Bible reading and prayer influenced the marriage of the Spurgeons. In the introduction, Rhodes (2018) wrote, “for Charles and Susannah Spurgeon, prayer to God and reliance on Scripture were almost as natural as breathing” (p. 1). Spurgeon once, in a message on the Scriptures, said, “The Bible is God’s Bible, and when I see it, I seem to hear a voice springing up from it, saying, ‘I am the book of God; man, read me’” (Spurgeon, 2017, p. 26). This historical and biographical research reviewed literature and other documents to show that it was because of
Bible reading and prayer that the Spurgeon marriage was remarkable and marked with faithfulness to God (Rhodes, 2018). Through the research, Rhodes (2018) concluded that Bible reading and prayer were the keys to the lives and marriage of the Spurgeon’s. Rhodes (2018) found these spiritual disciplines played a role in every aspect of their lives.

A doctoral thesis completed by Esther Lo Wu examined the Bible's role in Chinese family life. Wu (1991) took on this dissertation topic to gain information that could help missionaries, students, and people in the West who may not understand this aspect of Chinese family life. The dissertation magnifies the Christian belief that "the Bible is the highest authority not only on childbearing but marriage and family-raising as well" (Wu, 1991, p. 4). Wu (1991) found the Bible should be a place for Christians to help families. The Bible can impart truths such as "oneness of marriage," "absolute authority of parents," "filial piety," and "respect of old age" (Wu, 1991, pp. 135-137). Wu (1991) concluded that a generation of parents leading according to biblical truths would result in not only a healthy family but a strong "society" as well (p. 137).

In dissertation research focused on Bible study and faith formation, Olfelt (2018) began by reflecting on the Evangelical view of Bible reading's importance. Evangelicals believe Christians can "read the Bible as great literature and as a source of great ethical teaching but it should be more. It should be a core means of communication between God and humanity and thus undergird and support our faith" (Olfelt, 2018, p. 4). Despite this critical reason to read the Bible, Olfelt (2018) pointed out that trends revealed the number of Christians engaging in Bible reading had reduced. Olfelt (2018) found a positive link between Bible reading and the development of individual faith through his research. This and the other dissertations presented here reveal a great need for Christians to read their Bibles regularly. These studies revealed that
regular Bible reading could impact many different parts of the life of a Christian. They did not, however, discuss how regular Bible reading impacts Christian leadership.

**Rationale for Study and Gap in the Literature**

This literature review was dedicated to the link between Bible reading and leadership. This was accomplished by exploring the biblical beliefs of Christian leaders throughout history. There have always been influential Christian leaders who held to their belief that the Bible is the basis of truth. Perhaps these leaders from the past are remembered today because of their unbending beliefs in the truth of God's Word and the power available for those who read it. Many leaders did not water-down the Scriptures with the worldly wisdom of their day; they stood fast and held tightly to the truth of the Bible.

There are many God-given benefits to those who read the Bible regularly. Bible-based Christian "leadership must begin with an unequivocal belief in the objective truth of God's Word and its authority over both belief and practice…Jesus taught that absolute truth is knowable. He also taught that truth is found in the Word of God" (Bredfeldt, 2006, pp. 68-69). The more one reads, the more they will grow cognitively as they model the lives of those in the Scriptures.

There is also an entire history of leaders faithful to the Bible as the authoritative text, written by God Himself. Some leaders led in such a way that Christianity was perpetuated from one generation to the next, despite all hardships. What about now? Are Christian leaders taking the Bible as seriously as those in the past, or have they, like others across the nation, set it aside and, thus, set aside God's unmovable truths?

In today's time, upheavals are threatening both the church and the very fabric of society. Will today's Christian leadership be adequate as people cling to the faith and are, therefore, not overcome by secularization? The review of the early twenty-first century shows the truths of
God's Word are disregarded by many just as times in the past. This is the case today since up to seventy percent of Christians do not read God's Word (Earls, 2019). While there are leaders taking charge and leading the church into the front lines, is it enough? If the country continues to move farther away from God, will there be enough leaders who will rise to the call and move forward in truth despite the darkness? This review of the literature has shown unequivocally that reading scripture is vital to Christian life and leadership. Through all the studies, articles, and other texts reviewed, the importance of Bible reading for both Christians and Christian leaders was made clear. What was not revealed, however, is what does Bible reading look like in the lives of Evangelical Christian church leaders in America today? There was no literature found describing the number of Christian leaders today who are or are not reading the Word of God. The researcher sought to fill this gap in the research.

**Profile of the Current Study**

In order to fill this gap in the literature, this study utilized quantitative research, which allowed Bible reading habits and perceptions to be explored through statistical data. The descriptive survey method was the quantitative method employed to gather data from 120 American NAE senior pastoral church leaders. A questionnaire asked leaders to indicate the amount of time they spend reading the Bible. The questionnaire also asked the participants to reveal if they had personally perceived positive effects of regular Bible reading upon their personal lives and leadership roles. The NAE pastors who participated indicated they did read God’s Word with regularity. The majority of responses also indicated these pastors found regular Bible reading positively impacted their personal lives, family lives, leadership roles, understanding of God, and their relationship with Him. The participants also found the Bible,
role models in the Bible, and Bible-centered role models could be studied to glean a greater understanding of leadership.
CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Throughout the Literature Review, some impactful leaders committed to reading the Word of God were showcased. The Bible has been believed to be "our measure, our light, and our standard in this present darkness…the only stream from which truth can be drawn, but it is the only pure stream against which claims to truth can be judged" (Bredfeldt, 2006, p. 42). The end of the Literature Review asks if this is a belief Christian leaders have today. The answer to this cannot come from conjecture. It must be drawn from data and then analyzed, so the answer came forth from that data. This study answered this question through quantitative descriptive survey research that described the current state of Bible reading amongst American Evangelical pastoral church leaders. The researcher accomplished this by gathering the data via 120 questionnaires with questions focused on their current Bible reading views and habits.

Research Design Synopsis

The quantitative descriptive research revealed, through questionnaires, that leaders regularly spend time during the week reading the Bible. A sample of the population was chosen to represent the entirety of American Evangelical pastoral church leaders within the NAE. The resulting data revealed the NAE pastoral leaders read their Bibles much more regularly than the majority of American Protestant Christians as a whole (Earls, 2019).

The Problem

Choosing to read God’s Word results in success, power, and spiritual nourishment for those who choose to partake of it (Hebrews 4:12-16; Joshua 1:1-9). The Bible is the source for understanding who God is and provides role models that can be observed so leaders' lives and ministries can be enhanced with God’s life-giving power (Adeoye et al., 2014; Graham, 1984; Hebrews 4:12; Sibley Towner, 2002; Spurgeon, 2017). These aspects reveal the essential nature
of being committed to knowing God's Word (Krejcir, n.d.; Olsen, 2019; Sibley Towner, 2002). Although the Bible is essential for all Christians, it is also a critical element of Christian leadership (Piper, 1995).

Even though the reading of God's Word is vital for Christians, research shows, as a whole, Protestant Christians in America do not regularly read the Bible (Clark, 2020; Earls, 2019). In 2019, a study found only thirty percent of protestant Christians in America read their Bibles regularly throughout the week (Earls, 2019). A study conducted in 2020 found ninety-one percent of Americans do not read the Bible at all (Clark, 2020). While studies like these reveal current data regarding the time Americans and Protestant American Christians read their Bibles, this researcher could not locate studies undertaken explicitly to describe the Bible reading habits of current Protestant Evangelical American Christian leadership.

With the Bible being an essential source for Christian leaders, whether Christian leaders regularly read God's Word is central to this study. Throughout history, there have been leaders who have been dedicated to God's Word and had the power to lead in many different situations—even tumultuous ones (Benson & Anthony, 2008; Bredfeldt, 2006; Rau, 2011; Roszak & Vijgen, 2015; Torrey, 1923). The current era of America is also a time marked with much instability and chaos (Barna Group, 2017; Graham, 2019; Willingham, 2020). During this chaotic time, the church is regarded as an untrustworthy institution (Barna Group, 2017). The nation is also impacted by significant divisions, strife, and violence (Davidson, 2020; Willingham, 2020).

If leaders in the past depended upon God's Word to help navigate and lead in their respective eras, are today's leaders prepared to do the same? Are today’s American Evangelical pastoral church leaders consuming God's Word or matching the trend of other Christians who
disregard the Bible? If these leaders are not, how can they lead so that they would be effective, especially in such trying times as America is experiencing today (Piper, 1995)? Regularly reading God’s Word may be the key to leading and navigating through the turmoil seen in today’s America (Dollar, 2019; Graham, 1984; McConnell, 2011).

**Purpose Statement**

The purpose of this quantitative descriptive research is to ascertain both the amount of time spent reading the Bible, as well as the perceived impact of that reading on the lives and leadership roles of American Evangelical Christian church pastoral leaders. The central assumption guiding this study is that the Bible is a vital source for Christian leaders that provides many benefits to its readers, including leadership guidance that has been diligently applied by biblical and historical leaders. Because these leaders serve as role models, the theoretical foundation guiding this study is Albert Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory of Development, which links learning to the observation of role models.

**Research Questions**

**RQ1.** Excluding reading for vocational purposes (such as sermon or teaching preparation), how much time do Christian leaders spend in regular Bible reading for personal growth and development?

**RQ2.** What perceived impact, if any, do Christian leaders identify that Bible reading has on their personal lives?

**RQ3.** What perceived impact, if any, do Christian leaders identify that Bible reading has on their family lives?

**RQ4.** What perceived impact, if any, do Christian leaders identify that Bible reading has on their leadership approach and behaviors?

**RQ5.** What is the perception Christian leaders have on the link between Bible reading and their understanding of God?

**RQ6.** What perceived impact, if any, do Christian leaders identify that biblical and historical, Bible-centered role models have on their leadership approach and behaviors?
These RQs were designed to answer the questions regarding Bible reading and its perceived impact on leaders. In answering RQ1, the data describes that many American Evangelical pastoral church leaders regularly read the Bible. This data was compared to the national average of only 30% of American Protestant Christians who read their Bibles (Earls, 2019). The study's results reveal most American NAE pastoral leaders were reading the Bible regularly. RQs 2-6 were designed to provide richer data on the perceived impact Bible reading has upon leaders' lives and leadership roles. These questions follow the positive impacts on Bible reading outlined in the literature review. This study revealed most American NAE senior pastors find that regular Bible reading has a positive impact on their lives and leadership roles.

Research Design and Methodology

The purpose of this descriptive research was to describe both the frequency of Bible reading that Christian leaders engage in and also an in-depth look into their perceptions of reading God's Word. Descriptive survey research was chosen because it would allow the data to be viewed objectively (Gall et al., 2015). Using this type of method, researchers "take an objective, detached stance toward research participants and their setting" (Gall et al., 2015, p. 476). Another benefit to quantitative research is that it has "systematic procedures for selecting participants and collecting and analyzing data" (Rockinson-Szapkiw & Spaulding, 2014, p.173). This allows for stronger viability of the research. This method provided the opportunity to gather statistical data while ensuring objectivity.

This study was conducted using descriptive survey research with a cross-sectional design. The rationale for choosing quantitative research was that the statistical data collected would objectively describe current Bible reading times of leaders and their perceived impacts on their lives and leadership from Bible reading. This type of research is appropriate because descriptive
research is "primarily concerned with finding out 'what is'" in with respect to the study being conducted (What is descriptive research, 2001, para. 2). It can answer these questions because this method is "derived from the natural sciences that emphasize objectivity, measurement, reliability and validity" (Lee, 1992, sec. 1). Quantitative researchers conduct their studies with "numerical data and statistical analysis" (Gall et al., 2015, p. 13). The phenomenon being studied is seen in terms of "its factors and variables" (Creswell & Creswell, 2018, p. 104). The goal is to "seek facts and causes of human behavior" by understanding the studied variables (Roberts, 2010, ch.12).

Using the quantitative method begins with "a set of detailed questions or hypotheses" (Roberts, 2010, ch.12). The data is then collected through instruments such as "surveys, tests, [or] experiments" (Roberts, 2010, ch.12). This is accomplished using "designs [such as] descriptive research, experimental research, quasi-experimental research, ex post facto/causal comparative research, and correlational research" (Roberts, 2010, ch.12). The data collected using these different means can be desirable to researchers because they can reveal objective evidence on the "facts and causes of human behavior" (Roberts, 2010, ch.12).

In descriptive research, researchers are not interested in causal relationships among the variables but describe the variables at a certain point or during a specific period (Gall et al., 2015). The data is collected using "tests, questionnaires, observation schedules, interview guides, and other measurement methods" (Gall et al., 2015, p. 203). These data can reveal people's tendencies amid many situations (Gall et al., 2015). In order to describe the "trends, attitudes, or opinions of a population," survey research can be employed (Creswell & Creswell, 2018, p. 12). This type of research is essential to researchers who desire to understand how the variables interact (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Lee, 1992).
The rationale for using the descriptive survey method in this research was based on a research study that was key to this researcher's decision to investigate the current Bible reading by Christian leaders. The study, conducted by Lifeway Research, found only thirty percent of Protestant Christians who attend a church regularly read their Bibles (Earls, 2019). The Lifeway study was conducted by sending 2500 surveys to those identified as "protestant churchgoers" in two days of January 2019. The participant number was chosen because it provided a "95% confidence that the sampling error does not exceed plus or minus 2.0%" (Earls, 2019, para. 33). Reading this study spurred this researcher to develop a study that would similarly seek to understand how many American Protestant Christian leaders have regularly read the Bible. This type of research was desirable because it demonstrates the possibility of gathering large amounts of data in a short period without sacrificing confidence rates.

**Population**

The setting for this research was the American Protestant Evangelical churches because this researcher was attempting to gauge the current Bible reading practices of American Evangelical Christian pastoral leaders of these churches. In order to provide a holistic picture, participants were made up of the American Evangelical denominations that identify as being a part of the NAE (Denominations, n.d.). The pastoral leaders for this study were located through each denomination’s home page using the NAE’s listing (Appendix G) of Evangelical denominations (Denominations, n.d.). Evangelicals fall under the Protestant umbrella of those who worship Jesus. Protestantism is both a historical and current “movement within the broader Church of our Lord Jesus Christ that is fueled by a preeminent concern for a personal relationship with God through Jesus Christ according to Scripture” (Milton, 2018, para. 4). It began during the Protestant Reformation when the reformers called for a change in what they
saw to be a corrupted religious system (Benson & Anthony, 2008). The reformers desired the church to turn back to a more Bible-based existence (Benson & Anthony, 2008). Though it was not their desire for the church to split into two entities (Catholic and Protestant), it was the ultimate result of the Reformation under bold and faithful leaders (Benson & Anthony, 2008; Holcomb, 2012).

Protestantism has a focus upon "justification by faith, through the grace of God, in Jesus Christ, according to the Scriptures, and all to the glory of God" (Milton, 2018, para. 4). This movement has deeply held beliefs regarding "the preeminence of the Word of God for all that is vital in faith and life, as well as the Great Commission being realized by the services of the Church conducted in the common language of the people, was bound to flourish in national communities" (Milton, 2018, para. 15). The denominations within this movement have some "doctrinal" and "cultural" differences but hold to the core tenants discussed above (Milton, 2018, para. 16).

