LIBERTY UNIVERSITY

JOHN W. RAWLINGS SCHOOL OF DIVINITY

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CONTEMPORARY

EVANGELICAL CHURCH LEADERSHIP AND

CHURCH DISCIPLESHIP FORMATION

A Prospectus Presented in Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Education

by

James Lawrence Marshall

Liberty University, Lynchburg, VA

2021

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CONTEMPORARY

EVANGELICAL CHURCH LEADERSHIP AND

CHURCH DISCIPLESHIP FORMATION

by James Lawrence Marshall

A Prospectus Presented in Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Education

Liberty University, Lynchburg, VA

Date Defended July 6, 2021

APPROVED BY:

_____
Gary Bredfeldt, PhD., Dissertation Supervisor

_____
Jeffrey Davis, PhD., Second Reader

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this mixed methods study was to determine if the church leadership paradigm contributes to the problem of a lack of disciple-making in Pennsylvania Evangelical churches. A disciple is defined as an unwavering commitment to the Lordship of Christ that is illustrated by Luke 9:23 in which disciples deny themselves and carry their cross daily. This research sought to identify the causes for the lack of discipleship in Pennsylvania Evangelical churches, and had the following findings from the quantitative survey. First, the vision that leadership provides for disciple-making is much higher than either the member involvement in discipleship or the disciple-making that is actually occurring. The chuch leaders scale and senior pastors scale were the next highest scale after the vision scale indicating that members may think leaders and pastors do the disciple-making. Finally, the team leadership scale had much lower numbers than all the other scales. The qualitative part of the study found that the church needs the priesthood of all believers need to be restored, that culture adversely impacts the church, and that the church has mostly maintained the status quo of not making many disciples instead of making changes to make more disciples. By providing a clearer understanding of the reasons for the problem this study hopes to be of assistance to others who can assist in resolving the issue.

Keywords: Apostle, Church leadership paradigm, Cultural Values, Disciple, discipleship, Evangelical, interpretative phenomenological analysis, five-fold leadership, prophet.

Dedication

This paper is dedicated to the Lord Jesus Christ as this writer wants to bring glory to Him by helping to reveal the causes of the problem of incomplete obedience to His command to make disciples of all nations. This researcher realizes that his work is only a piece in the puzzle to getting the church ready for our Lord's return as many have been building the kingdom of God him while others will come after him to continue the work. It is his hope that this research can in some small way contribute to increased discipleship and eventually help to lead to the completion of the Great Commission.

Acknowledgments

My wife Anna deserves special appreciation for her patience, and my children Rayna and Joseph have been there as I have done this study. I am especially grateful to my dissertation supervisor Dr. Gary Bredfeldt. Special thanks to Barry Cushman who provided statistical analysis to help me. Many other Liberty faculty and students like Bryan Ewing have been very helpful in this process. I would be remiss not to credit those who have helped me learn discipleship and a different type of Christianity. Brother Andrew, Dr. Ralph Winter, Bob Sjogren, Rick Warren, Jay Smith, David Platt, and other Christians have been so influential in forming me into the person that the Lord has made me to be.

Table of Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

List of Abbreviations

IPA   Interpretative phenomenological analysis

PA   Pennsylvania

CHAPTER ONE: RESEARCH CONCERN

Introduction to the Shortage of Disciple Making in American Evangelical Churches

There are many sources which describe how American churches have not prioritized discipleship enough to create an adequate number of dedicated followers of Christ. Bartel (2014) describes a shortage of discipleship formation and wants the church to change how it is addr3essing discipleship formation to start forming more disciples. Roy (2017) mentions several sources that describe discipleship as fully obeying Jesus Christ (Roy, p. 8-11). According to Barna (2001) in chapter five, disciples fully surrender themselves to Jesus Christ (Barna, p. 98). Luke 14:27-33 tells how disciples should conduct themselves through self-denial and living sacrificial lifestyles. LifeWay Research (2008), Barna (2001) and other studies have found that although most churches have a program for making disciples and say it is important, not many disciples are being made. Johnston (2009) asserts that since discipleship is such a prevalent theme in the New Testament, both churches and individual Christians should prioritize it over the materialistic American dream (Johnston, p. 15-16).

These sources, and a wide variety of other sources that were found during the literature review and are listed in chapter two have observed a lack of disciple-making in American Evangelical churches. This chapter provides an overview of the problem, statement of the problem, research questions, and summary of how this study is designed. Although the literature shows that American Evangelical churches lack disciple-making, this study did not focus on trying to understand all the reasons why and has instead focused upon a smaller segment of the problem that was more manageable to research. The purpose of this mixed methods study was to determine if the church leadership paradigm contributes to the problem of a lack of disciple-making in Pennsylvania Evangelical churches.

Background to the Research Problem

The scarcity of discipleship in American Evangelical churches is a problem that has a long history as well as far reaching implications. This researcher found a diverse assortment of sources of how Evangelical churches in America are disobeying a primary command of Scriptures by not fostering nearly enough disciple-making. Jesus ordered his followers to "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations," (Matthew 28:19a, ESV). This command crystallized and clarified the essential biblical mission which Wright (2018) demonstrates has been God's command since creation in Genesis (Wright, p. 29-49). Bonhoeffer (1995) asserts that the church lacking discipleship is akin to Christianity being without Jesus Christ. There is a diverse assortment of authors which address different aspects of the problem of the lack of disciple making in Evangelical churches in America. Therefore, this background section includes a summary of the literature on the problem and considers the variety of its theological, biblical, historical, sociological, and theoretical contexts. This is done to provide an overview of what is going on with this issue by laying a foundation for determining if church leadership has had affected this problem.

Summary of what the Literature reveals

The literature reveals a variety of themes and sub-themes on the problem of the lack of discipleship formation in American Evangelical churches. Mars (2017), Brooks (2014), and Roy (2017) discuss one of these themes when they observe that apathetic churches impede discipleship. Another theme is the church lacking the vision of what the Lord wants them to do. Ranier (2014) describes the loss of vision as a primary factor for why Evangelical churches die (Ranier, p. 71-77). Pastor Ogundiran (2013) said he encountered the American church as having a lack of vision for what the Lord wants it to do when he moved from Nigeria to the United

States. Ogundiran (2013) observes that the American church is not adhering to biblical discipleship because of culture and other influences that impede the disciple-making process of surrendering, dying to self, and counting the cost (Ogundiran, p. 31-52).

Pearcey (2004) recognizes the need to free the church from cultural habits so that the church can return to being worldview missionaries who obey the Great Commission (Pearcey, p. 149). Lee (2014) shares that the church has been prioritizing building facilities, earning money, and other cultural activities ahead of God's plans, while Formicola (2016) observes how church hierarchy often takes precedence over obedience to God's Word (Formicola, p. 9-10). Copeland (2012) asserts that the division between clergy and laity has impeded discipleship by designating laypeople as being beneath the clergy (Copeland, p. 4-5). This greatly decreases the priority given to discipling laypeople because spiritual activities end up being reserved for the professional clergy. Maddix (2009) agrees that the priesthood of all believers needs to finally be restored after more than 500 years since Luther wanted this done.

Another theme which causes Great Commission disciple-making to be minimized is the church allowing cultural pride to replace the biblical humility which is needed to make disciples. Setran (2016) observes that many pastors have a domineering leadership style and view themselves as important ministers; and cites Baxter as asserting that Christians should be humble (Setran, p. 61-70). Morales (2013) notes that while some churches have a degree of focus on the Great Commission's command to make disciples as about 70% of churches ignore it (Morales, p. 1). Baldwin (2016) observes that most churches mention the Great Commission, but that it is usually only discussed about with lip service (Baldwin, p. 6). Dennery (2013) describes biblical illiteracy as greatly impeding discipleship formation since Christians being unaware of the

importance of the Great Commission renders them far more likely to ignore or give lip service to this essential biblical command (Dennery, p. 13).

The literature on minimal disciple-making reveals that, for a variety of reasons, the American church is often unwilling to submit itself to the Lordship of Christ. Kilner (2015) describes how humanity is made in the image of God, but, to a great extent, the church has not been acting as if conforming to the image of God was a high priority. In addition, instead of listening and learning from the many sources who are trying to reverse the decline of discipleship in American churches, the church has often been resistant to change and has preferred to maintain the status quo. Ogden (2003) observes that "If I were to choose one word to summarize the state of discipleship today, that word would be superficial. There appears to be a general lack of comprehension among many who claim Jesus as Savior to the implications of following Him as Lord." (Ogden, p. 22) It appears that the church has mostly ignored the constructive solutions many authors have developed to overcome cultural traditions by mitigating the lack of discipleship formation.

Theological context of this Problem

There is a theological component to the lack of discipleship formation in American Evangelical churches. Brooks (2014) observes that so many churches are apathetic towards biblical discipleship and other things of God, and shares that, because of this, the contemporary Evangelical church in America does not resemble the New Testament church. He maintains that this is mostly due to a lack of accountability that fosters discipleship and wants the church to make disciples like the Bible says it should (Brooks, p. 2-5). Brooks (2014) references Barna (2001) in his dissertation about rekindling discipleship in churches, as Barna (2001) describes the apathy that his research found, as being an issue of the heart. Barna states, :

The real obstacles to becoming fully devoted, zealous disciples of Christ are not money, time, methods, or knowledge. The major obstacle is the human heart. When that changes, all else changes. Jesus frequently reminded his disciples that the problem was not one of knowledge but of character. The Pharisees had more religious knowledge than they knew what to do with, but they lacked the character to apply it in ways that transformed themselves and their world…A disciple is a person of Christian character. Just as Paul instructed his young disciple Timothy if you develop appropriate character the rest will follow. (pp 166-167)

Mars (2017) concurs with this perspective of apathetic churches impeding discipleship when he describes the American church as resembling the church in Laodicea and says that the church has been deceived by prosperity (Mars, p. 12). He maintains that the American church is sinning by not obeying the biblical command to make disciples, and wants the church to return to the Lord, as God should be their first and greatest love (Mars, p. 8-9). Mars (2017) observes that the church is dying with half of churches rarely adding members and more than 3,000 American churches closing annually (Mars, p. 7). This author is concerned that America's material abundance has rendered the American church relatively blind to the unfortunate state they are in. Roy (2017) maintains that to a great extent, the Great Commission has become more like a great omission, and he researched what Jesus says about the importance of discipleship to the seven churches in the book of Revelation (Roy, p. 3).

In addition to apathy, the research also encountered numerous sources on the church having "lost the fear of the Lord." Meyer (2018) observes that during the commemoration of the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation, there was no mention of Luther's admiration of the many Bible verses on fearing the Lord. This source asserts that American culture has lost the fear of God, and describes the church as following the culture since there is minimal fear of God in American churches (Meyer, p. 15-18). Meyer (2018) observes that Luther did ministry with a deep reverence and fear of the Lord, and shares that not only has American culture lost its fear of God, but the church has also followed the cultural trend of pride by losing its humility. Setran

(2016) notes the degree to which Baxter describes western pastors as tending to lack humility and gravitating towards pride (Setran, p. 61-70). Sanders (2017) calls humility a hallmark of leadership, (Sanders p. 53-54), while Murray (2001) encourages all Christians to practice humility like the Bible says (Murray, p. 51-57). Although opinions may differ on this point, some such as Pastor Tomlinson (2017) advocate for pastors to evaluate themselves to determine if they lack humility. He believes that pastors have tendencies to be proud, and also believes that their pride make them defensive when other people observe it in them. As a result, Tomlinson (2017) recommends that Pastors critique themselves to determine in what areas, if at all, pride is an issue for them. He asserts that if they find that they have a problem with pride that the pastor should allow members of their congregation to hold them accountable so that they can become humble (Tomlinson, p. 101-107).

Historical context of this Problem

There is also a historical component of this problem which Copeland (2012) addresses. She chronicles the history of how church hierarchy began after the apostolic age. Copeland (2012) also points out that this leadership pattern copied Roman culture and eliminated the priesthood of all believers by putting priests up on stage and the laypeople below them (Copeland, p. 33-37). Baudler (2015) agrees with Copeland in observing that Luther wanted to restore the priesthood of all believers when he replaced priests with pastors during the Reformation, but that this reform has never been achieved. Costner (2017) found that laypeople were needed to reinvigorate churches that were declining (Costner, p, 8). Maddix (2009) notes that there is no mention of laypeople or clerics in God's Word. He hopes that clergy can be transformed into servant leaders and that laypeople be educated to help end the separation of priests and laypeople (Maddix p. 217-225). Wheeler (2015), Copeland (2012), and Maddix

(2009) assert that the separation of clergy and laypeople is a historical error that has never been properly redressed. Luther (2008) takes on the church hierarchy and calls church leaders foolish who try to follow extrabiblical religious traditions. Luther (2008) advocated for the restoration of the priesthood of all believers as the Bible mandates and longed for the church to wake up.