Protestants who are considered evangelical are those who "take the Bible seriously and believe in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord" (What is an Evangelical, n.d., para. 1). Evangelicals "focus on the 'good news' of salvation brought to sinners by Jesus Christ" (What is an Evangelical, n.d., para. 1). Many different Protestant denominations identify as being Evangelical (Appendix G). Four markers differentiate them from other Protestant denominations. First, they believe “lives need to be transformed through a ‘born-again’ experience and a life-long process of following Jesus” (What is an Evangelical, n.d., para. 3). Second, believers must have an “expression and demonstration of the gospel in mission and social reforms” (What is an Evangelical, n.d., para. 3). Third, evangelicals believe the Bible is “the ultimate authority” (What is an Evangelical, n.d., para. 3). Finally, evangelicals have a “stress on the sacrifice of Jesus
Christ on the cross as making possible the redemption of humanity” (What is an Evangelical, n.d., para. 3).

It was intended for the participants to represent a diversity of views on the phenomenon being researched. Thus, the participants consisted of American Evangelical pastoral church leaders within the NAE (Appendix G). Participants had at least three years of pastoral leadership experiences, which was desirable because these participants may have life experiences that can be drawn from to provide the data being researched. Because of these life experiences, these leaders provided data considered to be information-rich. This term refers to "those from which one can learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of the research" (Patton, 1990, p. 169).

**Sampling Procedures**

The quantitative research sample consisted of American Evangelical pastoral church leaders from varying denominations (Appendix G) within the NAE (Denominations, n.d.). This researcher sent out surveys to 1252 pastors from arbitrarily selected NAE churches with the expectation that 381 responses would be obtained (the final count of participants was 120). The pastors’ churches were chosen arbitrarily from the different states in which the denominations’ churches are located. This allowed for NAE leaders from across America to be participants while also providing data not only collected from pastors located in specific regions (except for those denominations located only in certain geographical locations).

There was no universal system to locate these churches, and ultimately the pastors, because the different denominations utilized different church locator tools (information provided through lists, maps, and zip code locators on denominations’ websites). Some denominations provided their church location tool in the form of a map. In this case, this researcher arbitrarily
picked churches from different geographical locations (i.e., Pacific coast, Midwest, South, East coast, etc.) For denominations provided in alphabetical order, churches were chosen such that some were chosen from each lead letter (i.e., A, B, C, etc.). When the user was required to provide a zip code, churches were located zip codes from states across America using internet searches. Once inputting these into the locator tool, arbitrarily chose churches in these areas. This was a very time-consuming process but provided this researcher the means to locate pastors, through their churches, from the NAE denominations who would also represent NAE pastors from across America.

The quantitative research sample consisted of American Evangelical pastoral church leaders from varying denominations (Appendix G) within the NAE (Denominations, n.d.). The researcher aimed to send out surveys to pastors from arbitrarily selected NAE churches until 381 responses were obtained. The sample size was calculated, beginning with the number of churches that were a part of the NAE, at the time of this research, being 45,000 (Evangelicals, n.d.). Assuming there would be a lead pastor of these churches, the population is 45,000 pastoral Evangelical church leaders. Calculating for a 95% confidence level with a sampling error of plus or minus 5%, the sample size should have been 381 (Sample Size Calculator, n.d.). This goal was not met because of the low response rate of 9.6%. 1252 surveys were sent to pastors from arbitrarily selected NAE churches, and 120 completed the survey. This sample size has an 80% confidence level with a sampling error of plus or minus 5.84% (Sample Size Calculator, n.d.).

The sampling technique was a stratified sampling, as it allows for a "sampling in which the population is divided into two or more groups (strata) according to one or more common attributes" (Dudovskiy, 2015, para. 1). This type of sampling "intends to guarantee that the sample represents specific sub-groups" (Dudovskiy, 2015, para. 2). The sub-groups of this
research were different denominations that were a part of the NAE at the time of this research. Of the two types of stratified sampling, this research used disproportionate stratified sampling. The purpose was to include persons from varying viewpoints without collecting data from the denominations based on their population percentages. By using this method, the sample was not be dominated by leaders of a large denomination but revealed views from all leaders who were a part of the NAE at the time of this research. Approximately the same number of recruitment letters via email were sent to leaders from each denomination despite the denomination's size with each batch of letters sent out (except with the case of very small denominations). For this study, data was gathered from those who have actively held a leadership position for more than three years because they should have been able to reflect on the impact the Bible has had upon their lives and leadership.

**Limits of Generalization**

This study was limited to Evangelical pastoral church leaders in the United States whose church is NAE affiliated. This was a study looking into the impact the Bible has upon the lives of this particular population's leaders. Although there are American Christian leaders who lead outside of the church, the focus did not include them because it would make the scope of this research too broad. This research also only gathered data from mid-level and senior-level church leaders who have been leading, in a church environment, for three or more years. This was not to discount the views of the less-experienced, only to narrow the scope while also discovering data from sources that have a potentially more in-depth understanding of the phenomenon. It is also acknowledged that other spiritual disciplines (such as prayer, meditation, worship, etc.) can impact a Christian leader's life. Still, to keep the scope narrow, other spiritual disciplines were not studied. An example of such a study focused on the impact of spiritual disciplines in the lives
of US Army chaplains (Maglio, 2017). This study revealed attitudes surrounding many spiritual disciplines and found "the practice of spiritual disciplines is essential for leaders, chaplains, and ministers who wish to finish strong" (p. 107).

**Ethical Considerations**

Ethics in dissertation research is essential because participants are humans, and their information must be safeguarded (Rockinson-Szapkiw & Spaulding, 2014). The focus on ethical concerns was not always the case in research. There have been cases of abuse of researchers' power, which brought much harm to research participants (Rockinson-Szapkiw & Spaulding, 2014). There are principles to ethical research researchers must consider (Rockinson-Szapkiw & Spaulding, 2014). The first is that participants have the right to make informed decisions on whether or not to participate (Rockinson-Szapkiw & Spaulding, 2014). In this research, this principle was fulfilled by providing prospective participants with a thorough overview of this research study in the introductory letter and requesting that, after thoroughly reading it, they would provide consent to participate.

The second principle states that researchers "must minimize potential harm to the participants in maximized possible benefits" (Rockinson-Szapkiw & Spaulding, 2014, p. 199). A potential source of harm could be that the information they provided could somehow be leaked to the public. The first step to prevent this type of harm was to conduct the study anonymously. Each participant was given a Qualtrics link to participate, and participation was anonymous (there was no identifying information collected during the survey). The second step was to protect their personally identifiable information (PII) by having used this information for recruitment procedures only. During the recruitment phase, the PII (pastor and church names, as well as contact information) was stored on two external storage devices (for redundancy) and
placed in the researcher's lockbox (only this researcher had access to it). This information was not, in any way, linked to the survey.

Another ethical consideration to be considered in conducting research is possible bias. Researcher bias occurs because of "the potential effects of a researcher's expectations, values, and general belief systems, which can predispose the researcher to study certain variables and not other variables, as well as to draw certain conclusions and not other conclusions" (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005, p. 169). In thinking about the possibilities of researcher bias, it is necessary to note that "no human being can be completely objective" (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005, p. 170).

Potential bias was addressed in this study by using a panel of non-participants to review the questionnaires before they were sent to the participants. This was so that, if bias or leading was unintentionally present, this researcher could have corrected those issues before those items were placed into the participants' hands. Out of the nine panel members (Christian leaders in both Christian and secular fields) invited, four agreed to participate. Those who agreed to be a part of the panel were Christian leaders engaged in work in both ministry (women’s ministry) and secular fields (banking, medical, and engineering) who had all maintained a Christian walk and leadership role for more than three years; no panel members were pastoral leaders (none invited agreed to participate). The survey questions and correspondence letters were also reviewed by Liberty University's Institutional Review Board (IRB) and corrected according to their feedback.

In conducting research, researchers have a definite role to play. Quantitative research "takes an objective, detached stance toward research participants and their setting" (Gall et al., 2015, p. 476). In this study, participants were not known by the researcher, which added to objectivity in analyzing the data. During this study, this researcher created the questionnaires,
conducted administrative work such as communications to participants, and collected and analyzed the data.

This researcher did certainly approach this topic with preexisting mental models of the importance of regular Bible reading. This researcher grew up in the Southern Baptist denomination of the Evangelical Protestant movement, through which the love of God's Word was imparted to her in the years she grew up listening to Bible-centered pastors. There was also a preconceived mental model by the researcher based upon her own Bible reading experiences. This researcher has read the Bible 18 times and has recognized the positive impact of regular reading on her life and relationship with the Lord. This researcher also recognizes a sense of spiritual power-loss when Bible reading was replaced with other activities. Thus, she does have a deeply-held belief that Bible reading is essential to a Christian's life. Because of these beliefs, the objective nature of quantitative research was an essential element for this research.

**Instrumentation**

The data collection process for this study was conducted using a questionnaire. This questionnaire was sent to a representative sample of the population of NAE pastoral church leaders. This questionnaire was designed so the data collected could provide a holistic description of Bible reading values and habits from NAE pastoral church leaders. The instrumentation used for the quantitative descriptive survey research was the Joshua 1:8 Questionnaire (JQ) (Appendix A). This questionnaire was developed to directly link to the research questions (Appendices A and H). It applies to the population that this study was seeking to describe (Rockinson-Szapkiw & Spaulding, 2014). This instrument was developed by this researcher instead of using one already created because the literature gap revealed no current studies conducted with this specific focus.
Each JQ question relates directly to the RQs, with each RQ being represented through three separate JQ questions (Appendices A and H). The independent panel was used to ensure the questions correlated to the RQs and the research problem. The JQ was designed to be easy for the participants to complete because their time is already in high demand (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005). The participants were informed that the expected time for completion would be five to 10 minutes (a time gleaned through the panel members experience with the field test). All questions had clear directions and wording (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005). Participants were provided examples of how to fill out the survey correctly, especially in any areas that could potentially cause misunderstandings (Gall et al., 2015). The questions were developed to be objective and straightforward questions that did not present any bias or lead participants to answer in specific ways (Gall et al., 2015; Leedy & Ormrod, 2005).

The JQ allowed this researcher to use data provided through the sample population to be described numerically, which can reveal the "quantitative description of trends, attitudes, and opinions of a population" (Creswell & Creswell, 2018, pp. 12, 147). The JQ (Appendix A) was a questionnaire focused on two areas of this study: time and impact. The participants were asked to indicate the amount of time they spend reading the Bible each week, and the perceived impact Bible reading has had upon their lives and leadership roles (Appendices A and H). There were 18 multiple-choice questions on the JQ (Appendix A). Each question provided a statement in which the participant chose the answer most reflected in their beliefs and actions in Bible reading (Appendix A).

Validity

For this study to be trustworthy, it must prove to be valid. Validity "refers to the degree to which the sample of individuals in the study is representative of the population from which it
was selected" (Gall et al., 2015, p. 115). All questions on the JQ were examined by a panel of non-participants formed by the researcher (Appendix B). The panel participants were Christian leaders engaged in work in both ministry and secular fields. The panel was asked to review the questionnaire to ensure questions were "well written, clear, organized, and grammatically correct" (Gall et al., 2015, p. 214; Leedy & Ormrod, 2005, p. 148). The panel was also asked to review the survey for any biased or leading questions. Each question on the survey directly related to the study's guiding research questions. This was the criterion the panel was asked to validate.

A field test was also conducted with the panel members (Appendix B). Researchers use field tests as they "conduct test runs of newly designed questionnaires to make sure that questions are clear and will effectively solicit the desired information" (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005, p. 148). The field test included follow-up questions about ease of use, clarity, time for completion, and bias or leading indications. They were asked to share any discernment they had on the questions being leading or biased. The panel members all provided positive feedback on the survey, and none found any question to be in need of updating or change. Additionally, the questionnaire and all correspondence letters to participants were reviewed by Liberty University's IRB and corrected according to their instructions.

**Reliability**

In research, “reliability is the degree to which a measurement instrument gives the same results each time that it is used, assuming that the underlying thing being measured does not change” (Crossman, 2019, para. 1). A dependable way researchers can prove an instrument's reliability is to ask the participants to take the survey two separate times (Split-half coefficients, n.d.). The problem with using this method to prove reliability, however, is twofold. First, a
researcher may not have had the same participation rate on both surveys (Split-half coefficients, n.d.). Second, participants who take both surveys may answer differently because the first survey introduced a different mental model of the topic being studied (Split-half coefficients, n.d.). Using the split-half method to reveal reliability gives researchers the “advantage of single administration of the test and use of one sample” (Chakrabartty, 2013, para. 1).

This researcher employed this method with both the panel (to test the reliability before the survey administration) and study participants (testing the reliability after the survey was completed). This was done by "dividing the items of the [questionnaire] into halves," and then "correlating the scores" of both groups (Chakrabartty, 2013, para. 1). Allowing each group of questions to "contain items that are highly correlated within the group but not between groups" can result in "the split-half coefficients [being] close to their lowest values" (Split-half coefficients, n.d., para. 9).

The answers given by those in each group were correlated to determine if the questionnaire was reliable. If the split-half analysis revealed vastly different answers, the assumption would have been that the JQ is unreliable; however, if the answers were similar in both groups, it would have been assumed that the JQ is reliable. The split-half correlation conducted on the panel field test revealed the participants held the same beliefs about the impact of Bible reading as described using data from JQ questions three through 18 (Appendix A). The panel members did have differences regarding how much they read their Bibles weekly and how many times they had read the entire Bible as described using data from JQ questions one and two (Appendix A). While the answers were different, all panel members did reveal they read the Bible regularly. The disparities in these answers were expected because different people have different experiences. For example, one panel member was a mother of two with a full-time
career, and another was a leader who has flexible work hours and has no children. It is possible the leader with no children probably has had more free time with which to pursue Bible reading.

After conducting the survey, this researcher took the answers to each JQ question, divided those answers into two groups, and then compared the answers. The split-half correlation results of the JQ itself followed suit with those from the panel split-half correlation. The results, which can be seen in detail in chapter four, revealed participants in both groups either agreed or strongly agreed they had perceived positive impacts from regular Bible reading and studying biblical or Bible-centered role models. The participants also provided a myriad of the number of hours they read the Bible weekly and the number of times they had read it completely. Still, the averages of both groups were similar. The split-half correlation revealed the JQ is a reliable instrument.