Wheeler (2015) wants the church to free itself from historical cultural traditions and have the entire body of Christ get involved in the mission of making disciples of all nations worldwide. He observes that the division between clergy and missionaries compartmentalizes Christians into two different camps, which impedes discipleship and the spread of the gospel (Wheeler, p. 149-162). Wheeler (2015) notes that many Christian leaders and followers use compartmentalization as an excuse for why discipleship does not apply to them, but Scriptural support is not given for why they are practicing compartmentalization. Wheeler (2015) also asserts that the practice of compartmentalizing begins with leaders dividing up between pastors and missionaries (Wheeler, p. 149-152). He wants to eliminate compartmentalizing so the whole body of Christ will join in the Great Commission process of making disciples of all nations.

Hirsch and Catchim (2012) focus upon another historical problem that has taken place during the last seventeen centuries in observing how apostles, prophets and evangelists were effectively exiled from the church around the time of the Roman Emperors Constantine and Theodosius (Hirsch, and Catchim, p. 16-17). The church has followed the shepherd teacher paradigm of only having priests/pastors and teachers as two types of leaders since. Hirsch and Catchim (2012) describe this leadership pattern as unbiblical, and incapable of completely equipping the saints to mature discipleship (Hirsch and Catchim, p. 16-17). According to Welton (2017) there is an increasing vision for reestablishing the five-fold ministry team in churches. Womack (2015) describes how evangelists were restored to the church during the 1800's,

prophets returned during the 1980s, and apostles came back in the 1990s. Green (2005) interviewed Christian leaders about the increasing numbers of apostles and evangelists as he believes that the Lord is renewing the five-fold team leadership of Ephesians 4:11. It appears that all the aspects of this historical section that are in question impact how church leadership is currently conducted.

Sociological context of this Problem

A sociological component of this problem is the church's tendency to place cultural values ahead of biblical obedience when it comes to worship. Discipleship needs to transcend cultural values since biblical disciples need to revolve their lives around the Lord. According to McKinney (2017), worship should focus on discipleship and not follow the cultural pattern of performance. He believes that the primary purpose of humanity is to glorify God and asserts that worship is incomplete without discipleship (McKinney, p. 2-4). Meyers (2014) maintains that worship needs to focus on the Great Commission command of making disciples and provides missional music to call people towards mission and away from traditional patterns of how musicians conduct themselves (Meyers, p. 25-28). Wheeler and Vernon (2011) share that God has been calling people to discipleship worship since creation, and want to bring the church back to biblical worship. They have developed a God-centered worship course to accomplish this objective (Wheeler and Vernon, p. 21-22). Worship is not the only area in which cultural preferences often are prioritized over biblical standards.

Sauer (2013) focused on persecution by admonishing theologians not to assume that western Christianity is the most biblical, and notes that more than 2/3 of Christians live in countries that significantly restrict religious freedom (Sauer, p. 267). He wants Christian leaders to learn from the suffering church as its members are living more like how the New Testament

describes disciples as being (Sauer, p. 268). Sauer (2013) also believes the division between western Christians and those living in persecuted areas does not please the Lord, as 1 Corinthians 12:26a tells us that there is only one body of Christ. This author encourages followers of Christ to end the gap between the western and persecuted church, as this division is not biblical. Sauer (2013) wants western Christians to consider that suffering Christians are living New Testament disciples and hopes that western Christian leaders can be willing to learn from persecuted followers of Christ (Sauer, p. 267-274).

Hull (2007) discusses how many pastors pay lip service to making disciples, but do no act accordingly (Hull, p. 18). Hirsch and Hirsch (2010) argue that blending faith with cultural traditions causes a great lack of discipleship (Hirsch and Hirsch, p. 19). Archer (2017) maintains that the church needs to stop following the American cultural habit of individualism (Archer, p. 2-3). There are additional sociological contexts to the lack of disciple- making in Evangelical churches, that the literature review will address these in more detail.

Theoretical context of this Problem

The theoretical context of the problem needs to be addressed as the Bible says to "Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding." Baldwin (2016) asserts that the church is stuck in a rut by following cultural traditions instead of obeying God's mandate to make disciples, while Costner (2017) shares that pastors cannot turn around a church by themselves. Costner (2017) maintains that just as Moses listened to Jethro to not do all the work by himself, pastors should have the humility to break the traditional separation of clergy and laity (Costner, p. 23-25). This example describes how teamwork can enhance discipleship formation by having increasing numbers of laypeople to share the workload and join in the work of the ministry.

The rationale for this study reveals another theoretical context to this problem as the research has found a gap between sources that are describing various aspects of the problem and other ones which are focusing on creating viable solutions to eliminate it. This study focuses on considering an aspect of the gap between these two groups of authors by evaluating if church leadership models contribute to the shortfall of discipleship in American Evangelical churches. By identifying if the church's current approach to leadership is exacerbating the problem, this research can help future researchers who are trying to resolve it by providing a clearer target for them to focus their energies on. Overall, there are a substantial number of biblical, theological, historical, sociological, and theoretical reasons which pertain to the lack of discipleship formation in American Evangelical churches.

Statement of the Problem

The problem is that American Evangelical churches have given too low of a priority to making disciples and to having discipleship training programs in place for new converts to grow. The literature review has found many sources that identified the pervasiveness of this problem, as well as how the extent of this problem is adversely affecting churches and individual Christians' relationships with the Lord as Ranier (2014) discusses (Ranier, p. 1-90). This researcher also encountered a wide variety of authors who became so concerned about the severity of damage the problem is causing that they pivoted from observing the problem to developing solutions to resolve it. In other words, a large assortment of authors have produced a relative cornucopia of classes or programs to mitigate the problem of lack of discipleship formation in American Evangelical churches.

Some of the authors who have attempted to ameliorate this problem have created solutions that show potential for mitigating the problem. For example, Morales (2013) took a

holistic approach to discipling a person as part of the evangelistic process, while Hull (2006) has been trying to stimulate a renewal of discipleship for many years. LifeWay Research (2008) created a transformational discipleship assessment that stimulates discipleship in those who take it. In addition, Ogundiran (2013) shares discipleship principles that he learned from the adversity of pastoring in Nigeria where persecution is prevalent, and which American Christians can apply to their lives (Ogundiran, p. 31-47). Solutions like these may be able to help reduce the problem, but they have not been widely enough implemented.

The lack of discipleship problem has not been getting better. Although there are some discipleship programs which have made disciples, they have not been widely used. There is something missing between the abundance of sources who have observed the problem and the large number of authors working to resolve it. There is a gap in the literature between these two groups. This gap is identifying what is causing the problem. The scope of this problem is so broad that instead of trying to fully investigate the entire issue, this study investigated if the contemporary church leadership paradigm has contributed to the lack of disciple making in American Evangelical churches. If a part of the problem can be diagnosed, it can help to decrease the overall issue. As a result, if this research can understand and explain different aspects of the problem as related to church leadership, it can help to clarify other components of the problem as well.

Although the shortage of discipleship in American Evangelical churches is a problem that has been spoken about so much, the issue has not gone away. The literature demonstrates that the problem is being exacerbated with the passage of time. Some may think if Christian leaders have been sounding an alarm about these type of problems with the church for so long and if a myriad of solutions have been formulated, the issue might not merit further consideration, but this is not

the case. For example, the Shields (2008) dissertation overcame a great deal of alarm sounding from Christian leaders about youth ministry being ineffective that was of such a concern because a high percentage of youth left the church during high school and college. Shields (2008) found that if Christian youth were discipled through an experienced youth pastor, far fewer left the church in the denomination he was studying (Shields, p. 148-155). His research showed that the alarm sounding by so many Christian leaders was incorrect. This scenario illustrates the degree to which many well-meaning Christians have overlooked how important discipleship is for people to persevere in the faith. It also further supports this researcher's premise that genuine discipleship makes an enormous difference in the lives of Christians, regardless of their age.

This problem resembles most other problems in that it does not usually go away if it is ignored and unresolved, and almost always worsens with the passing of time. The problem of too little discipleship in Evangelical churches in the United States needs to be addressed before it is too late. Otherwise the researchers who are developing solutions may be only focused on addressing the symptoms of the problem. It is essential that people who are attempting to resolve the problem of minimal discipleship in American churches design their solutions to rectify the actual reasons for the issue. This study used a mixed methods approach to thoroughly investigate and explore if America's current approach to church leadership may have impacted this problem. According to Creswell and Creswell (2018), combining qualitative and quantitative methods may be able to provide more insight into what is causing the research problem (Creswell and Creswell, p. 215).

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this mixed methods study was to determine if the church leadership paradigm contributes to the problem of a lack of disciple-making in Pennsylvania Evangelical churches.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided this study.

RQ1. What aspects of the church leadership paradigm may have contributed to the shortage of disciple-making in Evangelical churches?

RQ2. Can restoring the teaching and application of the priesthood of all believers help disciple making?

RQ3. To what degree, if any, has not following the five-fold team leadership that the Bible prescribes in Ephesians 4:11 exacerbated this problem?

RQ4. To what degree, if any, have cultural values such as materialism and pride contributed to the lack of focus on making disciples?

RQ5. Why does the Evangelical church continue pursuing familiar paths that have not been making many disciples?

Research Assumptions

1. This study assumes that most American Evangelical churches lack discipleship formation.

2. Most Christian leaders and laypeople who are members of Evangelical, Bible-believing churches, have a relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ.

3. Most churches have some type of program or general statement about discipleship and that most churches would wish to make disciples.

4. Churches live within culture, and the church is struggling with cultural issues.

5. This research also believes that Christians reading this have made the effort to consider how the Lord must feel about this issue.

6. Five-fold leadership is part of church leadership.

7. Pastors are acceptable gatekeepers for member research.

Delimitations of the Research Design

1. This study only sampled members of Evangelical churches. These are people who believe that the Bible is the inspired word of God and that salvation is by faith in Jesus Christ, and that Christians need to be conformed to the image of Jesus Christ.

2. It did not include unbelievers and people from other religious backgrounds.

3. This study was conducted from a sample of church members who attend Evangelical churches in Pennsylvania and therefore, may not apply to all Evangelical churches in the United States or globally.

Definition of Terms

1. *Apostle*: According to Hirsch and Catchim (2012) apostles are sent ones who are tasked with maintaining the vigor and advancement of the gospel. (pp. 8-9).

2. *Church leadership paradigm*: The methods with which churches are led, which often include a pastor, assistant pastor, elders, and a leadership team.

3. *Cultural values*: Beliefs and priorities that are important to a culture.

4. *Disciple*: An unwavering commitment to the Lordship of Christ that is illustrated by Luke 9:23 in which disciples deny themselves and carry their cross daily.

5. *Discipleship*: Roy (2017) cites several sources that describe discipleship as wholehearted obedience to Jesus Christ. (pp. 8-11).

6. *Evangelical churches*: Churches who believe that the Bible is inspired by God, all have sinned, and salvation is not of works, but is only through faith in Jesus Christ.

7. *Five-fold leadership*: Apostles, prophets, evangelists, shepherds, and teachers.

8. *Individualism*: A self-oriented focus on what a person wants.

9. *Interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA)*:A type of qualitative research that explores a phenomenon with a small number of in-depth interviews.

10. *Priesthood of all believers:* Every follower of Christ is a priest and does not any priest or pastor to intercede between themselves and God.

11. *Prophets*: A leader with a vision for what God wants, and a focus on justice for God's priorities as well as equity in dealings between people.

Significance of this Study

This study considered if the leadership model of the sampled Evangelical churches have contributed to the shortfall of discipleship formation in Evangelical churches. It was designed to fill in a section of the gap between the two groups that either discuss the lack of disciple-making or try providing solutions to resolve the problem. There are many Christian leaders who identify the problem of not enough discipleship formation in American Evangelical churches. However, this researcher is neither focused on discussing different aspects or the problem or in developing an additional solution that would attempt to mitigate it. He instead conducted research to determine if contemporary church leadership is part of the root causes of the problem.

Once the impact of the American Evangelical church leadership on the lack of disciple-making has been more clearly determined, this writer hopes that this research will provide an assist to future studies. This can enable future researchers to be able to develop more focused solutions that are better aimed upon how church leadership may impact this problem. It is this writer's hope that by having identified the impact of the church's approach to leadership it will be easier to formulate solutions to help decrease other parts of this problem. This investigation of how contemporary Evangelical churches are run can assist other researchers develop more clearly targeted solutions, which can help foster greater levels of discipleship. Authors who have developed solutions to ameliorate this problem without clearly knowing what the reasons for the problem are, may effectively be like trying to hit a target without knowing which direction the target is at. This study is important because it may be able to provide a clearer view of some of the reasons of the problem.

Summary of the Design

This mixed methods study utilized a combination of quantitative survey questionnaires and qualitative interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) to conduct a thorough evaluation of the church leadership paradigm on the shortage of disciple making in American Evangelical churches. The reason for having chosen mixed methods is because this is an important topic and using both quantitative and qualitative research enables the researcher to acquire a more comprehensive view of the subject. The design is discussed in more depth in chapter three which discusses is focused on research methodology. This chapter has shown that the shortage of discipleship has far reaching implications for the American Evangelical church by providing an overview of the problem.

It is noteworthy that although there are diverse variety of creative solutions which have been developed to resolve the problem and foster discipleship formation in churches, the problem has not been alleviated. This is not because there are not good solutions, as some have been shown to be effective. It is instead because the well-meaning solutions which have shown signs of working have not been fully implemented in a church, are not used by a meaningful quantity of churches, or both. The reality is that despite an abundance of solutions, the problem is getting worse. The next phase of this dissertation surveyed the literature by looking at the diverse assortment of sources that share about different components of this multi-faceted problem. This study considered the large quantity of researchers who have been so concerned about disobeying Jesus' command to make disciples that they have developed solutions to resolve it.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Overview

This review of the literature began by establishing the theological framework for this study by considering biblical and theological reasons for discipleship formation in churches. The biblical mandate for Christians to make disciples is Jesus commanding His followers to make disciples. Therefore, American Evangelical churches need to prioritize disciple-making. The review of precedent literature also established the theoretical foundation of this research, as this study investigated the process of being transformed into disciples through the discipleship process. Once these two frameworks were established, the literature then reviewed the sources on the status of discipleship formation in American churches. The research then considered the large number of sources which write about how the church is faltering at developing disciples as well as the diverse assortment of solutions many leaders provide to try to strengthen disciple-making. This review of these two related subjects revealed a gap that is the basis for this study. The gap is in between sources that discuss the status of church discipleship formation and other sources who create solutions to resolve this problem. This study investigated if the church leadership model contributes to the problem of the church having difficulties making disciples.

Theological Framework of the Study

There are extensive theological and biblical issues that are essential underpinnings to why it is important for Evangelical churches to making disciples and these reasons need to be reflected upon to lay the groundwork for this study. This section began with the biblical portion of the theological framework by considering the Great Commission command to make disciples, investigating how many verses relate to this command, looking at how Jesus made disciples, and evaluating the New Testament pattern of disciple-making. It utilized related literature that

pertains to these different aspects to guide the discussion of the theological framework. This study then considered the church as the bride of Christ and encourages the bride to prepare herself for our Lord's return. The theological section also considered sources on the importance of Christians developing a biblical worldview since the church needs to instill biblical worldviews in people as part of the discipleship process. In addition, this review of the biblical and theological context for this study considered obstacles to biblical discipleship like following cultural practices, being apathetic towards God, and lacking humility. The theological framework also investigated what the Scriptures and literature have to say about how these topics impact disciple-making.

Biblical foundation for Making Disciples

Jesus tells His followers to "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations…," (Matthew 28:19a). The Great Commission is very important to Him, as he shares variations of this same mandate in Mark 16:15-16, Luke 24:45-48, and in Acts 1:8. The New Testament has many verses about being a disciple, especially in the Gospels and in Acts. Jesus taught his followers lessons on how to become disciples in verses like "And He (Jesus) said unto them, 'If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will save it'" (Luke 9:23-24). A similar passage states "Then Jesus told his disciples 'If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me'" (Matthew 16:24). Another Scripture says, "A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone when he is fully trained will be like his teacher" (Luke 6:40).

These verses and the following passage from Luke chapter 14 demonstrate the theological priority that Jesus gave to disciple-making. These Scriptures also make it clear that

the process of discipleship formation is not easy as they describe how a disciple's level of obedience should be very passionate for the Lord. Luke 14:26-33 says, "Whoever does not bear his own cross and come after me cannot be my disciple" (14:27), and "So therefore, anyone of you who does not renounce all that he has cannot be my disciple" (14:33). According to Bible Gateway, (biblegateway.com) a search for the word disciple reveals that it is used 260 times in Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, and Acts in the English Standard Version (ESV) of the Bible. Making disciples and discipleship are major themes of the New Testament.

Roy (2017) observes discipleship in the book of Revelation as containing a pattern of discipleship in the message that Jesus imparted to the seven different churches of Revelation 2:1-3:22. Roy (2012) conducted his dissertation research on an investigation of discipleship themes that he observed in what the Lord spoke to each of the seven churches (pp. 20-22). He describes how the Lord taught three of the churches to repent (Ephesus, Pergamum, and Thyatira), one to not be afraid and to remain faithful until death (Smyrna), two to endure (Thyatira and Philadelphia), and one to awaken (Sardis). Jesus told the Laodicean church to obtain gold, clean garments, and eye salve from Him. The Lord encouraged discipleship by offering each of the seven churches rewards for persisting in their faith and holding fast until the end. He also provides specific instructions for each of these churches that enhance their discipleship. These Words of Christ have no less application to contemporary American Evangelical churches than they did to the churches that John wrote about in Revelation. The theological framework of making disciples permeates the New Testament and is at the heart of the Great Commission.

Beyond this, Wright (2018) has provided a roadmap to how God's mission is the primary theme of the Bible, which further enhances the importance of discipleship. The Great Commission is really God's mission that He has been working towards from the beginning. Jesus

restated and clarified His Father's mission in Matthew 28:18-20. Wright (2018) shares how the

Bible is a story about God's unwavering love to bless his followers so that they would in turn be

a blessing to all the nations of the earth, who in turn can worship God for his love and goodness

(pp. 531-534). This book reveals how the Lord wants men and women of all tongues, tribes, and

nations to become disciples who love Him with all their hearts and can worship and have a

relationship with Him for eternity. The Great Commission is the primary theme of Scriptures and

discipleship is a major component of it. Wright (2018) shares,:

> By twelve, I could have quoted all the key (mission verses like) "Go ye therefore and make disciples…" "How shall they hear…?" "You shall be my witnesses…to the ends of the earth" "Whom shall we send?...Here am I send me." I knew my missionary Bible verses. By the age of twenty-one I had a degree in theology from Cambridge in which the same texts had been curiously lacking. At the time there seemed to be little connection between theology and mission in the mind of the lecturers or of myself. Theology was all about God…mission was about us…However, the more I taught that course, the more I wanted to rename it the "Missional basis of the Bible" I wanted them to see not just that the Bible contains a number of texts which provide a rationale for missionary endeavor, but that *the whole Bible is itself a "missional" phenomenon*. (p. 22)

Wright's (2018) comprehensive work makes the importance of God's mission clear and

provides evidence to support his claim that the Great Commission began in the Old Testament

and permeates the Bible.

> Christians have been good at messianic reading of the Old Testament but inadequate (and sometimes utterly blind) at their missional reading of it. We read the Old Testament messianically in the light of Jesus; that is, we find in it a whole messianic theology and eschatology that we see as fulfilled in Jesus of Nazareth. In doing so we follow his own example, of course, and that of his first followers and the authors of the Gospels. But what we have so often failed to do is to go beyond the mere satisfaction of ticking off so-called messianic predictions that have "been fulfilled." And we have failed to go further because we have not grasped the missional significance of the Messiah. (p. 30)

Winter and Hawthorne (2009), Sjogren (2013) and other sources buttress Wright's

description of God's mission. Sjogren (2013) explains how God's mission begins with the Lord's

blessing to Abraham to be a blessing to the nations in Genesis 12:1-3 and culminates with a

worship service before the throne room in Revelation 5:9-10 (pp. 38-51). These sources strengthen the claim that God's mission is the focal point of the Scriptures. *Perspectives on the World Christian Movement* course has been teaching this subject in Bible Schools and Universities for over 40 years (Winter and Hawthorne, 2009). It is hard to overstate the biblical rationale for making disciples as the biblical mandate provides a very strong theological foundation for the practice of discipleship formation.

How Jesus made disciples

The church can learn from the many examples of how Jesus made disciples in the New Testament. Dunmire (2012) asserts that although the ministry of Jesus is the method of disciple-making that works, most churches do not follow the methods that Jesus taught. He investigated what would happen if an American Evangelical church were to try to form a group of twelve disciples the way that Jesus did and found that a small group format with a relatively intensive curriculum was effective for fostering discipleship (Dunmire, p. 9-15). This author observes that the Christians who participated in a study that followed the Lord's pattern of disciple-making drew closer to Jesus in the process. Dunmire (2012) wonders why more churches were not learning and applying the way in which Jesus made disciples. Hertig (2001) brings a very interesting perspective to considering Christ's command to make disciples in Matthew 28:18-20. He maintains that the last portion of this command that says, "Teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you," (Matthew 28:20a) is frequently overlooked by Great Commission enthusiasts. However, Hertig (2001) maintains that this command to observe all should not be ignored (p. 348-349). This source asserts that if these words of "observing all" that Jesus told his followers to do are applied to the spread of the gospel, disciple-making will be greatly enhanced.

He calls the idea of people having to obey all of Jesus' commands a safeguard to ensure that the Great Commission message will foster discipleship in the process.

Hertig's idea is that if churches practiced the command of "Teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you," (Matthew 28:20a) when people converted to Christ, it could increase the number of disciples that are being made. Someone could argue that this would need to be done with love as one should be careful not to overwhelm a new convert. Love is certainly essential as 1 Corinthians 13:13 states "The greatest of these is love." However, love needs to be balanced with biblical truth, as Ephesians 4:15 tells Christians to be "speaking the truth in love." It is a loving action to tell a follower of Christ that if they are disciples who love God "with all their heart, soul, and mind," and their "neighbors as themselves" as Matthew 22:37-39 commands, they will be saved and can enjoy spending eternity with Jesus Christ. Hertig (2001) establishes a critical theological foundation when he shares the importance of incorporating "Teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you," (Matthew 28:20a) into all discussions of making disciples and the Great Commission because it implicitly strengthens commitment levels.

Hull (2006) agrees that the Lord's command is to make disciples and not just converts shows that Jesus is looking for followers to make other followers who wholeheartedly obey him by "teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you," (Matthew 28:20a). Hull also asks "Does the gospel we preach produce disciples, or does it produce consumers of religious goods and services? (Hull, p. 44). Hull (2004) points out that Jesus Christ is the one who makes disciples, describes how Jesus fostered discipleship, and wants the church to learn the Lord's pattern of disciple-making that is written in the gospels. Although Jesus fed thousands of people on several occasions and often had the masses following Him, He shunned being made an earthly

king. Instead of becoming rich and powerful, the Lord withdrew Himself to pray and to focus

His attention on the twelve disciples whom He taught to follow Him. Hull asserts that there is a

great deal to be learned from the teachings and life of the Lord Jesus Christ.

<div align="center">**The Church is the Body and Bride of Christ**</div>

There is much more that could be said about how Jesus lived and taught discipleship. The

Bible makes this clear when it states "Now there are also many other things that Jesus did. Were

every one of them to be written, I suppose that the world itself could not contain the books that

would be written," (John 21:25). This overview establishes a theological foundation for

discipleship that is very hard for somebody who loves God to argue with because the teachings

of Jesus Christ provide a strong impetus for disciple-making. It is important to share how the

need for making disciples relates to the contemporary Evangelical church in America. God's

Word says the following.

> For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body,
> though many, are one body, so it is with Christ…Now you are the body of Christ and
> individually members of it. And God has appointed in the church first apostles, second
> prophets, third teachers. (1 Corinthians 12:12, 17-28a, ESV)

This passage explains how every follower of Christ are members of His body. It

immediately transitions into describing church leadership as the body of Christ in the church.

The body is not the only metaphor that is used to describe the church. The church will be the

bride of Christ for eternity as God's Word uses the illustration of a bride and bridegroom to

describe the church's relationship with Jesus Christ. Jesus gives a parable about how the church

has a bride type of relationship with Him in the parable of the ten virgins in Matthew 25:1-13.

The bride and bridegroom are also referenced in Matthew 9:15, Mark 2:19-20 and Luke 5:34-35.

Although it is not directly stated that the church in Christ's bride in these verses, the command

becomes more apparent when John the Baptist shares the following:

> You yourselves bear me witness that I am not the Christ, but I have been sent before Him. The one who has the bride is the bridegroom. The friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears Him rejoices greatly at the bridegroom's voice. Therefore this joy of mine is now complete. He must increase, but I must decrease. He who comes from above is above all, (John 3:28-31a)

John makes it clear that Christ is the bridegroom. Ephesians 5:22-23 continues with this theme of Christ being a bridegroom and the church being a bride and the book of Revelation clarifies what the church's theological relationship with Him is. Revelation 19:7-8 says, "Let us rejoice and exalt and give Him the glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His bride has made herself ready; it was granted her to clothe herself with fine linen, bright and pure." Revelation 21:9-17 describes how the church is the bride of Christ.