**Research Procedures**

The 120 American Evangelical pastoral church leaders were identified using the NAE’s denomination page, linking to the NAE denominations’ websites (Denominations, n.d.). The denominations’ home pages have church locator tools that were utilized to find arbitrarily selected church pastors. 1252 arbitrarily chosen pastors were identified and invited to participate in the study (to take into account possible declines or non-responses). There was no way to uniformly randomize the search because the denominations provided church location information differently (some were in list form, some were pins to select on a map, while others were to be found using zip codes). For those denominations that provided their church location tool in the form of a map, the churches were arbitrarily chosen from different geographical locations (i.e., Pacific coast, Midwest, South, East coast, etc.) For denominations provided in an alphabetical list, churches were arbitrarily chosen from each lead letter (i.e., two churches beginning with the
letter A, two beginning with the letter B, etc.). For denominations that required a zip code, internet searches for zip codes in the different states were conducted. Once these were located and input into the locator tool, churches were arbitrarily chosen in these areas. This was an extremely time-consuming process but provided this researcher the means to locate pastors from the different NAE denominations from across the United States.

The leaders’ churches were located by arbitrarily selecting churches across the country with no preconceived notion of those churches. This allowed for a sample that was like-minded in that they were all a part of the NAE while also being from the different states and cultural regions across the United States. For those denominations that exist only in a particular region, pastoral leaders were selected from different cities across that area. 1252 surveys were sent to approximately the same number of leaders per denomination, which allowed this researcher to conduct disproportionate stratified random sampling with each Evangelical denomination (Appendix G) being a stratum of the Evangelical population (Denominations, n.d.; Dudovskiy, 2015). The only exception was with a small number of denominations whose church directory was small in number and exhausted before all invitations were sent out.

Stratified sampling is useful because it "guarantees that the sample represents specific subgroups" (Dudovskiy, 2015, para. 2). This type of sampling "involves dividing a population into different subgroups (strata) and selecting subjects from each stratum in a proportionate manner" (Dudovskiy, 2015, para. 2). Disproportionate stratified sampling allowed for confidence that the sample population accurately represented the larger population (Gall et al., 2015). The advantages of this type of sampling include a greater number of participants and fewer errors because of the sample population (Dudovskiy, 2015). One disadvantage is this method may be more time-consuming and complicated than others (Dudovskiy, 2015). This researcher found
this to be true. Each batch of approximately 300 pastoral contacts took three to five full days to locate. Another complication was that some denominations, such as The Royal House Chapel, did not have enough churches to be included in each batch sent out (their list was exhausted after the second batch of introductory emails were sent out). Also, "the application of stratified random sampling requires the knowledge of strata membership a priori. The requirement to be able to easily distinguish between strata in the sample frame may create difficulties in practical levels" (Dudovskiy, 2015, sec. 4).

The sampling was disproportionate because the numbers of subjects recruited from each stratum did not have to be "proportionate to the total size of the population" (Dudovskiy, 2015, sec. 1). After all, the strata do not hold significance in this study but were included to represent the population holistically (Dudovskiy, 2015). This allowed the researcher to arbitrarily choose pastoral leaders because they were picked out of a list with no foreknowledge of the pastoral leaders or the churches they lead. When using disproportionate stratified sampling, the "numbers of subjects recruited from each stratum does not have to be proportionate to the total size of the population" (Dudovskiy, 2015, para. 4). By using this method, the sample should not have been dominated by one large denomination's leaders but revealed the leaders' views from all leaders who were a part of the NAE at the time of this research.

Once the pastoral leaders were identified, the pastors' contact information was recorded into a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet. The spreadsheet stored church and pastor names as well as their contact information. This information was kept secure because it was stored on two external storage devices (for redundancy) and kept in this researcher's fireproof lockbox. Once this was completed, the plan was to use the mail merge function to send the introductory letter to all prospective participants (Appendix C). However, this researcher could not utilize mail merge
because technical issues arose with her Microsoft Outlook account. As a result of not using this account, additionally constrained by a tight timeline, a non-Microsoft email account was used. Because of this, there was no way to use the mail merge function. The result was that all 1252 introductory letters had to be sent out individually. The introductory letter clearly stated the study's purpose and significance and provided an outline of what was to occur (future correspondence and necessary information on the survey, such as the length of time it would take to complete). Participants were asked to acknowledge if they would be willing to participate by clicking on the provided Qualtrics link and beginning the survey.

The questionnaire was conducted through Qualtrics via an emailed link to the participants in the introductory letter. Qualtrics was chosen because it has benefits that were useful for this research study. At the time of this research, it is a research tool used in almost 30,000 research projects, with over 90 million participants (Market research services, 2020). Qualtrics was also chosen because they have measures designed to keep data safe (Security Statement, 2020). The participant consent form was located on the first page of the survey (Appendix D). After reading, participants were directed to provide consent by typing in their name and the date, followed by advancing to the next page of the questionnaire. If they did not consent to participation, they were directed to exit the questionnaire. A reminder email was sent to participants one week after the introductory letter (Appendix E). This letter was sent to all participants because the survey’s anonymity prevented this researcher from knowing who had completed the survey. The exception was those email addresses that were invalid and email recipients who specifically asked to be removed from the mailing list. Once the questionnaires were completed, each participant was sent a thank-you letter for taking the time to participate (Appendix F). The data was then downloaded from Qualtrics to Excel for analysis.
Data Analysis and Statistical Procedures

Data Analysis

When interpreting data, this researcher ensured it was linked directly to the research questions driving the study because the data collected needed to be turned into useful information regarding that focus (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005). The raw data was processed through statistical analysis so that an understanding could be drawn from it (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005). As this was descriptive survey research, descriptive statistics were used to summarize the collected data (Gall et al., 2015). This branch of statistics is used to "analyze descriptive data to determine the central tendency in variability of score descriptions" (Gall et al., 2015, p. 204).

When conducting this analysis, the central tendency and the standard deviation were presented and can be seen in chapter four (Descriptive Statistics, n.d.). The central tendency is "a point in the distribution of scores around which a distribution of scores is centered" (Gall et al., 2015, p. 149). It is "a point around which the data revolve, a middle number around which the data regarding a particular variable seem to hover" (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005, p. 223). This study's central tendency was described by finding the data's mean score (Descriptive Statistics, n.d.; Gall et al., 2015; Leedy & Ormrod, 2005). The mean "is what most people usually are referring to when they say average. It is simply the total sum of all the numbers in a data set, divided by the total number of data points" (Descriptive Statistics, n.d., para. 4).

The Standard deviation is the “average distance that individual data points are from the mean” (Descriptive Statistics, n.d., para. 7). If the data points are spread away from the central tendency, there will be a high standard deviation (Descriptive Statistics, n.d.). Accordingly, a low standard deviation will exist when the data points are situated close to the central tendency (Descriptive Statistics, n.d.). Understanding the standard deviation helped this researcher
recognize if there was a “normal probability distribution” (Gall et al., 2015, p. 155). This data was then used to “estimate the population standard deviation from a sample standard deviation,” which is the point of conducting descriptive survey research using sample groups of the population (Standard Deviation, n.d., para. 1). An example of the results of extrapolating meaning from the data in this way reads as such: “the majority of American Christian Protestant church leaders in America agree Bible reading is important to their ability to be an effective leader with the average responding they read their Bibles more than five hours a week.”

**Statistical Procedures**

The procedure for performing the descriptive statistics for this study was to distill the data into the mean (central tendency) and standard deviation. This was done using tables such as the examples shown below. There were three related JQ questions for each RQ whose answers provided the data (Appendices A and H). Qualtrics provided the mean score, standard deviation, and answer percentages for all but the first two JQ questions (which were fill-in-the-blanks). The mean score, standard deviations, and other data were calculated using Excel functions for the first two questions.

The following example is from the analysis completed on RQ1. The first two examples are fill-in-the-blank questions seeking a numerical answer. The third example table was used for multiple-choice questions. The first research question asks, “Excluding reading for vocational purposes (such as sermon or teaching preparation), how much time do Christian leaders spend in regular Bible reading for personal growth and development?” The data analyzed for this question came from JQ questions one, two, and three. Question one reads, “I spend __________ hours reading the Bible throughout the week for personal growth and development (versus vocational purposes).” The participants answered this question by filling in the blank according to the
number of hours they spend reading the Bible each week. Question two reads, “I have read the Bible in its entirety ________ times.” The participants answered this by filling in the blank with the number of times they had read the entire Bible. Question three reads, “I have prioritized regular Bible reading throughout my time as a Christian leader.” The answers given to fill in this blank are: “strongly disagree, disagree, neither agree nor disagree, agree, or strongly agree.”

Table 1
Example Table for Data Analyzed for RQ1, JQ Question 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>#</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimum</td>
<td>#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximum</td>
<td>#</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2
Example Table for Data Analyzed for RQ1, JQ Question 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>#</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimum</td>
<td>#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximum</td>
<td>#</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3
Example Table for Data Analyzed for RQ1, JQ Question 3

| Strongly Agree | % |
| Agree          | % |
| Neither Agree nor Disagree | % |
| Disagree       | % |
| Strongly Disagree | % |
Table 4  
*Example Table for Data Analyzed for RQ1, JQ Question 3*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>#</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>#</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This information allowed for conclusions to be drawn indicating how much time participants devote to Bible reading and the perceived impact Bible reading has had on their lives.

**Chapter Summary**

The literature review concluded by asking if Christian leaders today are willing to follow in the footsteps of leaders who, throughout history, were dedicated to God's Word and showed that dedication by being committed to reading it. Many leaders lived during times when the world was in conflict or even chaos. Are Christian leaders leading during the chaos of today also biblically-rooted? While there is no way to understand how Christian leaders will succeed in this era until the future, questions can be asked of today's American Evangelical pastoral church leaders. They can be asked to reveal how much time they spend in the Bible and how they perceive the impact Bible reading has upon their personal and professional lives. Therefore, that is what this research sought to understand, and this chapter laid out the groundwork necessary for discovering this answer. The description of the quantitative study reviewed vital elements necessary for a successful descriptive survey study. This researcher followed a step-by-step plan used to create and implement the study. The goal of this study was to be able to describe current Bible reading habits and beliefs about those habits held and practiced by American NAE senior pastoral leaders. The next chapter will provide the description based on the data collected through the Joshua 1:8 Questionnaire.
CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

Overview

The descriptive survey research for this study was designed to describe how much time American NAE Pastoral leaders spend reading God's Word and if they have found that reading impacts their lives and leadership positively. In the Joshua 1:8 questionnaire (JQ), each RQ was broken down into three questions, each providing a different facet of information. For example, RQ3 asks, "What perceived impact, if any, do Christian leaders identify that Bible reading has on their family lives?" The JQ specifically asks pastors to indicate answers related to their relationship with spouses and children. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the data by finding the mean and standard deviation for each question. These were then analyzed according to the related RQ to provide a description that thoroughly answers each question. The resultant percentages are also shown in graph and table format to provide additional visual insight into the data. The results show that American NAE pastoral leaders regularly read the Bible and agree it positively impacts the different aspects of life and leadership as covered by the research questions.

Research Questions

RQ1. Excluding reading for vocational purposes (such as sermon or teaching preparation), how much time do Christian leaders spend in regular Bible reading for personal growth and development?

RQ2. What perceived impact, if any, do Christian leaders identify that Bible reading has on their personal lives?

RQ3. What perceived impact, if any, do Christian leaders identify that Bible reading has on their family lives?

RQ4. What perceived impact, if any, do Christian leaders identify that Bible reading has on their leadership approach and behaviors?
RQ5. What is the perception Christian leaders have on the link between Bible reading and their understanding of God?

RQ6. What perceived impact, if any, do Christian leaders identify that biblical and historical, Bible-centered role models have on their leadership approach and behaviors?

Null Hypothesizes

H01: Pastoral leaders will indicate that Bible reading is vital to their personal lives and leadership roles as represented in the RQs. They will also indicate that they regularly read God's Word.

H02: Pastoral leaders will not indicate that Bible reading is vital to their personal lives and leadership roles as represented in the RQs. They will also indicate that they do not regularly read God's Word.

H03: Pastoral leaders will indicate that Bible reading is vital to their personal lives and leadership roles as represented in the RQs, but indicate that they do not regularly read God's Word.

H04: Pastoral leaders will indicate that they regularly read the Bible but do not believe it is vital to their personal lives and leadership roles as represented in the RQs.

Compilation Protocol and Measures

Descriptive statistics were chosen to analyze the data. This method allowed the researcher to take all of the data collected from the survey and describe it in a way that could be understood clearly (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005). This researcher looked for two pieces of information when utilizing this method: the central tendency and the standard deviation away from that central figure (Descriptive Statistics, n.d.; Gall et al., 2015). For this study, this researcher wanted to describe current Bible reading habits and beliefs amongst participant NAE pastoral leaders to ascribe these beliefs and experiences to the entire NAE pastoral population. By locating the central tendency (the mean) of the data, the standard deviation of each JQ question was discovered (Descriptive Statistics, n.d.). This research revealed NAE pastors, on average, regularly read the Bible and understand Bible reading positively impacts their lives and leadership roles.
Though understanding the mean can provide a facet of the data description, it is not enough to provide a comprehensive interpretation of the data. This is because an average cannot show whether the majority of respondents feel the same way or not. Combining the mean and standard deviation allowed the data to be understood at a deeper level and with higher confidence. The standard deviation is a number illustrating whether the answers are closer to or farther from the average (Descriptive Statistics, n.d.). If the standard deviation is low, as was in most JQ responses, this indicates the answers were closely centered around the mean (Descriptive Statistics, n.d.). If the standard deviation is high, this would indicate the data was spread away from the mean. The standard deviation was low for most survey questions in this study. The standard deviation was high on two of the JQ questions; however, those particular questions were asking for personal, numerical responses that could vary from person to person. Because the standard deviation for each question's result was relatively low, the data and results can be confidently ascribed to the population (a higher response rate would have increased the confidence in the results).

**Demographic and Sample Data**

Descriptive research was chosen for this study in order to describe current Bible reading habits and specific beliefs amongst senior American NAE pastoral leaders by collecting data from a sample of that population (Gall et al., 2015). 45,000 churches are identified as being a part of the NAE (Evangelicals, n.d.). The research was delimited to pastoral leaders who had been in a leadership position for three years or more. With the assumption that each church would have one senior pastor, the population size for this research was estimated to be 45,000. This researcher initially targeted a sample size of 381, which would have provided data with a 95% confidence level with a sampling error of plus or minus 5% (Sample Size Calculator, n.d.).
This goal was not met because of the low response rate. Over the course of two weeks, 1252 participant invitations were sent out in four separate batches. Of these, 169 pastoral leaders initially indicated acceptance; however, only 120 completed the survey. This sample size results in a sampling error of plus or minus 5.84% with an 80% confidence level (Sample Size Calculator, n.d.).

**Data Analysis and Findings**

This descriptive survey research used descriptive statistics to describe the current Bible reading habits and beliefs surrounding regular Bible reading amongst senior American NAE pastoral leaders. The data revealed pastoral leaders, on average, were regularly reading their Bibles and have made regular reading a priority. The data also revealed that most pastors believe regular Bible reading positively affects their personal lives, family lives, leadership roles, understanding of God, and relationship with God. The majority of the leaders surveyed also indicate they agree that it is possible to gain leadership skills from studying biblical leaders, biblical leadership concepts, and biblically rooted historical leaders.