The Church is God's instrument in the world

The biblical foundation has established that all Christians are called to be involved in the Great Commission command to make disciples. It has also shown that believers are part of the body of Christ and will be the bride of Christ for eternity. The theological framework in which disciples are supposed to be made is through the body of Christ, which is the church. The Bible uses the Greek word ekklesia to describe the church. Jackson (2020) shares that The Greek word ekklesia means either called out ones or assembly and is used over 110 times in the New Testament. Jackson continues by noting that ekklesia describes the church as the global body of Christ or a local congregation of Christians, and that Jesus Christ is the head of the ekklesia (church). If a person looks at the biblical references to the church, there is something that promptly becomes apparent. How the Bible describes the church is very different than the church in America, starting with when it is first mentioned. This study considers the impact of the Pennsylvania Evangelical church leadership paradigm on church disciple-making.

The first reference to the church is in Matthew 16:18b, which states "I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." The description of the gates of hell not prevailing against the church sounds like a spiritual battle between the forces of evil and the forces of good. The preceding verse is about the Lord building his church upon Peter's faith, while the next verses resemble a spiritual war. There is nothing in this initial usage of the word church in the Bible that resembles the steeples, stained glass, and coffee that the church in American culture is known for. There is a stark contrast in the Bible's first mention of the church with how most Americans view the church these days. If one continues to look at the use of church from Matthew to Revelation in the New Testament the third reference to the church occurs when Ananias and Sapphira misrepresented the amount of money they sold their property for. Peter called their bluff on their deception and they died. Acts 5:11 says "And great fear came upon the whole church and upon all who heard these things" as people were petrified by how quickly Ananias and Sapphira had been gone from telling a lie to dying and being buried.

The next mention of the church is when Saul ravaged the church in Acts 8:1 after Stephen had been killed. There are several other references to the church in Acts chapters 8 to 11 about the persecution the began with Stephen's being stoned to death causing the church to flee and be scattered to different locations. Acts 11:26b states "And in Antioch the disciples were first called Christians," as before this time in Antioch, the followers of Christ were all called disciples. It took a robust faith to be a disciple of Jesus Christ up to this point in Antioch. The disciples had been scattered after the garden of Gethsemane since they were pressured and persecuted by the religious leaders, had to endure Jesus' being crucified, saw the resurrected Lord, and experienced Peter and John being arrested. Also, all the disciples got a heart-check with the way the Lord dealt with Ananias and Sapphira, had to endure the stoning of Stephen, and had to experience the

persecution that arose after Stephen was martyred. It is unlikely that any unbelievers or superficial believers were members of the church at this point in New Testament history.

The theological framework of the early church was filled with disciples who completely loved Jesus Christ. Much of this was due to the cultural context that the New Testament church was in, as their environment was adversarial to what the Lord wanted the church to be. Their persecution necessitated a strong level of discipleship for the church to persevere in the faith. The theme of disciple-making permeates Paul's letters, which continuously try to strengthen churches. This study has already mentioned Roy's (2017) observations about the messages of discipleship formation messages which Jesus spoke to each of the churches in Revelation chapters 2 and 3 (Roy, p. 130-146). The wisdom that Jesus Christ shared with these churches in Revelation is timeless and the church should never stop trying to learn and apply our Lord's teachings, especially since these are Jesus' Words to His churches in the last book of the Bible.

It is important to consider and make observations about the context of the New Testament church that was going against the culture. This is because the New Testament church's not following the culture of their time is very different then how the Evangelicalchurch has interacted with American culture. The early church was filled with disciples who had to deny themselves and "count the cost," as Luke 9:23 states, to continue in their faith. However, the contemporary American Evangelical church appears to have been greatly influenced by the culture. Contemporary churches often have buildings with large stages, have a focus on fundraising, and prioritize God blessing them. The early church had disciples who were unable to participate as typical members of the culture since the culture was persecuting the church. On the contrary, Christians in the contemporary church are frequently far more influenced by culture than they are by the gospel. Perhaps the current cultural environment in which the government

and cultural trends are beginning to go against the church will start the process of the church becoming more like the disciple-making organization that the Bible describes it as being.

Every Christian who has repented and asked Jesus Christ to forgive their sins are part of His church. The church is the Lord's body while it is here on earth and will be his bride for eternity. Each of the promises, commands and verses in God's Word applies to every Christian and to every church as "All Scripture is breathed out by God and is profitable for teaching, for correction, and for training in righteousness," (2 Timothy 3:16). No church or follower is exempt from participating in the Great Commission command to make disciples. This is regardless of age, sex, ethnic background, culture, or other characteristic that the church or group of believers has, as 1 Corinthians 12:12-26 makes it very clear that we are all parts of our Lord's body. There are no exceptions to the biblical mandate to make disciples of Jesus Christ applies throughout history to all churches everywhere. Pride is another biblical topic which affects disciple-making, and much of what transpires in people's relationships with the Lord Jesus Christ.

Pride impedes discipleship formation

God's Word repeatedly speaks about pride being the cause of so many problems. This research encountered a great deal of literature on problems that arise from a lack of humility and that it needs to be addressed in the biblical section. The Bible speaks against pride, saying "But He gives more grace. God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble" (James 4:6). This well-known verse explains the Lord's view of humility. However, it does not show the extent to which the Bible is permeated with verses that reveal God's blessings upon the humble like "The reward for humility and fear of the Lord is riches and honor and life" (Proverbs 22:4). Besides these verses, there are many other Scriptures that extol the virtues of humility and meekness and encourage servant leadership, such as the following passage from Isaiah 2:11-17.

The haughty looks of man shall be brought low, and the lofty pride of men shall be humbled, and the Lord alone will be exalted. For the Lord of hosts has a day against all that is proud…And the haughtiness of man shall be humbled, and the lofty pride of men shall be brought low, and the Lord alone will be exalted in that day. (Isaiah 2:11-17)

It is apparent that the Lord is against humanity's pride and will be judging it. American culture is known for pride and America's culture has had an enormous influence on the church, and the lack of humility is no exception. American Evangelical Christians would be wise to seek the Lord, humble themselves in His sight, and strengthen their relationships with Christ. Whether it is here on earth or on judgment day, some believers or churches who have prioritized the culture's pride over the gospel are heading towards trouble. Beck (2017) shines a light on this issue when he considers the issue of pride. Citing Jesus telling the story of the rich man and Lazarus in Luke 6:19-31, he describes how the rich man who was on top in this life ended up in hell, while Lazarus went the other direction. There are many verses that warn Christians not to become arrogant; King Hezekiah's "heart was proud" in 2 Chronicles 32:25, Jeremiah 13:15 commands us to "be not proud," and Romans 11:20 tells Christians "So do not become proud."

So many of the ancient Hebrew leaders allowed the subtle sin of pride to creep in; Beck (2017) mentions that King Uzziah did so in 2 Chronicles chapter 26. A lack of meekness contributed to many of Israel's misfortunes throughout the Old Testament. Proverbs 16:18 states "pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall." Being arrogant impedes the humility that is necessary for discipleship formulation, and 1 John 2:16 tells the dangers of having hubris in life. The pride of the Hebrews caused them so many problems by provoking God's judgment on them throughout the Old Testament. This raises the concern if the pride of American culture influences contemporary churches away from humility in a negative way. Is the culture of the United States, which has a global reputation of being a proud culture, any better than the ancient Jews who followed God? The following illustration shows how pervasive

the themes of pride and humility are in the Scriptures. This researcher was recently reading

Daniel chapter four and saw the following passage on Daniel's advice to King Nebuchadnezzar

about his dream and King Nebuchadnezzar's response.

> Therefore, O king…Break off your sins by practicing righteousness, and your iniquities by showing mercy to the oppressed that there may perhaps be a lengthening of your prosperity.' At the end of twelve months he was walking on the roof of the royal palace in Babylon, and the king answered and said, 'Is not this great Babylon which I have built by my mighty power as a royal residence and for the glory of my majesty?' While the words were still in the king's mouth there fell a voice from heaven, 'O King Nebuchadnezzar, to you it is spoken: The kingdom has departed from you, and you shall be driven from among men…until you know that the most high rules the kingdom of men'…At the end of the days I, Nebuchadnezzar lifted my eyes to heaven, and my reason returned to me, and I blessed the Most High, and praised and honored Him who lives forever…Now I, Nebuchadnezzar praise and extol and honor the King of heaven, for all His works are right and His ways are just; and those who walk in pride He is able to humble. King Nebuchadnezzar was so proud that it resulted in God's judgment. Those who walk in pride He is able to humble. (excerpt from Daniel 4:27-37)

Cherry (2016) is a pastor who asserts that humility is necessary for discipleship, and he

believes that passionate humility is required for the character of discipleship to be formed over

time (pp. 195-198). He also reflects on pride impeding humility away from biblical discipleship.

This principle of pride also applies to too many of America's churches that have leadership up on

a stage with a rock-star type of environment as pride separates people from God. Coleman

(2010) notes that the disciples were from humble backgrounds. Snelling (2015) says her church

quotes "When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child.

When I became a man, I gave up childish ways" (1 Corinthians 13:11) to encourage leaders and

members to mature, get away from pride, and become disciples (p. 6). It is difficult to overstate

how essential it is for disciples to develop humility to overcome American cultural pride, as

biblical humility is essential to resolving the issue of cultural pride.

Cultural Avoidance of Persecution

The ecological environment of the early church was one of suffering. The Apostle Paul was a committed disciple who wrote much of the New Testament. He tells the church in Ephesus that he was "Serving the Lord with all humility and with tears and with trials," (Acts 20:19a). He describes his experiences in more detail when he shared the following.

> Are they servants of Christ? I am a better one—I am talking like a madman—with far greater labors, far more imprisonments, with countless beatings, and often near death. Five times I received…forty lashes less one. Three times I was beaten with rods. Once I was stoned. Three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I was adrift at sea; on frequent journeys, in danger from rivers, danger from robbers, danger from my own people, danger from Gentiles, danger in the city, danger in the wilderness, danger at sea, danger from false brothers; in toil and hardship, through many a sleepless night, in hunger and thirst, often without food, in cold and exposure. And…the daily pressure on me of my anxiety for all the churches…and am I not weak? (1 Corinthians 11:23-29)

The Apostle Paul endured many difficulties as he spread the Gospel of disciple-making wherever he went to on his missionary journeys. He also wrote in his second letter to Timothy that "My persecutions and sufferings that happened to me at Antioch…which persecutions I endured… Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted, while evil people and impostors will go on from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived," (2 Timothy 3:11-13). The New Testament church and its leaders were not at all averse to persecution. Paul and other early church leaders considered suffering to be a normal part of the faith experience since "all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted," as 2 Timothy 3:13 states. The New Testament stands in stark contrast to the ecological environment of the contemporary American Evangelical church. American culture seeks to avoid persecution, or any other type of suffering, and this cultural aversion has greatly influenced the church.

Sauer (2013) describes how the western church exists in an environment that mostly shuns considering theological issues like persecution, suffering, and martyrdom. He notes that American theologians primarily overlook persecution and related issues as if they lack a biblical basis, believing that it could never happen here and now (pp. 268-274). However, this author notes that there are many New Testament verses about persecution and that most of the world's population resides in countries that restrict religious freedom. His journal article deeply questions western theologian's assumptions that since western churches do not encounter tribulation and hardships, that the west's theology must be right. It is hard to overstate the degree to which Sauer (2013) is skeptical of western theologian's assumptions that the absence of persecution in the west means the American church and other western churches are experiencing the correct type of Christianity as he shares:

> Christian thinking seems to be that persecution is something of the past…So the topic seems irrelevant and is largely ignored by western theology… But who says that the western perspective is all sufficient, normative, or the decisive one? Should not a contemporary theology seriously explore a topic that is very obvious, immediate, painful relevance to large parts of global Christianity? After all, it is a topic that permeates Scripture! Could it be that on a closer study the topic might be of more relevance for us than we are accustomed to think, and that an exercise in globalization of the theology might uncover some of our blind spots and correct our theology (p. 268)

Sauer (2013) maintains that western Christians should globalize their theology through interacting with persecuted followers of Christ. He believes this will help to shine a light on what he calls a western theological "blind spot," because suffering Christians understand the biblical concept of tribulation (p. 268). Moore (2017) supports Sauer's (2013) fundamental questioning of western theology in his work that exhorts American Christians to be willing to live as disciples of Jesus Christ. This is because many believers in persecuted areas are willing to die for Jesus. Moore (2017) used to be a top leader at Liberty University and knows American

Christianity well. He states in this book that Christianity finally made sense to him when he interacted with members of the suffering church (p. xi).

Lamoreau (2015) buttresses Sauer's (2013) theological argument with her research that found that pastors in the Northeastern United states were unprepared if biblical persecution were it to occur there (p. 131). She provides Pastor Richard Wurmbrand's suffering during his many years in a Romanian prison and Alexander Solzhenitsyn's experience with the Soviet Union's Gulag system as examples of Christians enduring persecution. Lamoreau (2015) then compares their experiences to pastors in the Northeastern USA. She found that if this kind of persecution were to happen in Maine and surrounding states that she sampled, nearly 40% of pastors responded they would give in to persecutor's bribes to get better conditions for themselves (Lamoreau, p. 131). In addition, Lamoreau's (2015) study also found that many pastors knew very little about persecution and were woefully ill equipped to train churches about how to conduct themselves in an ecological environment of suffering for Jesus Christ.