**Research Question One**

The first research question asks, "Excluding reading for vocational purposes (such as sermon or teaching preparation), how much time do Christian leaders spend in regular Bible reading for personal growth and development?" The data analyzed for this question comes from JQ questions one, two, and three. These questions were designed to describe the answer to RQ One by showing how much time pastoral leaders were spending reading the Word of God each week, how many times they have read the Bible in its entirety, and the priority they have placed upon Bible reading.
To ensure the JQ is a reliable instrument, this researcher performed a split-half analysis on each response (Chakrabarty, 2013; Split-half coefficients, n.d.). This was completed by downloading all responses to a Microsoft Excel Worksheet and then separating the responses into two columns. The data in the columns were then compared to look for similarities or differences. JQ question one asked participants to indicate the number of hours each week they spend reading the Bible. Figure 1 illustrates the split-half correlation for this question.

**Figure 1**  
*RQ1, JQ Question 1 Split-Half Correlation*

![Figure 1](image)

The data represented visually in Figure 1 reveals the responses to question one were similar. Group B had a slightly higher sum because one of the respondents indicated their answer was 35 hours per week. This was the only outlier amongst the answers.

JQ question two asked participants to indicate the number of times they had read the Bible from cover to cover. The split-half correlation for this question can be seen in Figure 2.
The data represented visually in Figure 2 revealed the responses to question two were similar. The minimum and maximum numbers were the same, and the average was different by only 0.86.

JQ question three asked participants to indicate if Bible reading had been a priority while serving in a leadership position. The split-half correlation for this question can be seen in Figure 3. The data represented visually in Figure 3 reveals the responses to question three were similar. This visual representation revealed both groups began with low responses in the disagree range, though not identical. The majority of the answers in both groups were in the range of agree and strongly agree responses. The split-half correlation revealed the answers were similar across the board. Using this reliability test for the first three JQ questions, this researcher concluded the JQ was a reliable instrument for these questions.
After concluding the instrument was reliable, this researcher then analyzed the collected data. This was accomplished by reviewing the data for each question and then analyzing according to the RQ those questions corresponded to. JQ question one reads, “I spend _______ hours reading the Bible throughout the week for personal growth and development (versus vocational purposes).” The participants answered this question by filling in the blank according to the number of hours they spend reading the Bible each week. The responses to this question are shown below in Figure 4.

Figure 4
*RQ1, JQ Question 1 Survey Responses*
Figure 4 shows the majority of the pastoral leaders surveyed indicated they have been reading the Bible regularly throughout the week. This researcher did not expect the range of answers for this question to be uniform because people have different life experiences and weekly schedules. The standard deviation of 4.78, as seen in Table 5, confirmed this assumption. The mean score of this question was 4.00, and the standard deviation indicated significant outliers from the mean. One pastor, for example, indicated he reads the Bible 35 hours a week. This is significantly more than the mean of 4.00. Also, some pastors indicated they read the Bible zero hours a week. On average, however, participants indicated they do regularly read the Bible weekly.

Table 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RQ1, JQ Question 1 Survey Statistics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Standard Deviation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximum</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

JQ question two reads, "I have read the Bible in its entirety _________ times." The participants answered this by filling in the number of times they have read the Bible in its entirety. The responses to this question are shown below in Figure 5. Figure 5 reveals the majority of the pastoral leaders surveyed have read the Bible in its entirety. This researcher did not expect the range of answers for this question to be uniform because, as in JQ question number one, people have different life experiences. Also, the answers may have varied for this question because it is assumed the amount of time each person has been alive, a Christian, or a leader could vary from person to person. The standard deviation of 9.99, as seen in Table 6, confirmed this assumption. The standard deviation indicated significant outliers from the mean.
of 7.00. There were pastors whose answers were significant outliers, ranging from zero to 50. This is significantly more than the mean of 7.00. On average, however, the pastors surveyed indicated they had read the entire Bible.

**Figure 5**  
*RQ1, JQ Question 2 Survey Responses*

![Graph showing survey responses](image)

**Table 6**  
*RQ1, JQ Question 2 Survey Statistics*

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Standard Deviation</td>
<td>9.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>7.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimum</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximum</td>
<td>50.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

JQ question three reads, “I have prioritized regular Bible reading throughout my time as a Christian leader.” The answers given for this question were: “strongly disagree, disagree, neither agree nor disagree, agree, or strongly agree.” The responses to this question are shown below in Figure 6 and Table 7 and Table 8. Table 8 reveals the mean was 4.44 with a standard deviation of 0.84. This low standard deviation shows that most of the answers were situated close to the central tendency (Descriptive Statistics, n.d.). This is illustrated in Figure 6 and Table 7, which reveal the majority (90.00%) of pastoral leaders surveyed have prioritized Bible reading while
serving as Christian leaders. Less than 5% of those surveyed indicated they have not made Bible reading a priority while serving as a Christian leader.

**Figure 6**
*RQ1, JQ Question 3 Survey Responses*

![Survey Responses Graph]

Table 7
*RQ1, JQ Question 3 Survey Answer Percentages*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agreement Level</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>60.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>30.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither Agree nor Disagree</td>
<td>5.83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>2.50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>1.67%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8
*RQ1, JQ Question 3 Survey Statistics*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statistic</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Standard Deviation</td>
<td>0.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>4.44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

RQ1 was developed to describe how much time American NAE pastoral leaders have been spending in regular (personal) Bible reading for individual growth and development. JQ questions one through three were designed to answer this question by asking the pastoral leaders to reveal how many hours they spend reading God's Word every week, how many times they
have read the entire Bible, and if they have prioritized regular Bible reading while serving as Christian leaders. The data revealed the majority of the NAE pastoral leaders surveyed have made Bible reading a priority. This prioritization is reflected in the fact that the mean score of hours a week in personal Bible reading was four, and seven regarding the number of times the Bible was read in its entirety.

**Research Question Two**

The second research question asks, “What perceived impact, if any, do Christian leaders identify that Bible reading has on their personal lives?” The data analyzed for this question comes from JQ questions four, five, and six. Each question sought to describe a different aspect of what it means for one’s personal life to be affected by regular Bible reading. Question four asks if participants noticed regular Bible reading has a positive effect on their personal lives. Question five asks if they noticed regular Bible reading has a positive effect on their emotions. Question six asks if participants have noticed regular Bible reading has a positive effect on their thought life.

To complete a split-half analysis for RQ2, the responses from JQ questions four, five, and six were downloaded to a Microsoft Excel Worksheet and then separated into two columns. The data in the columns were then compared to look for similarities or differences. JQ question four asked participants to indicate if they had perceived a positive impact of regular Bible reading on their personal life. A visual representation of the results of this split-half analysis can be seen in Figure 7.
JQ question five asked participants to indicate whether or not regular Bible reading positively affects emotions. A visual representation of the results of this split-half analysis can be seen in Figure 8.

JQ question six asked participants to indicate whether or not regular Bible reading positively affects one’s thought life. A visual representation of the results of this split-half analysis can be seen in Figure 9.
Figure 10 shows the participants’ answers for the questions were similar, though not identical. The split-half correlation revealed all answers were comparable. Each question’s answer was in the strongly agree category descending in like manner towards the strongly disagree category. Using this reliability test, this researcher concluded the portion of the JQ designed to answer RQ1 is reliable.
The second research question asked, "What perceived impact, if any, do Christian leaders identify that Bible reading has on their personal lives?" The data analyzed for this question comes from JQ questions four, five, and six. JQ question four reads, "Regular Bible reading has a noticeably positive effect on my personal life." The responses to this question were: “strongly disagree, disagree, neither agree nor disagree, agree, or strongly agree.” The responses to this question are shown below in Figure 11 and Table 9 and Table 10.

**Figure 11**
*RQ2, JQ Question 4 Survey Responses*

Figure 11 and Table 9 reveal 94.17% of pastoral leaders surveyed indicated that they believe regular Bible reading has a noticeably positive effect on their personal lives. Less than 2% of those surveyed indicated they had not seen such an impact in their own lives.

**Table 9**
*RQ2, JQ Question 4 Survey Answer Percentages*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>79.17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>15.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither Agree nor Disagree</td>
<td>4.17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>1.67%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 10 reveals the mean was 4.70 with a standard deviation of 0.70. This low standard deviation shows most of the answers were situated close to the central tendency (Descriptive Statistics, n.d.).

Table 10

**RQ2, JQ Question 4 Survey Statistics**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>0.70</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>4.70</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

JQ question five reads, “Regular Bible reading has a noticeably positive effect on my emotions.” The responses to this question were: “strongly disagree, disagree, neither agree nor disagree, agree, or strongly agree.” The responses to this question are shown below in Figure 12 and Tables 11 and 12.

Figure 12

**RQ2, JQ Question 5 Survey Responses**

Table 12 reveals the mean was 4.52 with a standard deviation of 0.73. This low standard deviation shows most of the answers were situated close to the central tendency (Descriptive Statistics, n.d.). This can be seen in Figure 12 and Table 11, which reveal the majority (91.67%) of pastoral leaders surveyed believe regular Bible reading has a positive effect on their emotions.
Less than 2% of those surveyed indicated they had not seen such an impact of regular Bible reading in their lives.

**Table 11**  
*RQ2, JQ Question 5 Survey Answer Percentages*  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>62.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>29.17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither Agree nor Disagree</td>
<td>6.67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>0.83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>0.83%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 12**  
*RQ2, JQ Question 5 Survey Statistics*  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Standard Deviation</td>
<td>0.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>4.52</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

JQ question six reads, “Regular Bible reading has a noticeably positive effect on my thought life.” The responses to this question were: “strongly disagree, disagree, neither agree nor disagree, agree, or strongly agree.” The responses to this question are shown below in Figure 13 and Tables 13 and 14.

**Figure 13**  
*RQ2, JQ Question 6 Survey Responses*
Table 14 reveals the mean was 4.65 with a standard deviation of 0.67. This low standard deviation shows most of the answers were situated close to the central tendency (Descriptive Statistics, n.d.). This can be seen in Figure 13 and Table 13, which reveal the majority (95%) of pastoral leaders surveyed believe regular Bible reading has a positive effect on their thought life. Less than 2% of those surveyed have not found that to be the case in their lives.

Table 13

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RQ2, JQ Question 6 Survey Answer Percentages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither Agree nor Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 14

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RQ2, JQ Question 6 Survey Statistics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Standard Deviation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

RQ2 was developed to describe the impact American NAE pastoral leaders have found regular Bible reading to have upon their personal lives. JQ questions four through six were designed to answer this question by asking them to indicate if they have perceived noticeable positive effects on their personal lives, emotions, and thought lives. Figure 14 reveals the majority of the NAE pastoral leaders surveyed have found the Bible positively impacts their personal lives. This is reflected in the fact that the Standard Deviation from the mean in each of these questions is less than 1.00.
Research Question Three

The third research question asked, “What perceived impact, if any, do Christian leaders identify that Bible reading has on their family lives?” The data analyzed for this question came from JQ questions seven, eight, and nine. Each of these questions was designed to garner answers that could explain a different aspect of what it means for one's family life to be affected by regular Bible reading. This was done by asking the pastors if they have noticed regular Bible reading has positive effects on their families through how they interact with and view their family members.

In order to complete a split-half analysis for RQ3, the responses from JQ questions seven, eight, and nine were downloaded to a Microsoft Excel Worksheet and then separated into two columns. The data in the columns were then compared to look for similarities or differences in the data. JQ question seven asked participants to indicate their views on Bible reading effects on how they interact with their spouses. A visual representation of the results of this split-half analysis can be seen in Figure 15.
JQ question eight asked participants to indicate if they had perceived a positive impact from regular Bible reading on how they interact with and lead their children. A visual representation of the results of this split-half analysis can be seen in Figure 16.

JQ question nine asked participants to indicate their views on Bible reading effects on the way they view their families. A visual representation of the results of this split-half analysis can be seen in Figure 17.
The split-half correlation for those questions related to RQ3, seen in Figure 18, reveals the answers were comparable. Each question had most of the answers in the strongly agree category descending in like manner towards the strongly disagree category. Using this reliability test, this researcher has concluded this portion of the JQ is reliable.

The third research question asked, "What perceived impact, if any, do Christian leaders identify that Bible reading has on their family lives?" The data analyzed for this question came from JQ questions seven, eight, and nine. JQ question seven reads, “Regular Bible reading has a
noticeably positive effect on the way I interact with my spouse.” The responses to this question were: “strongly disagree, disagree, neither agree nor disagree, agree, or strongly agree.” The responses to this question are shown below in Figure 19 and Tables 15 and 16. Table 16 reveals the mean was 4.53 with a standard deviation of 0.78. This low standard deviation shows that most of the answers were situated close to the central tendency (Descriptive Statistics, n.d.). This is shown in Figure 19 and Table 15, which reveal the majority (89.17%) of pastoral leaders surveyed indicated that they believe regular Bible reading has a noticeably positive effect on how they interact with their spouses. 2.50% of those surveyed indicated they had not seen such an impact in their own lives.

Figure 19
RQ3, JQ Question 7 Survey Responses

Table 15
RQ3, JQ Question 7 Survey Answer Percentages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>67.50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>21.67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither Agree nor Disagree</td>
<td>8.33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>1.67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>0.83%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 16
*RQ3, JQ Question 7 Survey Statistics*

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Standard Deviation</td>
<td>0.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>4.53</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

JQ question eight reads, “Regular Bible reading has a noticeably positive effect on the way I interact with and lead my children.” The responses to this question were: “strongly disagree, disagree, neither agree nor disagree, agree, or strongly agree.” The responses to this question are shown below in Figure 20 and Tables 17 and 18. Table 18 reveals the mean was 4.52 with a standard deviation of 0.72. This low standard deviation shows most of the answers were situated close to the central tendency (Descriptive Statistics, n.d.). This can be seen in Figure 20 and Table 17, which reveal the majority (88.34%) of pastoral leaders surveyed believe regular Bible reading positively affects the way they interact with and lead their children. Less than 1.00% of those surveyed indicated that they had not seen such an impact of regular Bible reading in their lives.

Figure 20
*RQ3, JQ Question 8 Survey Responses*
Table 17
*RQ3, JQ Question 8 Survey Answer Percentages*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>64.17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>24.17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither Agree nor Disagree</td>
<td>10.83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>0.83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 18
*RQ3, JQ Question 8 Survey Statistics*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statistic</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Standard Deviation</td>
<td>0.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>4.52</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

JQ question nine reads, “Regular Bible reading has a noticeably positive effect on the way I view my family.” The responses to this question were: “strongly disagree, disagree, neither agree nor disagree, agree, or strongly agree.” The responses to this question are shown below in Figure 21 and Tables 19 and 20.

Figure 21
*RQ3, JQ Question 9 Survey Responses*
Table 20 reveals the mean was 4.61 with a standard deviation of 0.64. This low standard deviation shows most of the answers were situated close to the central tendency (Descriptive Statistics, n.d.). This can be seen in Figure 21 and Table 19, which reveal the majority (93.33%) of pastoral leaders surveyed believe regular Bible reading positively affects the way they view their family. Less than 1.00% of those surveyed have not found that to be the case in their lives.

Table 19

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Answer Percentages</th>
<th>68.33%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>25.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither Agree nor Disagree</td>
<td>5.83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>0.83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 20

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Statistics</th>
<th>0.64</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Standard Deviation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>4.61</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

RQ3 was developed to describe the impact American NAE pastoral leaders have found that regular Bible reading has upon their family lives. JQ questions seven through nine were designed to answer this question by asking them to indicate if they have perceived noticeable positive effects on interacting with, leading, and viewing family members. Figure 22 reveals that most NAE pastoral leaders surveyed have found the Bible positively impacts their family lives. This is reflected in the fact that the Standard Deviation from the mean in each of these questions is less than 1.00.
Research Question Four

The fourth research question asked, "What perceived impact, if any, do Christian leaders identify that Bible reading has on their leadership approach and behaviors?" The data analyzed for this question comes from JQ questions 10, 11, and 12. These questions were developed to describe the following aspects of leadership: leading staff, leading volunteers, and interacting with other leaders.

In order to complete a split-half analysis for RQ4, the responses from JQ questions 10, 11, and 12 were downloaded to a Microsoft Excel Worksheet and then separated into two columns. The data in the columns were then compared to look for similarities or differences. JQ question 10 asked participants to indicate their views on Bible reading effects on how they interact with and lead their staff. A visual representation of the results of this split-half analysis can be seen in Figure 23.
Figure 23
*RQ4, JQ Question 10 Split-Half Correlation*

JQ question 11 asked participants to indicate their views on Bible reading effects on how they interact with and lead volunteers. A visual representation of the results of this split-half analysis can be seen in Figure 24.

Figure 24
*RQ4, JQ Question 11 Split-Half Correlation*

JQ question 12 asked participants to indicate their views on Bible reading effects on how they interact with other leaders. A visual representation of the results of this split-half analysis can be seen in Figure 25.
Figure 25
*RQ4, JQ Question 12 Split-Half Correlation*

Figure 26 shows the participants' answers for the questions were similar, though not identical. The split-half correlation revealed the answers for the portion of the JQ related to RQ4 were similar in that they had most of the answers in the strongly agree category descending in like manner towards the strongly disagree category. Using this reliability test, this researcher has concluded that this portion of the JQ is reliable.

Figure 26
*RQ4 Split-Half Correlation*
The fourth research question asked, "What perceived impact, if any, do Christian leaders identify that Bible reading has on their leadership approach and behaviors?" The data analyzed for this question comes from JQ questions 10, 11, and 12. JQ question 10 reads, “Regular Bible reading has a noticeably positive effect on the way I interact with and lead my staff.” The responses to this question were: “strongly disagree, disagree, neither agree nor disagree, agree, or strongly agree.” The responses to this question are shown below in Figure 27 and Tables 21 and 22.

**Figure 27**
*RQ4, JQ Question 10 Survey Responses*

![Bar chart showing survey responses](chart)

Table 22 reveals the mean was 4.50 with a standard deviation of 0.68. This low standard deviation shows most of the answers were situated close to the central tendency (Descriptive Statistics, n.d.). This is shown in Figure 27 and Table 21, which reveal the majority (90.83%) of pastoral leaders surveyed indicated that they believe regular Bible reading has a noticeably positive effect on how they interact with and lead their staff. Less than 1.00% of those surveyed indicated that they had not seen such an impact in their own lives.
Table 21
*RQ4, JQ Question 10 Survey Answer Percentages*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>60.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>30.83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither Agree nor Disagree</td>
<td>8.33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>0.83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 22
*RQ4, JQ Question 10 Survey Statistics*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Metric</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Standard Deviation</td>
<td>0.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>4.50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

JQ question 11 reads, “Regular Bible reading has a noticeably positive effect on the way I interact with and lead volunteers.” The responses to this question were: “strongly disagree, disagree, neither agree nor disagree, agree, or strongly agree.” The responses to this question are shown below in Figure 28 and Tables 23 and 24.

Figure 28
*RQ4, JQ Question 11 Survey Responses*

Table 24 reveals the mean was 4.52 with a standard deviation of 0.68. This low standard deviation shows most of the answers were situated close to the central tendency (Descriptive
This can be seen in Figure 28 and Table 23, which reveal the majority (90.84%) of pastoral leaders surveyed believe that regular Bible reading positively affects how they interact with and lead volunteers. Less than 1.00% of those surveyed indicated they had not seen such an impact of regular Bible reading in their lives.

**Table 23**  
*RQ4, JQ Question 11 Survey Answer Percentages*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>61.67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>29.17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither Agree nor Disagree</td>
<td>8.33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>0.83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 24**  
*RQ4, JQ Question 11 Survey Statistics*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statistic</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Standard Deviation</td>
<td>0.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>4.52</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

JQ question 12 reads, “Regular Bible reading has a noticeably positive effect on the way I interact with other leaders.” The responses to this question were: “strongly disagree, disagree, neither agree nor disagree, agree, or strongly agree.” The responses to this question are shown below in Figure 29 and Tables 25 and 26. Table 26 reveals the mean was 4.44 with a standard deviation of 0.78. This low standard deviation shows most of the answers were situated close to the central tendency (Descriptive Statistics, n.d.). This can be seen in Figure 29 and Table 25, which reveal the majority (90.83%) of pastoral leaders surveyed believe regular Bible reading positively affects how they interact with other leaders. Less than 3% of those surveyed have not found that to be the case in their lives.
RQ4 was developed to describe the impact American NAE pastoral leaders have found regular Bible reading has had upon their leadership. JQ questions 10, 11, and 12 were designed to answer this question by asking them to indicate if they have perceived noticeable positive effects on how they interact with other leaders, staff, and volunteers as well as how they lead staff and volunteers. Figure 30 reveals that most NAE pastoral leaders surveyed have found
Bible reading positively impacts their leadership. This is reflected in the fact that the Standard Deviation from the mean in each of these questions is less than 1.00.

**Figure 30**

*RQ4 Survey Responses*

![Figure 30: RQ4 Survey Responses](image)

**Research Question Five**

The fifth research question asked, "What is the perception Christian leaders identify on the link between Bible reading and their understanding of God?" The data analyzed for this question comes from JQ questions 13, 14, and 15. The different aspects of understanding God that the pastoral leaders were questioned on regarded one's relationship with God. In order to complete a split-half analysis for RQ5, the responses from JQ questions 13, 14, and 15 were downloaded to a Microsoft Excel Worksheet and then separated into two columns. The data in the columns were then compared to look for similarities or differences. JQ question 13 asked participants to indicate their views on Bible reading effects on their understanding of God. A visual representation of the results of this split-half analysis can be seen in Figure 31.
JQ question 14 asked participants to indicate their views on Bible reading affects their relationship with God. A visual representation of the results of this split-half analysis can be seen in Figure 32.

JQ question 15 asked participants to indicate if they believed the Bible is essential to understanding who God is, how He engages with people, and how people should engage with Him. A visual representation of the results of this split-half analysis can be seen in Figure 33.
Figure 33
*RQ5, JQ Question 15 Split-Half Correlation*

Figure 34 shows the participants’ answers to those questions related to RQ5 were comparable, although they were not identical. The split-half correlation revealed the answers were similar across the board. For each question, most of the answers in the strongly agree category descending in like manner towards the strongly disagree category. Using this reliability test, this researcher has concluded this portion of the JQ is reliable.

Figure 34
*RQ5 Split-Half Correlation*
The fifth research question asked, "What is the perception Christian leaders have on the link between Bible reading and their understanding of God?" The data analyzed for this question comes from JQ questions 13, 14, and 15. JQ question 13 reads, “Regular Bible reading has a noticeably positive effect on my understanding of God.” The responses to this question were: “strongly disagree, disagree, neither agree nor disagree, agree, or strongly agree.” The responses to this question are shown below in Figure 35 and Tables 27 and 28. Table 28 reveals the mean was 4.89 with a standard deviation of 0.40. This low standard deviation shows most of the answers were situated close to the central tendency (Descriptive Statistics, n.d.).

**Figure 35**
*RQ5, JQ Question 13 Survey Responses*

**Table 27**
*RQ5, JQ Question 13 Survey Answer Percentages*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>91.67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>6.67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither Agree nor Disagree</td>
<td>0.83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>0.83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 28  
*RQ5, JQ Question 13 Survey Statistics*

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Standard Deviation</td>
<td>0.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>4.89</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 35 and Table 27, which reveal the majority (98.34%) of pastoral leaders surveyed indicated they believe regular Bible reading has a noticeably positive effect on their understanding of God. Less than 1.00% of those surveyed indicated they had not seen such an impact in their own lives.

JQ question 14 reads, “Regular Bible reading has a noticeably positive effect on my relationship with God.” The responses to this question were: “strongly disagree, disagree, neither agree nor disagree, agree, or strongly agree.” The responses to this question are shown below in Figure 36 and Tables 29 and 30.

**Figure 36**  
*RQ5, JQ Question 14 Survey Responses*

Table 30 reveals the mean was 4.84 with a standard deviation of 0.45. This low standard deviation shows most of the answers were situated close to the central tendency (Descriptive Statistics). This is shown in Figure 36 and Table 29, which reveal the majority (98.34%) of pastoral leaders surveyed believe that regular Bible reading positively affects their relationship
with God. Less than 1.00% of those surveyed indicated they had not seen such an impact of regular Bible reading in their lives.

**Table 29**

*RQ5, JQ Question 14 Survey Answer Percentages*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>86.67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>11.67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither Agree nor Disagree</td>
<td>0.83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>0.83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 30**

*RQ5, JQ Question 14 Survey Statistics*

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Standard Deviation</td>
<td>0.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>4.84</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

JQ question 15 reads, “Regular Bible reading is essential in order to understand who God is, how He engages with people, and how people should engage with Him.” The responses to this question were: “strongly disagree, disagree, neither agree nor disagree, agree, or strongly agree.” The responses to this question are shown below in Figure 37 and Tables 31 and 32. Table 32 reveals the mean was 4.90 with a standard deviation of 0.42. This low standard deviation shows most of the answers were situated close to the central tendency (Descriptive Statistics, n.d.). This can be seen in Figure 37 and Table 31, which reveal the majority (97.5%) of pastoral leaders surveyed believe regular Bible reading is vital for understanding God, how God engages with humanity, and how humanity is to engage with Him. Less than 1.00% of those surveyed have not found that to be the case in their lives.
RQ5 was developed to describe the impact American NAE pastoral leaders have found that regular Bible reading has upon their understanding of God. JQ question 13 asked the participants to indicate if they have found Bible reading to positively affect their understanding of God. JQ question 14 sought the angle of this understanding by seeking to describe if pastoral leaders have found Bible reading to positively affect their relationship with God. JQ question 15 sought to describe if pastoral leaders believed that regular Bible reading was vital to
understanding God and the relationship between Him and people. Figure 38 reveals that most NAE pastoral leaders surveyed have found the Bible positively impacts their understanding of God. This is reflected in the fact that the Standard Deviation from the mean in each of these questions low (less than .5).

**Figure 38**

*RQ5 Survey Responses*

![Survey Responses Graph](image)

**Research Question Six**

The sixth research question asked, "What perceived impact, if any, do Christian leaders identify that biblical and historical Bible-centered role models on their leadership approach and behaviors?" The data analyzed for this question comes from JQ questions 16, 17, and 18. JQ question 16 sought to answer RQ6 by asking participants if they believed studying biblical leaders could positively impact their leadership. JQ question 17 asked if the same could be said for studying leadership-centered biblical concepts. The final question asked if studying historical leaders who were biblically grounded could also provide advances for their leadership.

In order to complete a split-half analysis for RQ5, the responses from JQ questions 16, 17, and 18 were downloaded to a Microsoft Excel Worksheet and then separated into two columns. The data in the columns were then compared to look for similarities or differences.
JQ question 16 asked participants to indicate their views on Bible reading's effects on gaining leadership skills. A visual representation of this question’s split-half analysis is shown in Figure 39.

**Figure 39**
*RQ6, JQ Question 16 Split-Half Correlation*

JQ question 17 asked participants to indicate their belief that one can gain leadership skills from studying biblical leadership concepts. A visual representation of this question’s split-half analysis is shown in Figure 40.

**Figure 40**
*RQ6, JQ Question 17 Split-Half Correlation*
JQ question 18 asked participants to indicate if they believed they could gain leadership skills from studying historical leaders who were biblically rooted. A visual representation of this question’s split-half analysis is shown in Figure 41.

**Figure 41**

*RQ6, JQ Question 18 Split-Half Correlation*

![Bar chart showing split-half correlation for JQ Question 18.](image)

Figure 42 shows the participants’ answers were very close, though not identical.

**Figure 42**

*RQ6 Split-Half Correlation*

![Bar chart showing split-half correlation for RQ6.](image)

The split-half correlation for those questions related to RQ6 did reveal the answers were similar across the board. Each question had most of the answers in the strongly agree category.
descending in like manner towards the strongly disagree category. Using this reliability test, the researcher concluded this portion of the JQ is reliable.

The sixth research question asked, "What perceived impact, if any, do Christian leaders identify that biblical and historical, Bible-centered role models have on their leadership approach and behaviors?" The data analyzed for this question comes from JQ questions 16, 17, and 18. Question 16 reads, “I can gain leadership skills from lessons learned from studying leaders who are in the Bible.” The responses to this question were: “strongly disagree, disagree, neither agree nor disagree, agree, or strongly agree.” The responses to this question are shown below in Figure 43 and Tables 33 and 34. Table 34 reveals the mean was 4.39 with a standard deviation of 0.76. This low standard deviation shows most of the answers were situated close to the central tendency (Descriptive Statistics, n.d.). This is shown in Figure 43 and Table 33, which reveal the majority (88.33%) of pastoral leaders surveyed indicated that they believe the study of biblical leaders can impart an understanding of leadership. Less than 3.00% of those surveyed indicated they had not seen such an impact in their own lives.

**Figure 43**

*RQ6, JQ Question 16 Survey Responses*
Table 33
*RQ6, JQ Question 16 Survey Answer Percentages*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>53.33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>35.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither Agree nor Disagree</td>
<td>9.17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>2.50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 34
*RQ6, JQ Question 16 Survey Statistics*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Standard Deviation</td>
<td>0.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>4.39</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Question 17 reads, “I can gain leadership skills from the leadership concepts that are presented in the Bible.” The responses to this question were: “strongly disagree, disagree, neither agree nor disagree, agree, or strongly agree.” The responses to this question are shown below in Figure 44 and Tables 35 and 36.

Figure 44
*RQ6, JQ Question 17 Survey Responses*

Table 36 reveals the mean was 4.44 with a standard deviation of 0.67. This low standard deviation shows most of the answers were situated close to the central tendency (Descriptive
Statistics, n.d.). This is shown in Figure 44 and Table 35, which reveal the majority (90.00%) of pastoral leaders surveyed believe leadership skills can be gained by studying leadership concepts in the Bible. None of those surveyed indicated they did not believe studying biblical leadership concepts provides an understanding of leadership.