King (2020) is an expert in persecution who shares a message about the persecuted church which is like a bullseye on this subject. King said that lately he has been thinking a lot about:

> *The similarity between the effects that COVID-19 and persecution have on our lives.* The first similarity is between what we face with COVID-19 and what the suffering Church faces with persecution. We both face an ever-looming threat. It's a threat which the impact is hard to judge but is waiting outside our doors. We hear about others in our community devastated by it, and we wonder if it will visit our home. The persecuted are always aware that the secret police or mob are out there, ready to pounce. If the threat comes to fruition, it could mean the loss of their job, a light beating, a severe attack, a health crisis and a financial disaster, imprisonment, or even torture. The other similarity between COVID-19 and persecution is the isolation we are facing and the persecution that Muslim-background believers (MBBs) experience. When a Muslim comes to Christ, they often face a period of intense isolation. Islam is an all-consuming practice that goes beyond religion. So when a Muslim comes to Christ in a fundamentalist culture, they lose their friends, their families, their jobs, and have to hide because they will often face

> beatings, torture, rape, and even murder as a result of following Jesus. *So, COVID-19 has made the plight of the persecuted more present and real to me. (p.1)*

King's (2020) words are a very poignant comparison of the church's experience with COVID-19 to what so many Christians who reside in Muslim and other persecuting countries experience. King (2020) relates what pastors, church's, and believers are beginning to feel about coronavirus to what Muslim-background believers in some Islamic countries often always feel.

The biblical foundation section of the theological framework has provided the Scriptural basis for making disciples and considered how Jesus made disciples. It has also shown that the church is the body of Christ, and that the church is God's instrument to do His will in this world. However, humanity's sin nature is so pervasive that pride and tendencies to follow cultural examples have impeded followers of Christ from fully obeying God's command to make disciples. The results of this disobedience have been tragic since the literature shows that the shortage of discipleship has created all kinds of problems. This concludes the theological framework section and this paper now transitions to the theoretical section.

Theoretical Framework for the Study

This mixed methods study conducted both quantitative and qualitative research to investigate if the way church leadership is organized is helping to cause the shortage of discipleship in American Evangelical churches. The theoretical framework is essential to all research, but Anfara and Mertz (2014) maintain that it is especially important to qualitative research, which is part of this mixed methods study (p. xiii). This is because these authors observe that the theoretical framework "affects almost all aspects of a qualitative research study since it provides a lens of seeing and making sense of what to do in the design and conduct of the study." Now that the importance of theoretical frameworks has been established, it is necessary to consider how difference sources help to develop the framework.

The theoretical framework section of chapter two reviews what the literature has shown by considering a full spectrum of sources on this problem. This includes precedent literature which focuses upon the relationship of discipleship and several examples of church discipleship programs which have been shown to work. It is important to note that that this research is not implying that there are not methodologies which cannot work as the research encountered a significant number of discipleship programs for churches that appear to be effective. However, the problem is that discipleship formation programs have not been widely used and applied to people's lifestyles. In addition, when they are utilized, the full process is rarely fully implemented with everyone doing and applying the complete program. Therefore, the overall impact of solutions like these have been unable to ameliorate the problem. This section now transitions to considering the what the literature has to say.

The Great Commission Mandate for Discipleship

Geiger, Kelly, and Nation (2012) observe that there needs to be a dramatic change in order for the church to start producing disciples, who beget other disciples as Jesus commands it to do (pp. 10-12). Moon and Moreau (2017) assert that Evangelical leaders are not satisfied with the contemporary situation where only a small percentage of those who get saved become committed disciples (pp. 10-12). They also tell how the disciples heard the Lord's call to live their lives for Him, submitted themselves and became obedient to Jesus. These authors describe discipleship as consisting of a process by which followers of Christ become disciples and spread His message of discipleship to others.

Lynn (2014) shared early in his dissertation that Jesus tells Christians to make disciples instead of producing converts, and he makes a persuasive argument for churches to obey this mandate (pp. 1-3). Morales (2013) maintains that the Great Commission command to make

disciples is the primary command of Scripture. His study stresses the necessity of combining evangelism with disciple-making (pp. 9-12). Nichols (2017) tells readers that the Great Commission orders followers of Christ to make disciples and uses this foundation to argue that this command also applies to those who are recovering from addictions. These authors show the critical priority of the Great Commission is the theoretical framework of discipleship. Milks (2017) states the paramount importance of Jesus' command to make disciples very early in his doctoral dissertation at Liberty. Milks (2017) then observes that there needs to be a paradigm shift in American Christianity towards a missional lifestyle in which every believer sees themselves as a missionary (pp. 1-2). He believes that Christians should be living their lives as disciples to fulfill the Great Commission.

Reddy (2019) asks four questions which show that people need to make disciples of all nations starting with asking as to what has become of the commitment to the Great Commission in America's churches (p. 6). Roy (2017) devotes nearly half of chapter one of his dissertation to his description of Jesus' mandate to make disciples of all nations. Roy references a variety of sources on the urgency and importance of the command to make disciples of all nations. He cites Ranier (2014) in observing how the church has been overwhelmed by American culture and maintains that the church is practicing cheap grace instead of the hard work, prayer and sacrifice that discipleship requires. Roy wonders how so many Christians have come to ignore this global mandate to make disciples and describes the contemporary situation as more closely resembling a great omission in American churches (p. 3).

Shiraki (2014) asserts that churches have dropped the ball on discipleship and mentions causes as being apathy, misunderstanding of what love is, lack of biblical leadership, and incomplete Sunday Schools (pp. 54-57). He believes small group ministry and worship services

can help resolve the problem. Shiraki recommends that the church prioritize accountability and mentoring of disciples to rejuvenate biblical discipleship formation. This study researched the underlying reasons for what Shiraki (2014) and others have found about the lack of discipleship. Ogundiran (2013) wants the church to cease evaluating their ministry in terms of financial contributions or attendance. His research found that the American church has mostly ceased discipleship formation (pp. 2-3). Ogundiran advises disciples to surrender to the Lordship of Christ, count the cost, die to self, abandon worldly priorities, love God and others, and join God's mission. Hirsch (2009) notes that the status of the church's leadership should be measured in terms of the quality of its discipleship formation.

Wheeler (2015), Milks (2017) and other sources maintain that most Christians are not prioritizing the Great Commission nearly as much as they should. However, there are many who are deeply committed to obeying the command to make disciples, and their dedication helps to provide the theoretical framework for this topic. Smith (2018) cites four strategies of Jesus for developing disciples. He is a pastor who maintains that there is a disconnect between pastors mostly believing that churches are doing poorly with fostering discipleship, and with laypeople who generally think that discipleship is in much better shape (pp. 1-3).

Separation of Clergy and Laity

Copeland (2012) agrees with Smith about the critical importance of making disciples, and that the church is mostly not obeying this command. However, she disagrees with his assessment that this it is primarily the responsibility of the laypeople. This is because she believes that the separation of clergy and laypeople has a great deal to do with this problem. Copeland (2012) asserts that leaders are often the ones who keep laypeople from reaching their full potential in Christ, as their pride can get in the way (pp. 112-113). Copeland (2012) and Maddix (2009) did

their research on overcoming the longstanding separation of clergy and laity to help increase the number and quality of disciples in churches. Maddix (2009) asserts that separating pastors as professional leaders and the remainder of congregations as followers goes against the biblical model of discipleship (pp. 214-217). He is determined to overcome this extrabiblical motif and believes it has greatly impeded discipleship. Copeland (2012) focuses on how this issue impacts discipleship by analyzing the history of the division between clerics and laypeople and her dissertation researched ways to solve this problem. Baudler (2016) contributes to this theme with his book on Martin Luther's desire to reestablish the priesthood of all believers. Luther was unsuccessful in restoring the priesthood of all believers during the Reformation. However, Baudler (2016) asserts that resurrecting the biblical paradigm of priesthood of all believers would provide a strong foundation for church discipleship.

Winchester (2018) maintains that much of the responsibility for the lack of discipleship rests with pastors who are not making disciples and that many have never been discipled themselves. Wright (2018) believes that the Great Commission is the main theoretical framework of discipleship that is found throughout the Bible. He describes his work as a missional reading of the Bible and demonstrates that Christians need to obey the biblical mandate of making disciples. This concludes the theological and theoretical frameworks for discipleship, and this review of the literature continues by looking at how churches conduct disciple-making.

Smith (2014) notes the importance of obeying the biblical command in Matthew 28:18-20 and describes the American church as being in decline and maintains that the root of the problem is a shortage of discipleship formation. He describes an insufficient number of transformed lives that church discipleship should bring about, and then takes a pastoral approach to try to mitigate the issue (pp. 1-2). Snelling (2015) observed a specific older Baptist church that

had very little spiritual formation taking place. She then discusses the priority of making

disciples, and her research attempts to change the status quo towards greater discipleship. Hirsch

and Hirsch (2010) look at faith being blended with cultural traditions as causing a great lack of

discipleship (pp. 252-255). Archer (2017) describes how American individualism has greatly

influenced the church, as American Christians are mostly individualistic, and that this

characteristic has impeded accountability. He shares how accountability is greatly needed for

discipleship and cites verses to support his position.

Disciples submit to the Lordship of Christ

Barna (2001) describes discipleship as fully submitting to the lordship of Christ in all

areas, while Bonhoeffer (1995) states that "Christianity without discipleship is Christianity

without Christ" (p. 64). Hull (2007) discusses how many pastors talk about making disciples, but

that their actions do not match their rhetoric as American Christianity suffers from a shortage of

disciples and disciple-making (p. 21). Discipleship transcends cultural values as biblical disciples

revolve their lives around the Lord. Hull (2006) observes that discipleship is the Lord's primary

command and that Christians need to obey this mandate. Carr (2014) builds on Blomberg's

(1992) assertion that Christ commands his followers to make disciples and that disciple-making

is a pre-requisite for the church. He does this by stating that discipleship should be studied to

determine the best discipleship practices for the church. Carr (2014) echoes the importance of

applying our Lord's methods of disciple-making to the church while observing that the

preponderance of discipleship formation has been done by parachurch organizations or mission

agencies. He researches the disciple leader Waylon Moore who was a Southern Baptist disciple

maker that was experienced working in parachurch and church settings. Carr shares three reasons

why the church should apply the discipleship wisdom that Moore learned through applying our Lord's discipleship practices. :

> Waylon Moore has spent sixty years attempting to implement disciple-making practices in the local church. His theology of disciple-making … found in his books and have been seen in his service as a pastor and trainer to missionaries. There are three reasons why his theology and methodology should be studied. First, the major emphasis of his ministry has been disciple-making in the local church. Second, he served on staff with two of the most widely known disciple makers of the twentieth century, Dawson Trotman, and Bill Bright. Third, from 1969 to 1982 he trained all new missionaries on the subject of disciple-making for the Foreign Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, now known as the International Mission Board, (Moore, 2018, p. 15)

Moore (2018) references a variety of sources which reveal that the protestant church in America is closing its doors faster than ever, and he effectively describes the church as dying (pp. 1-4). He wants to revitalize existing churches by encouraging them to focus on both drawing nearer to God and practicing discipleship principles long before they get close to considering closing. Dennery (2013) notes that although the Bible is the best-selling book of all time, American's knowledge of the Scriptures has dramatically decreased recently. This author found that this has negatively impacted leadership and diminished discipleship in his church and other churches (pp. 14-16). Weems (2013) asserts that there is a church leadership problem and notes that pastors are regularly asked how many people there are in their church but are almost never asked how many disciples they are making (Weems, p. 30). This author invokes the five-fold ministry to describe how laypeople should be equipped for the work of the ministry and alludes to pastor-centric churches as being part of the problem.

Healthy churches make disciples

Weems (2013) states that healthy churches make disciples, and that many churches are preaching a watered-down gospel (p. 39). He shares that Jesus is our role model and makes a strong argument for major changes in church leadership. Morales (2013) cites numerous verses

and sources in maintaining that evangelism and discipleship should not be separated. He is convinced that a person should start being discipled as soon as they are saved (pp. 9-10). Morales calls for a revival of church-based discipleship and provides an insightful description of Wright's (2018) seminal work on unlocking the Bible's grand narrative from Genesis to Revelation. Wright's (2018) book describes how God has been on a mission to make disciples of all tongues, tribes, and nations and that he wants Christians to become disciple-makers and to join God's divine mission. Many sources have focused on different aspects of this issue including Bartel (2014), who devotes her first few pages to noting that the American church is in decline, and that the church has been hastening to increase discipleship efforts (pp. 3-8).

Nee (1977) maintains that unless a believer really dies to themselves in a discipleship-like fashion that God cannot use them, while Wheeler (2015) wants all the body of Christ to be empowered to do the work of making disciples globally (pp. 154-159). Chan (2012) equips readers so that they can obey the Great Commission by becoming disciples who make disciples (pp. 39-52). Ogden (2003) maintains that the western church has been overrun by culture and that western churches need to make a major adjustment by refocusing on making disciples so that they can rejoin God's mission. Taylor (2013) began his doctoral study with a historical investigation to determine what discipleship really is by eliminating the time interval from A.D. 325 to A.D. 1900. Taylor believes that the early church fathers in the Apostolic Age and Ante-Nicene Fathers period had a much clearer understanding of what the essence of discipleship really is (pp. 2-3). He thinks that this knowledge was lost during the time when Constantine and others helped to make Christianity the state religion of Rome. He said that his doctoral professor, himself and twelve other students established definitions for discipleship and the essence of

discipleship at the beginning of his dissertation. The definitions Taylor helped develop are as follows:

> *Discipleship*: By the grace of God, Christian discipleship is the process by which the teacher engages and facilitates the training of a follower in self-denial with the goal of producing godliness. *Essence of discipleship*: The essence of discipleship is one person helping another to grow in Christlikeness. (p. 2)

It is interesting that this source considers what the Bible has to say about being a disciple, and what Justin, Origen and other early church fathers share, to try to recover a better understanding of what discipleship consists of. Taylor (2013) describes himself as an Evangelical who views the church as having lost a real understanding of discipleship after some Roman cultural practices and other cultural behaviors started becoming church practices around 325 A.D. He concluded that Jesus Christ is the essence of discipleship and that the church should try to conduct itself as disciples based upon the life and teachings of Jesus Christ.

Disciples are Rare

According to what Baldwin (2016) asserts in his Liberty Baptist dissertation, the church has all but abandoned the discipleship formation process, and disciples have become extremely rare in the church. He maintains that the church still has members and is conducting research because he does not believe this situation is either acceptable or viable over time. Baldwin (2016) states:

> The lack of a biblically based disciple making model has led to mediocre Christians and a church in need of the Holy Spirit. The church has lost its direction and Christians have lost their commitment to the things of God. The term disciple has lost its significance and the church is suffering for it. As a result, the church is having difficulty understanding how to make disciples. It is difficult to fulfill the Great Commission when standards have been lost. The problem with disciple making in today's churches is twofold: the focus of the church, and the commitment of the Christians who attend church. These two areas need to be addressed before any real change can take place. (p. 3)

Baldwin's (2016) diagnosis shows that the status quo of the church's and individual Christian's levels of commitment to Jesus Christ need to be transformed. Although Baldwin's statement of limitations made no mention of any geographical limits of where he is referring to, it is likely that Baldwin (2016) is referring to the church in America, and possibly elsewhere in the western world. This is because Baldwin, like most sources, write about their own cultural context. Besides that, Moore's (2017) experience of leaving Liberty and meeting persecuted Christians who were willing to die for their faith provides a framework for Baldwin's comments. Moore's (2017) description of his Christianity finally making sense when he witnessed committed disciples means Baldwin's (2016) description is unlikely to apply to areas where there is persecution. Moore (2017) describes how the persecuted Christians he met in Asia, Africa, the Middle East, and elsewhere conduct themselves as disciples who pick up their crosses daily in with a self-denial approach to their faith. With that foundation established, it is very likely that Baldwin's (2016) comments mostly apply to the American ecological environment as that appears to be implicit in his writings.

Baldwin (2016) shares that one of the primary impediments to discipleship formation is the lack of time because everybody is so busy. Joseph (2015) addresses this issue in his study on how to make disciples in America's mobile culture that is so busy. He shares that accountability and transparency are required for a believer to grow, but comfort has become the goal of western society (pp. 34-35). Joseph (2015) believes that American and other western churches are out of shape like an obese person who has not exercised, and that the church needs to arise and come back to life (pp. 28-29), which sounds like the bones of Ezekiel chapter 37 being remade into a living army.

Joseph (2015) describes the church as overflowing with education and information, but missing God-centered action to bring it into focus since the church has been following American culture. He notes that the cost of discipleship has not decreased even when the culture has devalued it. The Apostles did not stop ministering the Word of God to wait on tables as they put ministry first and so should the church. Discipleship takes time and effort for followers of Christ to grow together. Joseph (2015) found that only about one third of the pastors/leaders were being mentored even though nearly all were mentoring others, and he considers this to be a problem for discipleship formation. He shared that pastors really need to be discipled themselves but noted that they allocated very little time for being formed into disciples.

<div align="center">**A Spiritual Earthquake is needed**</div>

Baker (2015) observes that the church needs the equivalent of an earthquake to awaken it from its slumber of not making disciples. This source notes that over two decades his Canadian church has been involved in a Reformation and has been transformed into a missional church. He advocates for a second Reformation and maintains that pastors must connect church culture to biblical mission and Baker (2015) talks about reforming a dead and dying church culture (pp. 136-137). He maintains that western culture is permeated with idolatry, consumerism, hypocrisy, and legalism and that self-centered worship songs with lyrics that sing songs about God blessing them and revolving around people is a key starting point for change. Baker (2015) argues that culture has been winning against biblical vision, and that the tables need to be turned so that the church can begin to overcome culture, and that this cannot happen until Christianity chooses Jesus Christ as their Lord and not just their savior.

Payne (2014) shares that too many church leadership teams are afraid to discuss or address suffering. This source notes that the Bible is replete with verses on suffering and growth

through pain and trials and that leaders need to disciple people to be prepared for this. Payne

(2014) maintains that America's cultural disdain for suffering is so pervasive that it prevents too

many Christians from having an open mind towards what the Bible teaches about disciples

dealing with adversity. He describes this as being unfortunate since Christians grow best through

adversity (pp. 35-36). Payne (2014) also observes that too many ministries prefer to teach a

cultural gospel of pleasure and prosperity (pp. 7-8). He cites Bowler (2013) as a source that

provides the history of the prosperity gospel in the United States, and references how so many

American Christians prioritize being blessed by God to the degree that it overshadows whatever

God wants them to do for Him. Bowler is a Duke University professor who has researched the

degree to which the cultural prosperity gospel has influenced the church, since prosperity

teachers are throughout America including nearly being on television 24 hours a day and 7 days

a week (Payne, 2014, pp. 40-41).

According to Payne (2014), the church is surrounded by an overwhelming influence of

secularism which is destroying the church from the outside (pp. 37-39). He believes there is a

great need for laypeople and pastors alike to persevere through adversity. Payne (2014)

encourages believers to practice the principles of perspective, perseverance, power, and peace

which will provide a way for followers of Christ to systematically mature into disciples. Payne

describes how Strobel (2000) commissioned Barna (2001) to determine what was the most

important question that American Christians want to ask of God, and it was found to be *"Why is*

there pain and suffering in the world?" This indicates how far most American Christians are

removed from the persecution and adversity which permeate biblical discipleship.

Precedent Literature on the Theoretical Framework

There are a substantial number of other precedent literature sources. This includes what McKinney (2017) and Balentine (2017) tell readers about the relationship between worship and discipleship, and what Dearman (2005) and Andrew and Jansen (2014) share about the relationship between prayer and discipleship. In addition, Payne (2014) shares the benefits of discipleship of overcoming adversity, while Bonhoeffer (1995) maintains that discipleship requires complete obedience. Furthermore, both Brosius (2017) and Burdick (2018) describe how churches need to overcome American culture to make disciples. Roy (2017) prioritizes the Great Commission, but then describes how it has become more like the great omission in America. Ogundiran (2013) makes the Great Commission command of creating disciples his top priority. He believes that Christians need to follow this theoretical framework of discipleship to be humble, completely dedicated, die to self, consider the cost of discipleship, and participate in God's mission. The Scriptures give Christ's followers a mandate for making disciples of all nations and this is the theoretical framework of this paper.

Harris, (2000) describes how followers of Jesus are intended to become as His slaves, as disciples were not only to be as "servants," but as slaves. The Greek word "doulos" that is translated throughout the Bible as "servants" actually means "slaves," and his excellent work details many verses on believers being slaves of God or slaves of Christ (pp. 20-24). Although this word is so racially charged with such a despicably negative connotation in American culture, to early Christians who faced persecution as disciples, being a slave of Christ was a mark of Christian maturity. Within this context, making disciples needs to be done locally, regionally, and to the ends of the earth. Acts 1:8 states: "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit

has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

Hardison (2019) maintains that discipleship is the key to keeping young adults in the church. He is convinced that the church needs to address questions that young people raise in a straightforward way. Hardison (2019) says that youth need sermons, large gatherings, and personal devotionals, but that their primary need is for discipleship that is derived from small groups (pp. 3-7), as this author has a young adults discipleship book that follows the relationship approach that Jesus used. He provides Greek words for why we should be encouraging and recommending everybody to practice discipleship. Our faith needs to be based on solid answers that people can relate to. He references Willard (2016), who says that "The Great Commission is still the mission statement of the church. It is just stunning to watch churches struggle to get mission statements when there it is, the Great Commission, and they should simply do what it says. Make disciples!"

Foster (2007) provides another perspective on these matters with his research that encourages seminaries to disciple pastors to stop the decline of churches. He observes that the church is overlooking the primary part of the Great Commission by not making disciples and maintains that this issue begins with pastors who have not been discipled enough to make disciples themselves (p. iv). Foster (2007) conducted a survey and the results showed that if pastors were doing baptisms and witnessing it was very likely that they had been previously discipled. However, he found that most pastors had not been discipled before, which has contributed to Foster's (2007) being convinced that the pastor-centric approach of running churches is failing. This source advocates for reforms to focus on the discipleship of pastors, which includes more prayer and Bible study and can lead to greater levels of discipleship, as he

maintains that the New Testament calls every true believer a disciple (p. 10). He asserts that if pastors call others to be disciples but are not truly disciples themselves, it places the disciple-making process in a very precarious position.

According to Foster (2007) any church that presents discipleship as optional is compromising the meaning of the Great Commission. This author notes that American culture places such a large priority on people being entertained, but that the disciples did not seek to be entertained since they knew that being saved meant living a life full of trials and tribulations instead of enjoying fun and games. Foster (2007) credits Bible colleges for preparing students' minds but maintains that they fail at transforming people's hearts. He also observes that godly leaders can expect resistance and friction from the religious establishment, who tend to prefer the status quo, and notes that their traditional approach which primarily follows American culture is failing. He wants Christians to follow the Lord's calls to draw closer to Him since the love for God is the most important characteristic to live by. The fact that Followers of Christ were called disciples in the New Testament long before the word Christian ever began to be used in Antioch supports the importance that the New Testament places upon discipleship.

Bartel (2014) echoes Foster's (2007) ideas and believes that the effort to make disciples by transforming people's minds has not worked well. She calls the worldview approach to discipleship too cerebral and maintains that attitude is more important than behavior, citing several verses about the heart to support her argument. Bartel (2014) lists 3 requirements of discipleship that are taken from the Gospel of Luke: 1) deny yourself, 2) take up the cross, and 3) follow Jesus. This author is convinced that the Scriptures show that God has a special concern about both our hearts and our minds (pp. 12-14). According to Bartel (2014) discipleship efforts have been primarily focused on the mind but need to be focused on both the heart and the mind

as people need to feel loved. Bartel (2014) believes that worldviews include both people's hearts and minds and has developed a heart-shaping model of discipleship that goes beyond just the intellectual model as it addresses attitude as well as other issues of the heart as well as knowledge and other aspects of the mind. As a suggestion for further research, it could be beneficial if somebody could develop a course in which the person leading discipleship can be trained in how the discipleship process transforms both student's hearts and their minds.

Examples of Church Discipleship programs that work

Although a large majority of the researchers described a shortage of discipleship in American Christianity, the glass is not empty. There were a substantial number of sources that are examples of viable church discipleship models. Virtually all of these examples have leaders that have developed church discipleship methods and were nearly unanimously trying to spread their methodologies They are trying to replicate their discipleship programs in other churches in an attempt to reinvigorate them. Morales (2013) cites numerous verses and sources in maintaining that evangelism and discipleship should not be separated. He calls for a revival or awakening in church-based discipleship and provides an insightful description of Wright's (2018) seminal work on unlocking the Bible's grand narrative from Genesis to Revelation. Wright's book describes how God has been on a mission to make disciples of all tongues, tribes, and nations and wants more Christians to become disciple-makers and join the Lord's mission.

Holsinger (2009) maintains that most churches have had some degree of success making converts, but very few are making disciples (pp. 1-2). He notes that a small number of churches have been able to produce disciples and recommends that most churches should find a church that possesses a working discipleship program and try to reproduce it. Holsinger (2009) then compares the secular leadership style of situational leadership to the Apostle Paul's process of

disciple-making in the New Testament and recommends that Christian leaders try to adapt Paul's leadership style which adapted to situations to foster discipleship (pp. 56-65). Hull (2006) informs readers that Jesus Christ is the chief disciple-maker and that Christians need to study and learn how Jesus accomplished discipleship (pp. 25-26). He maintains that Christians need to apply Christ's discipleship principles to their churches. Taylor (2013) agrees and observes that Jesus Christ is our primary example of discipleship, and that therefore we need to copy what Jesus did. Taylor (2013) considers leaders in the early church to be better examples of disciples since they more closely followed the Lord's example of discipleship.