**Table 35**

*RQ6, JQ Question 17 Survey Answer Percentages*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>54.17%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>35.83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither Agree nor Disagree</td>
<td>10.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 36**

*RQ6, JQ Question 17 Survey Statistics*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>0.71</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>4.30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Question 18 reads, “I can gain leadership skills from studying leaders who, throughout history, have been biblically rooted.” The responses to this question were: “strongly disagree, disagree, neither agree nor disagree, agree, or strongly agree.” The responses to this question are shown below in Figure 45 and Tables 37 and 38. Table 38 reveals the mean was 4.30 with a standard deviation of 0.71. This low standard deviation shows most of the answers were situated close to the central tendency (Descriptive Statistics, n.d.). This is shown in Figure 45 and Table 37, which reveal the majority (88.33%) of pastoral leaders surveyed believe regular studying biblically grounded historical leaders can result in gaining leadership skills. Less than 2.00% of those surveyed have not found that to be the case in their lives.
RQ6 was developed to describe the impact American NAE pastoral leaders have found that studying biblical leadership concepts, biblical leaders, and biblically rooted historical leaders can have on their leadership skills. Figure 46 reveals the majority of the NAE pastoral leaders surveyed have found this to be the case in their leadership roles. This is reflected in the fact that the Standard Deviation from the mean in each of these questions was less than 1.00.
Evaluation of the Research Design

The descriptive survey method had both strengths and weaknesses. A strength was that this researcher was able to draw enough data to describe current Bible reading habits and specific values of the population of American NAE pastoral leaders (Gall et al., 2015; Leedy & Ormrod, 2005). This is important because the background of the problem indicated that data showed populations, such as Protestants and Americans, to have a meager Bible-reading rate (Clark, 2020; Earls, 2019). These studies were what sparked this researcher into looking for similar studies on populations of Christian leaders, and to be able to describe a large population of Christian leaders in a similar way. There was a gap in the literature in the area of Bible reading amongst Protestant Christian leaders. To fill this gap, this study used research on a sample of the NAE population to describe the entire NAE populations' Bible reading habits.

The first weakness observed in the execution of this study was the number of non-responses. Because of this low response rate, this researcher could not provide as strong of a description as desired. This may have been explained through the correspondence with a church secretary who responded to the recruitment letter. This secretary revealed it is her church’s
policy to never click on links in emails due to its potential of being spam. Because of this revelation, if this researcher had to do it over, she would have sought out means to make participants understand that she was a "real" person, perhaps through phone contact.

Another weakness of this research is the fact that all responses were self-reported. It has been found that "to the extent that social desirability bias is uniform within a group under study, it will inflate individual responses but not alter their rank order" (West, 2014, para. 3). While there was no danger of their answers being linked to them because of the survey's anonymity, there is no way of knowing if pastors answered completely truthful. It could have been possible they provided answers that would have been recognized as being acceptable for those holding their position as pastoral leaders.
CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSIONS

Overview

This research study sought to describe the current Bible reading habits and values placed on those habits by American senior pastoral leaders who identify as being a part of the NAE. Data was collected via a survey designed so that such a description could be made (Appendix A). This survey looked at each RQ through three different perspectives in order to provide a holistic picture of the RQ (Appendix H). Those descriptions are summarized in this chapter. This chapter also discusses the research implications, applications, limitations, and areas that could be explored in future research.

Research Purpose

The purpose of this quantitative descriptive research was to ascertain both the amount of time spent reading the Bible, as well as the perceived impact of that reading on the lives and leadership roles of American Evangelical Christian church pastoral leaders.

Research Questions

RQ1. Excluding reading for vocational purposes (such as sermon or teaching preparation), how much time do Christian leaders spend in regular Bible reading for personal growth and development?

RQ2. What perceived impact, if any, do Christian leaders identify that Bible reading has on their personal lives?

RQ3. What perceived impact, if any, do Christian leaders identify that Bible reading has on their family lives?

RQ4. What perceived impact, if any, do Christian leaders identify that Bible reading has on their leadership approach and behaviors?

RQ5. What is the perception Christian leaders have on the link between Bible reading and their understanding of God?

RQ6. What perceived impact, if any, do Christian leaders identify that biblical and historical, Bible-centered role models have on their leadership approach and behaviors?
Research Conclusions, Implications, and Applications

In Chapter Two, the review of the literature illustrated that the Bible is essential for both personal lives and the leadership roles of Christian leaders. The literature also revealed many biblical and historical role models from which leaders can learn leadership-specific skills through role model observation. This section looks at each of the RQs, the study's results, and how that information can inform the literature reviewed.

Research Question One

The first research question asked, “Excluding reading for vocational purposes (such as sermon or teaching preparation), how much time do Christian leaders spend in regular Bible reading for personal growth and development?” The survey was designed to look at this question from a few different angles: how much time a week pastors read the Bible, how many times they have read the entire Bible, and the prioritization they have placed upon Bible reading. The results showed there was no standard number of hours leaders spent reading their Bibles. The mean of four hours a week revealed pastors had been regularly reading God's Word, but the standard deviation of almost five showed just how different the answers were from pastor to pastor. The answers ranged from as little as zero hours to as much as 35 hours a week. While the standard deviation revealed a wide range of weekly hours spent reading the Bible, the importance of the data revealed is that the majority of pastors surveyed regularly read God’s Word.

In asking pastors to reveal how many times they had read the entire Bible, the standard deviation was very high, indicating no common answer. The answers ranged from zero to 50, with the majority being in between. Despite a high standard deviation, the data did reveal the mean score of this question was that pastors had read the entire Bible an average of seven times. Age differences could account for differences in pastors and differences in Bible reading.
dedication, amongst other factors. Despite the differences in Bible reading hours or times read, the overwhelming majority of pastors agreed they have prioritized Bible reading while serving as Christian leaders.

The primary study that drove this researcher to focus on Bible reading and Christian leadership as a topic for this dissertation was a research study that showed only 30% of American Protestants were regularly reading the Bible (Earls, 2019). One research study on Bible study found participants believed it was their leaders' job to teach them the Bible and, because of that belief, were hesitant to read the Word themselves (Barnes, 2018). Another study revealed that, though many Americans were becoming Bible-illiterate, some do have an understanding of God's Word (Reese, 2010). While studies focusing on church parishioners’ Bible reading habits had been conducted, there was no literature revealing current Bible reading regularity of pastoral leaders. This researcher sought to fill this gap by describing the current state of Bible reading amongst American NAE senior pastoral leaders. Most American NAE senior pastoral leaders were found to have been regularly reading the Bible, have prioritized Bible reading, and have read the entire Word of God. This finding revealed that, although many in America have forsaken the practice of regular Bible reading, the NAE pastoral leaders have not.

**Research Question Two**

The second research question asked, "What perceived impact, if any, do Christian leaders identify that Bible reading has on their personal lives?" To understand pastoral beliefs in this area, the survey asked them to indicate a positive impact of Bible reading on their personal lives and their emotions and thought lives. In each of the three areas, the overwhelming majority of participants indicated they found these positive impacts to be present. A minimal standard
deviation away from each of the mean scores (less than 1.00) reveals very few pastors disagreed that they have perceived this impact.

The review of the literature revealed Bible reading does indeed impact the life of the reader. Scripture itself reveals the Bible is "living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart" (ESV, Hebrews 4:12). Through its dynamic nature, the Bible can provide the reader with mental enlightenment (Dollar, 2018; Dollar, 2020; Needham, 2017; Sibley Towner, 2002; Wetherell, 2016). Another result of Bible reading is being at peace (McConnell, 2011; Stanley, 2015). By not taking in the Word of God, there is even a possibility that there would be adverse mental and emotional effects (Dollar, 2018). The reading of God's Word has a positive impact on the reader's personal life, as described in the literature review. This impact was also revealed in this research study, as most pastors indicated they had perceived regular Bible reading had a positive impact on their personal lives.

**Research Question Three**

The third research question asked, "What perceived impact, if any, do Christian leaders identify that Bible reading has on their family lives?" To describe this holistically, the survey asked if regular Bible reading has positively impacted the way they view their families, how they interact with their spouses and children, and how they lead their children. In each of these survey questions, the overwhelming response from participants was that they agreed regular Bible reading positively impacted their family lives. The standard deviation for each question was less than 1.00, indicating few did not agree there was a family impact resulting from regular Bible reading.
The literature review informed on the impact Bible reading has on one's family life, especially for Christian leaders. These leaders, in particular, may have ministries that are so demanding or draining they have little left to give their families at the end of the day (Kroff et al., 2018; Resolution, n.d.). However, it has been found that families of Christian leaders who engage in God's Word are marked by having more positive relationships than those who do not (Kroff et al., 2018). Leading one's family as a biblically rooted leader impacts family life (Frere, 2019; Mostert, 2014). The importance of this can be seen in the Old Testament, where family leaders are admonished to ensure the Word of God was continually at the forefront of the family members' minds (Deuteronomy 6:7-9; Fowler, 2018). After researching the role the Bible plays in family life, a researcher concluded that reading the Bible can help families because it provides much wisdom for family life (Wu, 1991). The researcher also postulated that families strengthened by biblical truths could also help strengthen communities with that truth (Wu, 1991). These positive impacts were also seen in this research study as most pastors indicated they had perceived regular Bible reading to have had a positive impact on their family lives.

**Research Question Four**

The fourth research question asked, "What perceived impact, if any, do Christian leaders identify that Bible reading has on their leadership approach and behaviors?" To understand this question fully, the survey asked it in three different ways. Participants were asked to indicate if they have seen positive effects of Bible reading on how they lead both their staff and volunteers and interact with other leaders. In each of these questions, most participants agreed they had seen such an impact. The standard deviation from these answers was less than 1.00, revealing few participants had experiences contrary to this.
There are many biblical leaders in the scriptures, but only one, Joshua, was given a direct promise of leadership success linked directly to the intake of God's Word (Earl, 2010; Joshua 1:8; McConnell, 2011). Today's Christian leaders may not have been given such an incredible promise from God. However, the literature review revealed there is still an impact of Bible reading possible for leaders today. One reason for this impact is that, while regularly reading the Bible, the leader keeps their minds focused on truth (Colossians 2:8; Dollar, 2019). This focus will help leaders to grow in wisdom (Krejcir, n.d.).

God's Word also impacts leaders because it is living; it can also help leaders grow by informing on leadership itself (Hebrews 4:12; Woolfe, 2002). Faulkner (2014) postulates that leaders “can learn valuable and unique lessons from several biblical characters…whose leadership played a significant role in leading the early church and furthering the gospel" (para. 1). One such leadership case study would be to study the leadership style Jesus used while on earth (Woolfe, 2002). By examining Jesus' leadership style, one can learn to lead with solid communication skills and a servant's heart (Cheek, 2010; Flaniken, 2006; Woolfe, 2002). Biblical truths also inform on leadership by presenting a picture of leadership that encompasses "honesty and integrity, purpose, kindness and compassion, humility, communication, performance management, team development, courage, justice and fairness, [as well as] leadership development" Woolfe, 2002, p.xi). There is such an impact on leaders that, by reading the Bible, they will understand God's will for their leadership position (Krejcir, n.d.). These impacts upon leadership growth were seen in this research study because most pastors indicated they had perceived regular Bible reading affects their leadership positively.
Research Question Five

The fifth research question asked, "What is the perception Christian leaders have on the link between Bible reading and their understanding of God?" To provide a complete description of this question, the survey asked participants to indicate if they believe regular Bible reading positively impacts their understanding of God, their understanding of God's relationship to humanity, and their relationship with Him. In each of these areas, the pastors responded with an overwhelming agreement that regular Bible reading does have a positive impact. The standard deviation of these questions was the smallest (less than .5) of all the questions on the survey.

The literature review examined the truth that the Bible reveals God to its readers (Stanley, 2015). Through reading the Bible, people can come to know God personally (Cole, 2007; Graham, 1984; Needham, 2017). The Bible reader can know more about God through reading the textual information about Him, such as who He is, what He is like, and how He thinks (Stanley, 2015). Reading the Bible also allows people to understand God's words and cultivate a relationship with Him (Sibley Towner, 2002; Stanley, 2015). A person who does not partake in the Scriptures will not only be deficient in their understanding of God but will also begin to see God through a human-based worldview instead of a biblical worldview (Bontrager, 2016; Stanley, 2015a). By regularly reading the Bible, a leader will gain both an understanding of God and a dynamic relationship with Him (Bontrager, 2016; Cole, 2007; Needham, 2017). A recent research study found this to be the case amongst Evangelicals (Olfelt, 2018). The research found a positive link between Bible reading and the formation of one's faith (Olfelt, 2018). These positive impacts were also seen in this research study as most pastors indicated they had perceived regular Bible reading to impact their understanding of God positively.
Research Question Six

The sixth research question asked, "What perceived impact, if any, do Christian leaders identify that biblical and historical, Bible-centered role models have on their leadership approach and behaviors?" The survey questions designed to answer this research question asked pastors to indicate if they believe they can gain leadership lessons and skills by studying biblical leaders, Bible-centered historical leaders, and biblical concepts on leadership. The responses for each question indicated the majority of pastors found each of these to be true, with standard deviations all less than 1.00.

The pastoral responses to this portion of the survey indicated they found the study of biblical and Bible-centered role models to impact their leadership journeys. The literature review covered how the observation of role models affects growth in the area of cognitive development. Albert Bandura is a theorist who believes that observing models is a vital element of human learning (Bandura, 2006; Yount, 2010). Observational learning is essential to growth because the observer will first watch the model's behavior, then practice what they see the model doing, and then begin to replicate that behavior themselves (Davidson, 2003; Adeoye et al., 2014). Bandura also theorized that this type of learning is essential to spirituality because people can grow as they take in what they learned through modeling (Bandura, 2003; Yount, 2010). This information can then be used to create conceptual ideas that add to their own spirituality (Bandura, 2003; Yount, 2010).

A spiritual model is a role model who can be observed as they live their lives biblically (Oman & Thoresen, 2003). Bandura (2003) said, "observers extract the principles or standards embodied in the thinking and actions exhibited by others. Once they acquire the principles, they can use them to generate new instances of the behavior that go beyond what they have seen,
read, or heard” (p. 169). A large portion of this study's literature review looks at spiritual role models in both scriptural and historical accounts. Jesus is the foremost of all the role models Christians can observe through the pages of the Scriptures (ESV, 2 Cor. 3:18; Adeoye et al., 2014; Yount, 2010). A way leaders can learn through the observation of Jesus is by observing his servant-leadership and then emulating that in their own leadership (Cincala, 2016; Flaniken, 2006; Howell, 2015).