Baker (2015) chronicles how God transformed a dying church that was over 80 years old and how they were able to overcome their traditional division between clergy and laypeople in this process. He maintains that cultural Christianity is killing the church in Canada and their church tried to change that (pp. 2-5). Matthews (2005) targeted his research on increasing discipleship in Baptist churches. He used a variation of Bloom's taxonomy for measuring discipleship levels and had participants choose a response on a Likert scale to answer questions. These questions were about the first four items of Bloom's taxonomy which are knowledge, comprehension, application, and analysis, and asked participants how these topics pertained to discipleship formation. He believes that there is a great lack of biblical discipleship curriculum and developed a 10-week discipleship course as a means of evaluating it.

Costner (2017) cites many statistics on churches that are dying or plateauing in the west. He is focused on mobilizing laity to stem what he observes is the decline of the western church. Costner (2007) maintains that pastors cannot successfully turnaround declining churches by themselves, as they need assistance from the entire body of Christ (pp. 133-137). This author believes that empowering lay leaders so that everybody in the church shares the work, which is

very beneficial to the church. Costner (2007) asserts this is how the New Testament church functioned, and that this approach can help to restore biblical discipleship. He also cites an encouraging book by Stetzer and Dodson (2007) about 300 sick and dying churches that have been turned around by a combination of new pastors and laypeople

In concluding this theoretical framework section of the literature review, it is apparent that the Great Commission is the theoretical framework upon which discipleship is based. Jesus shares several characteristics about what being a disciple consists of. Matthew 28:19 commands disciple making by saying to "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations." Styron (2004) shared that the church he pastored, and most other churches struggle to make genuine disciples of Jesus Christ. His concern for the lack of obedience to the Lord's commands to make disciples led him to develop a measurement instrument for discipleship (pp. 11-12).

This researcher needs to keep in mind what Galvan and Galvan (2017) shared which said to indicate why this study is important (p. 110). This writer is intrigued by investigating the church leadership paradigm's relationship with the lack of discipleship since he was unable to find any dissertations that focused on it. After reviewing around three hundred dissertations, this writer was able to find many studies that spoke about there being a shortage of discipleship and another large quantity of dissertations that tried to resolve this issue. However, Galvan and Galvan's (2017) concept of "no studies were found" applies to this situation since this researcher was unable to find any that focused on identifying the causes of the reasons for this problem. This study now transitions to the related literature area, which examines the theme of the large quantity of sources which have developed solutions for the lack of discipleship problem that is very pervasive throughout the literature.

Related Literature

The Attempt to resolve the Lack of Discipleship Problem

This research encountered many authors who have created constructive solutions to rekindle discipleship formation in the church. A significant percentage of these authors and researchers seem to make a prompt transition from observing the problem of the scarcity of discipleship to developing a class, curriculum, book, or movement to resolve this problem. These Christian leaders appear to have viewed disobeying Jesus' primary command as being such an urgent and important problem that many appear to have almost instantaneously pivoted from recognizing the problem to focusing on creating workable solutions to try to ameliorate it.

As Shields (2008) describes many well-meaning Christian leaders as sounding alarms about youth leaving the church, this research encountered an enormous number of sources who have sounded alarms about the lack of discipleship in American Evangelical churches. In their transition from describing the problem to trying to resolve it, some of the sources seem to have responded with alarms almost as urgently as a fire chief would if a house were on fire. Sources like these which quickly change to trying to put the figurative fire out may have observed one or more of the easily recognizable causes of the metaphorical fire. However, noticing one or more superficial reasons for the problem in passing while prioritizing the development of solutions is very different than focusing on a specific area that may be one of the root causes for the problem. This is because their focus has not been on determining a comprehensive list of reasons for the problem. Not all sources respond with such an extraordinary sense of urgency, since others may be developing solutions more systematically, but there are many authors who have.

This research cannot begin to list all the solutions which have been developed to try to resolve the lack of discipleship because so many remedies have been made that this theme

permeates the literature. This study instead considered some of the most notable ones. Although many of these solutions have been shown to be effective at helping to treat the problem, the problem still persists. This is because no matter how excellent a course or discipleship formation plan for churches may be, they have not frequently been utilized. In addition, if a disciple-making program is used, it usually is only partially implemented. In addition, Jesus taught His disciples for three years, and it is quite rare when a complete lifestyle discipleship program is fully adhered to in a biblically disciplined fashion for three or more years. Therefore, not only does the problem continue to persist, but it has also been progressively getting worse with the passing of time. Christian leaders who have produced solutions to try to mitigate this problem have used creativity, innovation, hard work, commitment, teamwork, and other characteristics to try to develop working discipleship models. Their ideas have ranged from simple to complex and from comprehensive to targeting a specific niche. There are so many different varieties of discipleship formation models which have been produced to try and solve the problem of lack of discipleship. This abundance of solutions is therefore an important theme in the research on the status of discipleship in American churches.

The following example is representative of how pervasive this theme is. While conducting research about the status of discipleship, this researcher received unsolicited emails in both his Liberty inbox and his personal email inbox. These emails were from Vines (2012), who is a Christian leader that was trying to pass on his legacy of biblical knowledge and experience to the next generation through a discipleship-oriented Sunday School curriculum. Vines (2012) said that the reason that he has sent these solicitations is because too many Christians rarely or never read the Bible. His information looked interesting, and anyone could sense his desire to impart biblical wisdom was sincere. However, this well-meaning leader's

attempts to encourage this researcher to be a disciple became email solicitations that kept inundating his inboxes so much that he eventually had to unsubscribe. The literature also contained many sources like this who were trying to strengthen disciple-making.

Missional Discipleship

Reddy (2019) conducted research on healthy churches practicing missional discipleship. He has over 25 years of experience in planting churches and wanted churches to have a mission orientation from the moment they begin discipling new converts so that they are prepared to train others. He considers if American churches are fostering the development of mature disciples who are strong enough in Christ that they can continue to persevere in the faith despite cultural pressures. Reddy (2019) wants Christians to become such strong disciples that they can endure hardships like the New Testament disciples did (pp. 6-8). He also desires that for new churches to have a missional orientation when conducting outreach to their communities.

Milks (2017) concurs with the need for having a missional orientation in churches and is focused on helping transform church members into disciples conducting themselves with missional lifestyles as the Great Commission is for all believers (pp. 77-78). Hirsch and Hirsch (2010) believe in this and wrote about the importance of the church recovering a missional form of discipleship. These authors are convinced that contemporary Christianity has been overwhelmed by cultural influences, to the degree that many Christians have either lost their faith or have a faith that is weak and superficial. Wright (2018) agrees with the need for Christians to live as missionaries in his detailed work on the Great Commission. Hirsch and Hirsch want the church to be much less influenced by various cultural trends, and to instead have such strong discipleship that the church is the one that is influencing the culture. Burgraff (2015)

developed a discipleship curriculum to help followers increase their commitment to God and develop greater biblical literacy (pp. 398-400).

Ott (2016) is another source who has chosen to try fostering discipleship through a missional approach to Christianity as a solution to the problem of lack of discipleship. He believes that all believers should participate in God's mission by actively being involved in trying to make disciples for Jesus Christ (pp. 42-43). Lee (2016) uses the words *Imitatio Missionis,* which means imitating Christ's mission in the title of his work as his description of the missional approach to strengthening discipleship. This author wants to transform discipleship in a Korean context and believes that the missional approach is a constructive mechanism which can be used to alleviate the lack of discipleship in churches (pp. 323-327).

Johnston (2009) believes that churches need to connect disciples with disciple-makers, and maintains that disciples are needed similar to the book of Acts. He mentions that since there are 260 references to disciples in the Gospels and in Acts, discipleship should supersede the American dream. Johnston then takes a pastor-centric approach to provide a solution to address this issue. However, Winchester (2018) and Foster (2007) argue that before pastors can disciple others, they must first go through the discipleship process themselves. Foster advocates for seminaries to begin discipling pastors so that they can disciple their churches (pp. 10-13). He surveyed 150 pastors and found that most had never been discipled. This author maintains that the pastor-centric approach to Christianity is failing and that structural changes are needed so that pastors are discipled and are prepared to lead churches into greater discipleship.

There are many authors like Matthews (2005) that have developed discipleship education programs for churches. Han (2015) prioritizes mentoring to achieve discipleship while Johnson (2015) wants to draw adults closer to Jesus (pp. 37-41). There are such a wide variety of sources

that have developed curriculums, Bible studies, small groups, leadership training, and other methods to try to decrease the pervasive shortfall of discipleship in America's churches, that it is impossible to mention them all. There are so many solutions to this problem since there are a diverse assortment of people who deeply care about the lack of discipleship problem and want to do something about it. The literature review has clearly established a widespread desire to provide a solution to the problem of a lack of church-based discipleship formation.

Lynn (2104) illustrates this in the first sentence of his abstract of his Liberty University dissertation, by citing Barna (2001) as determining that the status of contemporary discipleship formation is lacking. He observes the problem and asserts that the American church's level of obedience to Jesus' command to make disciples of all nations is at a nadir (p. 2). He believes that the system of discipleship that American churches follow is both ineffective and not frequently practiced. This pastor spends a significant part of his abstract and beginning of his dissertation describing this theoretical framework. He investigates 25 or more churches to determine what, if anything, they are using for developing disciples, then transitions into developing a church discipleship plan that he recommends for churches to wholeheartedly begin to utilize.

Baker (2015) is trying to awaken a Canadian church from its long slumber due to the shortage of discipleship, while Geiger, Kelly, and Nation (2012) wants to make certain that people who receive Jesus as their savior go through a transformational discipleship process until they desire to live as disciples of Christ (Geiger, et.al., p. 36). Lee (2016) wants to transform Korean churches into disciple-making communities that participate in God's mission (p. 1). There are a many other examples of this sub-theoretical framework, as the shortage of discipleship permeates the research about the status of disciple making in America's churches.

The literature reveals a broad consensus that there is an acute lack of discipleship in America's churches. This study will research and try to identify the primary causes of this phenomenon.

Holsinger (2009) asserts that most churches have had some degree of success making converts but that they very rarely make disciples. However, Holsinger (2009) observes that a small number of churches have been able to produce disciples. He recommends that churches or other Christian organizations try to locate a church or Christian ministry which is using a viable discipleship program and try to reproduce what that church is doing. Hull (2006) informs readers that Jesus Christ is the chief disciple-maker and that Christians need to study to learn how Jesus accomplished discipleship and apply Christ's principles to their churches (p. 15). Taylor (2013) notes that Jesus is our role model of discipleship, that we need to copy what he did, and that the early church was closely adhering to our Lord's example of discipleship (p. 8).

Pearcey (2004) has a subtitle of *liberating Christianity from its cultural captivity*. The idea of truth being unencumbered by culture is intriguing, especially as this author shares how American culture has prevailed over Christianity by influencing the church far more than the church has influenced culture. Pearcey (2004) describes culture as being like the layers of an onion that have covered God's truth for a very long time. She asserts that the practice of compartmentalization has created layers of culture which have obscured the truth from people's daily lives, and that these cultural layers need to be peeled back to reveal the truth (p. 65). In this case, the cultural problems which needs to be overcome are inside the church since the church has produced too few disciples. Moreover, the layers of the cultural onion that Pearcey (2004) refers to impedes the sources trying to resolve the issue from focusing their attention upon the underlying reasons for the problem. Pearcey (2004) maintains that if there are any differences

between culture and God's Word, that cultural habits are incorrect because the Bible is a universal truth that applies to worldview and to all aspects of life.

Developing Discipleship Models

Burgraff (2015) recommends a model for helping to mitigate this issue. An excerpt from the Burgraff (2015) abstract says the following about designing church discipleship programs:

> Discipleship is the process of learning the Scriptures, internalizing them to shape one's belief system, and then applying them to change one's life. It is the church's role to be actively involved in following the Great Commission (Matt 28:19-20), but contemporary research related to discipleship has revealed several concerns that the 21st-century church must acknowledge as it seeks to disciple believers. Today, more than ever, it is essential that the church develop curriculum that accurately and systematically teaches believers how to be a true disciple of Christ. To do so, church leaders must understand the process to develop and accurately design discipleship curriculum for the church. (p. 397)

Weems (2013) observes that pastors are regularly asked how many people attend their congregations but are almost never asked how many disciples they are making. This source believes the solution to the lack of disciple making is to overcome the pastor-centric ministry model by prioritizing laypeople to help in the work of the ministry (pp. 41-43). He believes church leadership needs major changes to start forming enough disciples and wants to equip church members for the work of the ministry, as he believes in restoring the priesthood of all believers. Weems wants the church to be run like a team where the whole body of Christ can share the workload instead of just a few who are leaders.