There are also numerous Old and New Testament leaders that can be observed by reading the Bible. These include Noah, Abraham, Joseph, Moses, Nehemiah, John the Baptist, Barnabas, and Paul (Faulkner, 2014; Daskal, 2012; Forrester, 2019; Greene, 2015; Raiger, 2017; Wellman, 2015; Woolfe, 2002). The Bible is not the only place a Christian leader can go to observe spiritual models. Historical accounts from the time of the early church to the time of this research study show that there have been leaders who have been entirely biblically rooted. Some such leaders were Jerome, Thomas Aquinas, John Wycliffe, Martin Luther, John Wesley, D.L. Moody, Frank Gaebelein, and Franklin Graham (Benson & Anthony, 2008; Fawcett & Thompson, n.d.; Graham, 2019; Hanson, 2018; Mark, 2019; Marsh, 2017; Roszak & Vijgen, 2015; Torrey, 1923). These positive impacts were also seen in this research study as most pastors indicated they had perceived the observation of biblical leaders, biblical leadership concepts, and the observation of biblically rooted historical leaders positively impacted their leadership.

**Research Limitations**

This research did have its limitations. One of these was that it was wholly dependent on self-reporting. As discussed in Chapter Four, self-reported responses can differ from actual experiences (West, 2014). Although this was mitigated by ensuring anonymity, there is no way of truly knowing if the answers provided were completely accurate. Participants could have
provided a pastoral or theologically sound answer because it is assumed to be the type of answer expected from their population. One possible reason for the low standard deviations was because the participants believed in the importance of pastors regularly reading the Bible rather than presenting their own experiences.

Another limitation came from the low survey response rate. It was revealed to this researcher that church staff are wary of opening and clicking on external links for fear that the email is spam or a scam. One way to mitigate this would be to spend time calling ahead so that the potential participants would understand they were contacted by an actual researcher. Another potential mitigation strategy would be to contact a prominent member of the population (one whose name would be recognized) and ask them to distribute the survey recruitment letter. The limitation based on the low response rate changed the study's confidence level and sampling error. The study's goal was to have 381 participants, which would result in a confidence level of 95% and a sampling error of plus or minus 5%. With the actual response rate, those numbers were lowered to an 80% confidence level and a corresponding sampling error of plus or minus 5.84%. While this change does not invalidate this research, it does call into question whether these results can be projected to the entire population.

Another possible reason for the low response rate could have been born out of some pastors’ desire to avoid the topic of regular Bible reading. Some people may choose to avoid situations that make them have painful feelings, such as being flawed, uncomfortable, or not good enough (Boyes, 2013). According to Boyes (2013), a person may "avoid entering situations that may trigger thoughts like "I'm not the best. I'm not as good as other people" (sec. 9). Could the limitation of a low response rate be somehow linked to avoidance? There is no way to answer this question within the scope of this research. The topic is only presented as a possible
explanation for the low response rate. An example of this could be that some pastors know Bible reading is an essential element of Christian leadership but realize they are not reading the Bible; these pastors may have chosen to avoid the survey to prevent negative feelings. If this was the case (again, there is no way to know truly), the data revealing that most NAE pastoral leaders regularly read the Bible may be wholly or somewhat different than the results revealed by this study.

Another limitation exists because of the survey’s anonymity. This study was designed to have disproportionate stratified sampling with approximately equal participants from each denomination within the NAE. While the anonymous nature of the survey provided benefits such as protection of participants' information, it also prevented the knowledge of how many participants responded from each denomination. Although an equal number of invitations were sent out to the denominations of the NAE, it is impossible to know how many participants from each denomination responded. It is possible that disproportionate stratified sampling was not achieved. This limitation could have been mitigated by including a demographics section on the JQ that would have revealed the participants' denominations.

RQ1 asked, “excluding reading for vocational purposes (such as sermon or teaching preparation), how much time do Christian leaders spend in regular Bible reading for personal growth and development?” This RQ was addressed as pastors indicated the amount of time they spend reading the Bible during the week, how many times they had read the Bible in its entirety, and if Bible reading had been prioritized since stepping into leadership roles. This RQ was vital to this study because it addressed a core question of whether NAE pastoral leaders regularly read the Bible as compared to the mediocre Bible reading habits of those in the American Protestant church as a whole (Earls, 2019). The limitation surrounding this RQ is in the separation of
personal Bible reading from vocational Bible reading. There may be some pastors who read the same portion of scripture for personal growth and sermon preparation. Pastors may feel that they must be personally in touch with a portion of scripture before preparing to teach that portion to those in their churches. Because of this, there may have been a difficulty in separating personal Bible reading from vocational reading that could have caused a limitation in pastoral responses.

**Further Research**

In the process of conducting this study, several opportunities for further research came to light. These are as follows:

1. The study could be replicated with pastors of non-evangelical Protestant denominations.
2. The study could be replicated with pastors of non-Protestant denominations.
3. The study could focus on Christian leaders outside of the church, such as those leading in Christian ministries or secular organizations.
4. A correlative study could investigate possible causal links between regular Bible reading and the benefits discussed in the literature review. This could be accomplished with many different types of Christian leaders as participants.
5. A similar study could be conducted using a qualitative interview method where leaders provide more in-depth personal accounts of what regular Bible reading means to their life.
6. A comparative analysis could be conducted on Bible reading by lead pastors between different NAE denominations.
7. The study could be replicated with other pastoral leaders in the church, such as youth pastors or other staff pastors.
8. The study could be replicated with a focus on pastors of specific denominations (i.e., only Southern Baptists, only Assemblies of God, etc.).

**Summary**

In the literature review, many positive reasons for regular Bible reading by Christian leaders were discussed. The literature has revealed few American Protestants regularly read the
Bible (Earls, 2019). The primary goal of this research was to add to the current literature by describing the state of Bible reading amongst a specific set of Protestant Christian leaders. This research study investigated two overarching areas regarding regular Bible reading: habits and perceptions. Its purpose was to describe the regularity of American NAE senior pastoral leaders’ Bible reading describe if American NAE senior pastoral leaders were regularly reading God's Word and if they found regular reading had impacted their lives and leadership.

This research study revealed pastoral participants' average Bible reading significantly exceeded the averages among all American Christians according to Earls' (2019) findings. By projecting this study's results upon the whole of the NAE population of senior pastoral leaders, the data reveals these leaders have prioritized regular Bible reading and have spent time during the week reading the Scriptures. This reading is outside of any time spent reading God's Word for professional reasons, such as sermon preparation. It can also be assumed the NAE senior pastoral leaders in America have also found regular Bible reading to positively impact their personal lives and their leadership roles, including the positive effects discussed in the literature review.

The literature review, in its brief historical survey, revealed there were many instances where there were biblically rooted leaders during times when the culture ranged from religiously apathetic to aggressively oppressive (Benson & Anthony, 2008; Dreher, 2016; Fortson, 2020; Graham, 2019; Gutek, 1995; Leonard, 2005; Holcomb, 2012; Needham, 2018). There have been times intertwined throughout world history when the culture is hostile to God and His precepts. During these times Christian leaders can make an impact. It has been surmised that Christianity survived in England due to the leadership of one biblically rooted man: Charles H. Spurgeon (Telfer, 2010). Spurgeon led while the culture rejected God and His precepts in order to embrace
Charles Darwin's Evolutionary theories (Telfer, 2010). Though the culture was moving away from God, a remnant survived because of Spurgeon's Christian leadership (Telfer, 2010). It is encouraging to this researcher that many American NAE pastoral leaders regularly read God's Word and understand its impact on their lives and leadership roles. If one leader kept Christianity alive in England, what might be the impact on American Christianity be with a population of NAE pastors who are biblically rooted leading the church?
REFERENCES


https://lifestyle.inquirer.net/347528/transforming-our-self-efficacy-into-faith/


https://www.britannica.com/biography/Saint-Thomas-Aquinas


https://bible.org/seriespage/lesson-9-knowing-god-more-deeply-ephesians-115-17

https://doi.org/10.1093/jts/fls059


https://www.thoughtco.com/reliability-definition-3026520

https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.ezproxy.liberty.edu


https://www.reference.com/world-view/many-adults-live-usa-b830ecd6b6047660


https://decisionmagazine.com/fighting-for-the-truth/

In U.S., decline of Christianity continues at rapid pace. (2019). *Pew Research Center*.
https://www.pewforum.org/2019/10/17/in-u-s-decline-of-christianity-continues-at-rapid-pace/


https://www.britannica.com/biography/John-Wesley


https://www.kenblanchard.com/About-Us/Meet-the-Team/Ken-Blanchard


http://www.churchleadership.org/apps/articles/?articleid=44014


http://godscareerguide.com/deborahs-leadership/


angry protestors shouting hail Satan. *CBN News.*


http://www.jstor.org/stable/41887255


Richard, T. (2016). Equipping members of Pendleton Street Baptist Church, Greenville, South Carolina to use the Bible in a daily time of study and prayer. ProQuest Dissertations Publishing.


Sibley Towner, W. (2002). The inner self, the word of God, and the Cause that matters. Interpretation, 56(2).


Split-half coefficients. (n.d.). *IBM Knowledge Center.*


https://www.ligonier.org/learn/articles/the-history-of-the-reformation/


https://www.intouch.org/Read/the-importance-of-scripture

https://www.intouch.org/read/getting-to-know-god


Appendices

Appendix A: Preliminary Joshua 1:8 Questionnaire (JQ)

Joshua 1:8 Questionnaire (JQ)

Participant Vetting Requirement Question:
Please continue only if you are a Christian pastoral leader who has held a leadership position for a minimum of three years and who is currently a leader of a church which identifies as being a part of the National Evangelistic Association (NAE). If you have been a leader for less than three years, please exit the survey now. I truly appreciate your time and hope you have a blessed day in the presence of our Almighty God!

Please acknowledge that you have been in a leadership role for three or more years and currently lead a NAE affiliated church by clicking the appropriate answer below.

- Yes
- No

Please fill in the blank or click the circle corresponding to the response which most accurately reflects your thoughts regarding Bible reading. Please select on the answers that best describe your thoughts, feeling, and actions regarding each question within the last year. This research is seeking to understand these questions from the perspectives of the Christian leaders in this current period of time.

Please use the following definition of regular Bible reading while answering the relevant questions:

Regular Bible Reading: reading the Bible personally daily or a minimum of a few times during the week.

Example Question for Questions 1 and 2: I spend ___3___ hours reading or watching the news throughout the week.

Example Question for Questions 3 through 18: I find that regular time singing to God through Psalms, hymns, and thanksgivings are important to my personal life.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree
1. I spend __________ hours reading the Bible throughout the week for personal growth and development (versus vocational purposes).

2. I have read the Bible in its entirety _________ times.

3. I have prioritized regular Bible reading throughout my time as a Christian leader.
   - O Strongly Disagree
   - O Disagree
   - O Neither Agree nor Disagree
   - O Agree
   - O Strongly Agree

4. Regular Bible reading has a noticeably positive effect on my personal life.
   - O Strongly Disagree
   - O Disagree
   - O Neither Agree nor Disagree
   - O Agree
   - O Strongly Agree

5. Regular Bible reading has a noticeably positive effect on my emotions.
   - O Strongly Disagree
   - O Disagree
   - O Neither Agree nor Disagree
   - O Agree
   - O Strongly Agree

6. Regular Bible reading has a noticeably positive effect on my thought life.
7. Regular Bible reading has a noticeably positive effect on the way I interact with my spouse.
   - Strongly Disagree
   - Disagree
   - Neither Agree nor Disagree
   - Agree
   - Strongly Agree

8. Regular Bible reading has a noticeably positive effect on the way I interact with and lead my children.
   - Strongly Disagree
   - Disagree
   - Neither Agree nor Disagree
   - Agree
   - Strongly Agree

9. Regular Bible reading has a noticeably positive effect on the way I view my family.
   - Strongly Disagree
   - Disagree
   - Neither Agree nor Disagree
10. Regular Bible reading has a noticeably positive effect on the way I interact with and lead my staff.
   - Agree
   - Strongly Agree
   - Disagree
   - Neither Agree nor Disagree
   - Agree
   - Strongly Agree

11. Regular Bible reading has a noticeably positive effect on the way I interact with and lead volunteers.
   - Strongly Disagree
   - Disagree
   - Neither Agree nor Disagree
   - Agree
   - Strongly Agree

12. Regular Bible reading has a noticeably positive effect on the way I interact with other leaders.
   - Strongly Disagree
   - Disagree
   - Neither Agree nor Disagree
   - Agree
13. Regular Bible reading has a noticeably positive effect on my understanding of God.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

14. Regular Bible reading has a noticeably positive effect on my relationship with God.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

15. Regular Bible reading is essential in order to understand who God is, how He engages with people, and how people should engage with Him.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

16. I can gain leadership skills from lessons learned from studying leaders who are in the Bible.

- Strongly Disagree
17. I can gain leadership skills from the leadership concepts that are presented in the Bible.

   O Strongly Disagree
   O Disagree
   O Neither Agree nor Disagree
   O Agree
   O Strongly Agree

18. I can gain leadership skills from studying leaders who, throughout history, have been biblically rooted.

   O Strongly Disagree
   O Disagree
   O Neither Agree nor Disagree
   O Agree
   O Strongly Agree
Appendix B: Follow Up Questionnaire for Panel Reviewing JQ

Date

Leader Name
Email

Dear __________,

As a graduate student in the School of Divinity at Liberty University, I am conducting research as part of the requirements for a doctorate in Christian leadership degree. The purpose of my research is to describe both the amount of time spent reading the Bible, as well as the perceived impact of that reading on the lives and leadership roles of American Evangelical Christian church pastoral leaders.

In order to ensure that my survey is free of bias or error, I would like to have it reviewed by a small panel of Christian leaders. If you would be interested in assisting me, please open the attached document. This document contains the survey I will be sending to 381 pastoral leaders across America. I have also included a copy of the research questions and how they relate to each survey question for your review. This will help ensure that I am remaining focused on my original research focus. Please read and complete the survey and then answer the questions listed below. Please return this document to this email address by 18 January 2021.

If you are unable to take part in this process, I understand entirely. Please reply to this email by simply typing the word “Decline” in the subject line.

Thank you very much. I am genuinely thankful for your assistance in ensuring that my research is useful and valuable to the Kingdom of God.

Have a wonder-filled day in God’s Majestic Presence!

Respectfully yours,
Andrea M. Tom
Ed.D. Candidate
Liberty University

Attachments

(Questionnaire, Table Linking Questionnaire to Research Questions, and Response Form)

Joshua 1:8 Questionnaire (JQ)

Please fill in the blank or click the circle corresponding to the response which most accurately reflects your thoughts regarding Bible reading. Please select on the answers that best describe your thoughts, feeling, and actions regarding each question within the last year. This research is
seeking to understand these questions from the perspectives of the Christian leaders in this current period of time.

Please use the following definition of regular Bible reading while answering the relevant questions: Regular Bible Reading: reading the Bible personally daily or a minimum of a few times during the week.

Example Question for Questions 1 and 2: I spend ___3___ hours reading or watching the news throughout the week.

Example Question for Questions 3 through 18: I find that regular time singing to God through Psalms, hymns, and thanksgivings are important to my personal life.

  Strongly Disagree
  O Disagree
  O Neither Agree nor Disagree
  O Agree
  O Strongly Agree

1. I spend __________ hours reading the Bible throughout the week for personal growth and development (versus vocational purposes).
2. I have read the Bible in its entirety __________ times.
3. I have prioritized regular Bible reading throughout my time as a Christian leader.
  O Strongly Disagree
  O Disagree
  O Neither Agree nor Disagree
  O Agree
  O Strongly Agree
4. Regular Bible reading has a noticeably positive effect on my personal life.
  O Strongly Disagree
  O Disagree
  O Neither Agree nor Disagree
5. Regular Bible reading has a noticeably positive effect on my emotions.
   O Strongly Disagree
   O Disagree
   O Neither Agree nor Disagree
   O Agree
   O Strongly Agree

6. Regular Bible reading has a noticeably positive effect on my thought life.
   O Strongly Disagree
   O Disagree
   O Neither Agree nor Disagree
   O Agree
   O Strongly Agree

7. Regular Bible reading has a noticeably positive effect on the way I interact with my spouse.
   O Strongly Disagree
   O Disagree
   O Neither Agree nor Disagree
   O Agree
   O Strongly Agree

8. Regular Bible reading has a noticeably positive effect on the way I interact with and lead my children.
   O Strongly Disagree
   O Disagree
   O Neither Agree nor Disagree
   O Agree
   O Strongly Agree

9. Regular Bible reading has a noticeably positive effect on the way I view my family.
   O Strongly Disagree
10. Regular Bible reading has a noticeably positive effect on the way I interact with and lead my staff.

11. Regular Bible reading has a noticeably positive effect on the way I interact with and lead volunteers.

12. Regular Bible reading has a noticeably positive effect on the way I interact with other leaders.

13. Regular Bible reading has a noticeably positive effect on my understanding of God.
14. Regular Bible reading has a noticeably positive effect on my relationship with God.

15. Regular Bible reading is essential in order to understand who God is, how He engages with people, and how people should engage with Him.

16. I can gain leadership skills from lessons learned from studying leaders who are in the Bible.

17. I can gain leadership skills from the leadership concepts that are presented in the Bible.

18. I can gain leadership skills from studying leaders who, throughout history, have been biblically rooted.
Table Linking RQs and JQs

<p>| RQ1. Excluding reading for vocational purposes (such as sermon or teaching preparation), how much time do Christian leaders spend in regular Bible reading for personal growth and development? | JQ1 | I spend _________ hours reading the Bible throughout the week for personal growth and development (versus vocational purposes). | JQ2 | I have read the Bible in its entirety _________ times. | JQ3 | I have prioritized regular Bible reading throughout my time as a Christian leader. |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| RQ2. What perceived impact, if any, do Christian leaders identify that Bible reading has on their personal lives? | JQ4 | Regular Bible reading has a noticeably positive effect on my personal life. | JQ5 | Regular Bible reading has a noticeably positive effect on my emotions. | JQ6 | Regular Bible reading has a noticeably positive effect on my thought life. |
| RQ3. What perceived impact, if any, do Christian leaders identify that Bible reading has on their family lives? | JQ7 | Regular Bible reading has a noticeably positive effect on the way I interact with my spouse. | JQ8 | Regular Bible reading has a noticeably positive effect on the way I interact with and lead my children. | JQ9 | Regular Bible reading has a noticeably positive effect on the way I view my family. |
| RQ4. What perceived impact, if any, do Christian leaders identify that Bible reading has on their leadership approach and behaviors? | JQ10 | Regular Bible reading has a noticeably positive effect on the way I interact with and lead my staff. | JQ11 | Regular Bible reading has a noticeably positive effect on the way I interact with and lead volunteers. | JQ12 | Regular Bible reading has a noticeably positive effect on the way I interact with other leaders. |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>RQ5.</strong></th>
<th><strong>JQ13</strong></th>
<th><strong>JQ14</strong></th>
<th><strong>JQ15</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What is the perception Christian leaders have on the link between Bible reading and their understanding of God?</td>
<td>Regular Bible reading has a noticeably positive effect on my understanding of God.</td>
<td>Regular Bible reading has a noticeably positive effect on my relationship with God.</td>
<td>Regular Bible reading is essential in order to understand who God is, how He engages with people, and how people should engage with Him.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>RQ6.</strong></th>
<th><strong>JQ16</strong></th>
<th><strong>JQ17</strong></th>
<th><strong>JQ18</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What perceived impact, if any, do Christian leaders identify that biblical and historical, Bible-centered role models have on their leadership approach and behaviors?</td>
<td>I can gain leadership skills from lessons learned from studying leaders who are in the Bible.</td>
<td>I can gain leadership skills from the leadership concepts that are presented in the Bible.</td>
<td>I can gain leadership skills from studying leaders who, throughout history, have been biblically rooted.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Response Form**

Please use this form to provide feedback and any other comments you may have. Thank you.

1. Were all questions clear and easy to understand? If not, please indicate the question number and reason why not.
2. How long did it take you to complete the questionnaire?
3. Was there any sense that any questions were bias or leading you to answer in a certain way? If so, please indicate the question number and reason why.
4. What are the survey’s strengths?
5. Are there areas to improve in the survey?
6. Provide any other comments here:
Appendix C: Introductory Letter to Participants

Date

Leader Name
Church Name
Street Address
City, State, Zip Code
Email

Dear Pastor,

As a graduate student in the School of Divinity at Liberty University, I am conducting research as part of the requirements for a doctorate in Christian leadership degree. The purpose of my research is to describe both the amount of time spent reading the Bible, as well as the perceived impact of that reading on the lives and leadership roles of American Evangelical Christian church pastoral leaders. I am writing to invite eligible participants to join my study.

In order to participate, leaders should be a pastoral leader of a church that identifies as being a part of the National Evangelistic Association (NAE). Pastors must also have held a leadership position for a minimum of three years. Participants, if willing, will be asked to complete a short, multiple choice questionnaire. It should take approximately five to ten minutes to complete. Participation will be completely anonymous, and no personal, identifying information will be collected.

In order to participate, please click here survey’s hyperlink here

A consent document is provided as the first page of the survey. The consent document contains additional information about my research. After you have read the consent form, please click the button to proceed to the survey. Doing so will indicate that you have read the consent information and would like to take part in the survey.

Thank you very much. I am genuinely looking forward to working with you. Have a wonder-filled day in God’s Majestic Presence!

Respectfully yours,
Andrea M. Tom
Ed.D. Candidate
Liberty University
Appendix D: Consent Form

Consent Form

Title of the Project: A Quantitative Descriptive Study of The Impact Bible Reading Has on The Lives and Leadership of American Evangelical Church Pastoral Leaders
Principal Investigator: Andrea M. Tom, Doctoral Candidate, Liberty University

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Invitation to be Part of a Research Study</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>You are invited to participate in a research study. In order to participate, leaders should be a pastoral leader of a church that identifies as being a part of the National Evangelistic Association (NAE). Pastors must also have held a leadership position for a minimum of three years. Taking part in this research project is voluntary. Please take time to read this entire form and ask questions before deciding whether to take part in this research project.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What is the study about and why is it being done?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The purpose of the study is to describe both the amount of time spent reading the Bible, as well as the perceived impact of that reading on the lives and leadership roles of American Evangelical Christian church pastoral leaders</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What will happen if you take part in this study?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>If you agree to be in this study, I would ask you to do the following things:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Complete the short, multiple choice questionnaire via Qualtrics. (10 minutes)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How could you or others benefit from this study?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participants should not expect to receive a direct benefit from taking part in this study.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What risks might you experience from being in this study?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The risks involved in this study are minimal, which means they are equal to the risks you would encounter in everyday life.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How will personal information be protected?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The records of this study will be kept private. Research records will be stored securely, and only the researcher will have access to the records.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Participant responses will be anonymous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The data will be stored on 2 thumb-drives which will be stored in a fireproof lockbox owned and accessed by this researcher only.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How will you be compensated for being part of the study?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participants will not be compensated for participating in this study.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Is study participation voluntary?
Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether to participate will not affect your current or future relations with Liberty University. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time prior to submitting the survey without affecting those relationships.

What should you do if you decide to withdraw from the study?
If you choose to withdraw from the study, please exit the survey and close your internet browser. Your responses will not be recorded or included in the study.

Whom do you contact if you have questions or concerns about the study?
The researcher conducting this study Andrea M. Tom. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, you are encouraged to contact her. You may also contact the researcher’s faculty sponsor.

Whom do you contact if you have questions about your rights as a research participant?
If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher, you are encouraged to contact the Institutional Review Board, 1971 University Blvd., Green Hall Ste. 2845, Lynchburg, VA 24515 or email at irb@liberty.edu

Your Consent
Before agreeing to be part of the research, please be sure that you understand what the study is about. You will be given a copy of this document for your records. If you have any questions about the study later, you can contact the researcher/study team using the information provided above.
Appendix E: Reminder Letter to Participants

Date

Leader Name
Church Name
Street Address
City, State, Zip Code
Email

Dear Church Leader,

As a graduate student in the School of Divinity at Liberty University, I am conducting research as part of the requirements for a doctorate degree in Christian leadership. Last week/two weeks ago an email was sent to you inviting you to participate in a research study. This follow-up email is being sent to remind you to complete the survey. If you would like to participate and have not already done so, the deadline for participation is [Date].

If you choose to participate, you will be asked to click on the link to Qualtrics and complete the short, multiple question survey. It should take approximately 10 minutes for you to complete the procedure listed. Your participation will be completely anonymous, and no personal, identifying information will be required.

In order to participate, please click here survey’s hyperlink here

As a reminder, the consent document is provided as the first page of the survey. The consent document contains additional information about my research, please click on the survey link at the end of the informed consent document to indicate that you have read it and would like to take part in the survey.

Thank you. I am excited to see what America’s protestant Christian leaders have to say regarding this subject!

Have a wonder-filled day in God’s Majestic Presence!

Respectfully yours,
Andrea M. Tom
Ed.D. Candidate
Liberty University
Appendix F: Thank You Letter to Participants

Date

Leader Name
Church Name
Street Address
City, State, Zip Code
Email

Dear Church Leader,

Thank you for participating in this dissertation research regarding Bible reading and Christian leadership. This research is a major help in completing my dissertation. Outside of the dissertation process, I truly feel that this research can have kingdom impact.

Should you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to email me.

Thank you. I am excited to see what America’s protestant Christian leaders have said regarding Bible reading.

Have a wonder-filled day in God’s Majestic Presence!

Respectfully yours,
Andrea M. Tom
Ed.D. Candidate
Liberty University
### Appendix G: List of Evangelical Denominations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Denomination</th>
<th>Denomination</th>
<th>Denomination</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Advent Christian General Conference</td>
<td>Evangelical Free Church of America</td>
<td>North American Baptist Conference Open Bible Churches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assemblies of God</td>
<td>Evangelical Friends Church International</td>
<td>Pentecostal Free Will Baptist Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Brethren Church</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brethren in Christ Church</td>
<td>Evangelical Presbyterian Church</td>
<td>Presbyterian Church in America</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian and Missionary Alliance</td>
<td>Every Nation Churches</td>
<td>Primitive Methodist Church USA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian Reformed Church in North America</td>
<td>Fellowship of Evangelical Bible Churches</td>
<td>Royalhouse Chapel International</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian Union Church of God (Cleveland, Tennessee)</td>
<td>Fellowship of Evangelical Churches</td>
<td>Seventh Day Baptist General Conference of the USA &amp; Canada</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church of the Nazarene</td>
<td>The Foursquare Church</td>
<td>Transformation Ministries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservative Congregational Christian Conference</td>
<td>Free Methodist Church USA</td>
<td>United Brethren in Christ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Converge Worldwide</td>
<td>Grace Communion International</td>
<td>U.S. Conference of the Mennonite Brethren Churches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECO: A Covenant Order of Evangelical Presbyterians</td>
<td>International Pentecostal Church of Christ</td>
<td>Vineyard USA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elim Fellowship</td>
<td>International Pentecostal Holiness Church</td>
<td>The Wesleyan Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Evangelical Church</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evangelical Congregational Church</td>
<td>Missionary Church, Inc.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Appendix H: Table Linking RQs and JQs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RQ1. Excluding reading for vocational purposes (such as sermon or teaching preparation), how much time do Christian leaders spend in regular Bible reading for personal growth and development?</th>
<th>JQ1</th>
<th>JQ2</th>
<th>JQ3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I spend __________ hours reading the Bible throughout the week for personal growth and development (versus vocational purposes).</td>
<td>I have read the Bible in its entirety __________ times.</td>
<td>I have prioritized regular Bible reading throughout my time as a Christian leader.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RQ2. What perceived impact, if any, do Christian leaders identify that Bible reading has on their personal lives?</th>
<th>JQ4</th>
<th>JQ5</th>
<th>JQ6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Regular Bible reading has a noticeably positive effect on my personal life.</td>
<td>Regular Bible reading has a noticeably positive effect on my emotions.</td>
<td>Regular Bible reading has a noticeably positive effect on my thought life.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RQ3. What perceived impact, if any, do Christian leaders identify that Bible reading has on their family lives?</th>
<th>JQ7</th>
<th>JQ8</th>
<th>JQ9</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Regular Bible reading has a noticeably positive effect on the way I interact with my spouse.</td>
<td>Regular Bible reading has a noticeably positive effect on the way I interact with and lead my children.</td>
<td>Regular Bible reading has a noticeably positive effect on the way I view my family.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RQ4. What perceived impact, if any, do Christian leaders identify that Bible reading has on their leadership approach and behaviors?</th>
<th>JQ10</th>
<th>JQ11</th>
<th>JQ12</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Regular Bible reading has a noticeably positive effect on the way I interact with and lead my staff.</td>
<td>Regular Bible reading has a noticeably positive effect on the way I interact with and lead volunteers.</td>
<td>Regular Bible reading has a noticeably positive effect on the way I interact with other leaders.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RQ5. What is the perception Christian leaders have on the link between Bible</th>
<th>JQ13</th>
<th>JQ14</th>
<th>JQ15</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Regular Bible reading has a noticeably positive effect on my</td>
<td>Regular Bible reading has a noticeably positive effect on my</td>
<td>Regular Bible reading is essential in order to understand who God is, how He engages</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RQ6. What perceived impact, if any, do Christian leaders identify that biblical and historical, Bible-centered role models have on their leadership approach and behaviors?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>JQ16</strong></td>
<td>I can gain leadership skills from lessons learned from studying leaders who are in the Bible.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>JQ17</strong></td>
<td>I can gain leadership skills from the leadership concepts that are presented in the Bible.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>JQ18</strong></td>
<td>I can gain leadership skills from studying leaders who, throughout history, have been biblically rooted.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix I: NAE Permission Letter

From:  
Date: Wednesday, December 16, 2020 at 10:30 AM  
To: Tom, Andrea Michelle  
Subject: [External] Permission to Use NAE's Denominational Web Page

Hi Andrea,

It was a pleasure speaking with you today!

The National Association of Evangelicals gives you permission to use the following web page to conduct your dissertation research:

https://www.nae.net/denominations/

Sincerely,

Office Manager

NAE.net