Shirley (2008) developed a model of church discipleship and wants the church to make disciples instead of parachurches being the primary disciple-making organizations. He asserts that the reason that so many parachurches have taken the lead on discipleship formation is because the American church has abandoned its primary duties of making disciples (p. 208). Shirley exhorts the church to start obeying God's Word and start developing more disciples.

LifeWay Research (2008) agrees and notes that pastors are rarely discipling their congregations. This source also observes that limited disciple-making has contributed to a pervasive lack of discipleship in churches and in American Christianity as a whole.

Costner (2017) cites many statistics on western churches that are dying or plateauing (pp. 3-5). He is focused on mobilizing laity to stem what he observes is the decline of the western church and cites an encouraging book by Stetzer and Dodson (2007) about 300 sick and dying churches that have been turned around by a combination of new pastors and laypeople. Costner believes that empowering laypeople, as the New Testament teaches is a foundation for restoring biblical discipleship. Archer (2017) wants the church to overcome the culture's individualism and his dissertation focused upon developing accountability as a solution to help rekindle biblical disciple-making. Moore (2018) hopes to revitalize existing churches by encouraging them to draw nearer to the Lord and to practice discipleship formation before they ever consideri closing (pp. 1-4).

Cox and Peck (2018) note that Christian education needs to prioritize making disciples, but that it rarely does so (pp. 245-246). They reference a quote from former President Simmons of the Christian Schools Association that states, "Everything that the Christian school does should be within the context of discipleship to Jesus Christ." Wilhoit (1986) agrees that Christian education is in desperate need of developing disciples to overcome its lack of vision and significant moral issues. Alarid (2016) investigates the degree of discipleship of Christian school faculty and finds issues that impede them from fully transforming young people into disciples (Alarid, p. iv-v). She introduces her paper with the Great Commission and a definition of what being a disciple means. Alarid (2016) administered the Transformational Discipleship Assessment that LifeWay Resources (2008) and found that although Christian school faculty

have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, they have a hard time expressing this relationship to others as the Lord's disciples should be able to do.

New Testament Discipleship

Hull (2004) admonishes the church to get back to the fundamentals of the faith by practicing first century discipleship and focusing on the life of Jesus like the church of the apostolic era did. He points out that the Bible has not changed since the command to make disciples was given. The Scripture confirms the assertion that Hull (2004) is making since Hebrews 13:8 states "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever," as the Great Commission remains the same. Hull (2004) observes that:

> The problem at its root is that we have accepted a nondiscipleship Christianity that leads to plenty of motion, activity, and conferences, but no lasting transformation. By transformation, I mean consistent long-range change into the likeness of Jesus, so that we are in position to break the back of strongholds and habits that retard our growth. In the last twenty years, I have written nine other books, pastored two other churches, and created an international training network. I can confidently report to you that there is a desperate search among church leaders for something more meaningful than what is currently being offered. We have found that church growth does not satisfy the soul; neither do accolades about sermons or completed projects. There is a movement in our land that is driven by hunger for intimacy with God. There is a growing consensus that the Great Commission has as much to do with depth as with strategy. (p. 10)

In a later work that Hull (2006) entitles, *The complete book of discipleship,* he notes that making disciples is at the heart of God's work. This comprehensive resource also mentions how a transformed person can change the world for Jesus Christ. Hull (2006) describes the type of Christianity that he calls nondiscipleship as being the source for all kinds of problems that develop within Evangelical churches in America (pp. 30-32). Mars (2017) shares that the church has rarely obeyed our Lord's commands to make disciples and says there is a resemblance between the contemporary American Evangelical church and the Laodicean church. This author asserts that the buck needs to stop with church leadership and that they should be held

accountable for this lack of obedience. Mars (2017) does not want the American church to be too lukewarm and end up being spit out of the Lord's mouth as Jesus warned could happen to the Laodicean church (pp. 11-12). He is very concerned that by overlooking God's primary command of making disciples resembles "Having a form of godliness but denying the power thereof," as 2 Timothy 3:5 states.

Smith (2018) is broken-hearted about the lack of discipleship in American churches and conducted research about it. Anybody reading his study can appreciate the passion that he put into his research as he made a great deal of effort to try to remedy the situation. This senior pastor's broken-hearted perspective about what he perceived as a virtual void of discipleship formation is not dissimilar to what Styron (2004) describes (pp. 1-2). This is because Styron (2004) was motivated to create a vetted measurement instrument to ascertain discipleship levels of an individual follower of Christ's by the pervasive lack of discipleship he saw around him. Styron humbly focused upon the shortage of discipleship that he observed in his own life as well as in the church that he has led in West Virginia (pp. 5-6). He expressed biblical humility in writing this, and shared that he was so downcast about this problem that he spent years developing the Summit Point Discipleship Test and testing it during his dissertation process.

Baldwin (2016) lists five impediments to making disciples that begin with the letter "t" and focuses his dissertation on overcoming these obstacles. He states that these are theology, tradition, training, time, and transparency (pp. 46-65). Baldwin's (2016) study focuses upon trying to develop a solution for the lack of disciple-making and seeks to reestablish disciple making in the church. He recommended that disciple-makers have an intimate relationship with Jesus Christ, prioritize the Kingdom of God over their own agenda, apply God's Word to their lives, have a clear plan of discipleship, live an authentic Christian lifestyle, and love God and

others as themselves. To overcome the five "t" words which are obstacles to forming disciples, Baldwin recommends that the church go beyond theological lip service and to fully start obeying the Great Commission. To finally conquer the traditions which have constrained churches for so long, Baldwin (2016) notes how the Pharisees had traditions, and then mentions that contemporary church traditions have generally done far more harm than good.

Baldwin (2016) asserts that everything in the church should be reoriented around making disciples, and that other activities should fall by the wayside. This author argues that discipleship should not be limited to a class, worship service, an amount of time, or a small group. He found that discipleship formation takes place over a lifetime and gives the early church as examples (pp. 91-95). Baldwin (2016) points out that limited time is a major issue in America's busy culture, but that this obstacle can be overcome if individual Christians and the church itself are willing to prioritize discipleship. His research found that discipleship meetings of 60 to 90 minutes were a sufficient amount of time if people stay committed to the process and points out that Jesus spent three years transforming fisherman and other followers into twelve disciples who were ready to propagate the faith. Baldwin (2016) is convinced that if the church and its members make disciple-making a priority over other activities, then discipleship can take place.

Wilder and Parker (2010) perceive that short-term mission trips are foundational for young people becoming disciples. They challenge students to live discipleship lifestyles that include death to self as Matthew 16:35 describes, and that the straight and narrow road that follows Jesus Christ is the one that leads to eternal life. Costner (2017) researched how high-capacity lay disciples were essential for strengthening faltering churches (pp. 133-135). Morales (2013) did his study on discipleship and evangelism to help focus on the Great Commission. His dissertation provides a different angle on the relationship between evangelism and discipleship,

and he made a discipleship program to foster discipleship. Morales (2013) surveyed students before and after his discipleship class and found that the result in student's lives exceeded his expectations (pp. 142-144). He observes that John Wycliffe had similar beliefs to Luther but lived two centuries before him. Morales (2013) also believes that the church needs at least a revival or an awakening, and possibly a new Reformation with his references to Wycliffe and Martin Luther.

Keener (2009) is focused on making disciples of all nations and maintains that the Lord is looking for a more than a half-hearted commitment since New Testament disciples used to take up their crosses and deny themselves and risked being killed (p. 18). Moore (2017) agrees with the importance of Christians taking up their crosses daily (p. 211). Niedmandt (2017) and Meadows (2012) are two of many other sources which focus upon missions fostering discipleship. The relationship of discipleship to missions, is a significant theme in the literature.

Brooks (2014) thinks the church does not resemble the New Testament church and that the primary reasons for this are lack of biblical discipleship, lack of accountability, and apathy towards spiritual gifts. This author asserts that discipleship includes a person's complete surrender to Christ, but that the church has been apathetic and mostly ignored it (pp. 91-94). Brooks (2014) maintains that becoming a disciple is a lifelong process since discipleship is not a program one can graduate from, and that Christians need to become disciples of Christ. He made a 10-question survey for senior pastors and for church members as he notes that the church is unhealthy with more than half of pastors having people on their leadership team whose gifts are not the best suited but are helping because nobody else is willing to (p. 100). This author wants small groups and mid-sized groups that are modeled after how disciples conducted themselves in the book of Acts for fostering a renewal of discipleship in American Evangelical churches.

Lack of Discipleship and Attempts to Resolve this Shortage

Styron (2004) observed a shortage of discipleship in his life as well as in his church in West Virginia. This led him to research the level of disciple-making in American churches by consulting clergy and laity, his experience, and a review of current literature. His study found that other churches also lacked discipleship and the sources he found in his literature review confirmed it. As the pastor of a small church which was not doing discipleship, he humbly took responsibility for this problem and thought it would be constructive to develop a measurement instrument for determining a Christian's discipleship level (p. 6). He maintains that discipleship requires a greater commitment to obeying Christ than just being saved and shared that disciples need to live the Lordship of Christ. He developed a profile of the characteristics of what he calls the ideal disciple in his study's Appendix A (p. 105-109). Geiger, Kelley, and Nation (2012) share that Christ-centered discipleship leads to Christians being transformed:

> Confidently assert that most churches are deficient in discipleship. This is a scathing claim as our entire mission as believers and churches is to 'make disciples.'…The reason Jesus left His disciples on the planet was to make other disciples. The fundamental reason that your church exists is to make disciples of Jesus. (pp. 11-12)

After their observation of the deficiencies that most churches have in making disciples, these authors provide a solution to this dilemma. Geiger, Kelly, and Nation (2012) maintain that the solution to the problem is to help Christians see who Jesus Christ is. They describe the wisdom of Jesus as being so much wiser than worldly wisdom, and His love as vastly superior to the world's love, and His truth as the real truth that makes the world's "truth" seem as lies in comparison. Their point is that Jesus is so much better than what the world has to offer in all aspects, that a disciple-maker should feel compelled to get converts to develop complete relationship with Jesus Christ. These authors believe that once Christians have fully experienced Jesus, themselves, they will no longer want the things that this world has to offer.

According to Ogden (2003), many laypeople complain about their church's lack of discipleship training programs, and many pastors are frustrated by their lack of programs that make disciples. However, Ogden maintains that both are not viewing the problem properly. He believes that the solution is not in large programs but is instead found in studying and applying the principles of how Jesus made a small quantity of disciples at a time (p. 16-17). Niemandt (2016) comes at the problem from a different angle by maintaining that focusing upon mission and developing a radical level of obedience provides such a joyful experience that people will really experience Jesus and then want to live as His disciples (p. 3-5).

Hirsch & Catchim (2012) chronicle how the church was supposed to be led by apostles and prophets and evangelists (APE) as 1 Corinthians 12:28 and Ephesians 4:11 mention (with the latter including evangelists), but that the church leadership has almost exclusively consisted of shepherds and teachers for seventeen centuries. They describe the shepherd-teacher leadership paradigm as incomplete and unable to foster discipleship and observe that the Great Commission has never been completed because of the wrong leadership paradigm stating:

> As far as we can discern, it is simply not possible to be the church that Jesus intended if (APE) three of the five constitutional ministries are removed. According to the explicit teachings of Ephesians 4:1-16 it cannot be done. But in fact it has been done, and the tragic consequences are dramatically demonstrated in and through the history of the Christian church through the past seventeen centuries. We have been condemned to Sisyphean frustration in this matter ever since. Every time we seem to develop some semblance of movement and get the missional boulder up the hill, it rolls back down again, only to initiate the next cycle of seemingly futile efforts all over again. Seldom (and maybe never) have we stopped to correct our misunderstandings at this point. (p. 16).

Ranier (2014) specializes in trying to determine why churches have died. As the past leader of LifeWay Research, he views himself as a spiritual mortician in trying to diagnose this problem. Ranier (2014) wants to reverse the trajectory and the lack of discipleship and dying

churches that he has observed in America and has placed some blame for churches closing upon their disobeying the Great Commission, which has contributed to a lack of vision and prayerlessness (pp. 39-46). LifeWay Research (2008) developed a method of evaluating a person's level of discipleship, to try to strengthen discipleship formation, that is called the Transformational Discipleship Assessment (TDA). The TDA has been widely utilized, as LifeWay has been trying to change the lack of discipleship by having as many Christians as possible take the survey. This is because the survey tends to enhance people's relationships with the Lord. According to Barna (2001), nearly every church has some type of class or activities to foster discipleship formation, and church leaders will indicate they are doing this. However, Barna (2001) observed a scarcity of disciples in a large majority of these churches. This source researched statistics on churches and Christianity and found a shortage of discipleship, declining churches, and the increasing secularization of American culture.

The theme of a lack of discipleship that was covered in the theoretical framework and the theme of leaders developing church discipleship models that try to eliminate the problem in this related literature section are widely found throughout the literature. These motifs are so pervasive when researching the status of discipleship that they permeate the dissertations, books, journals, and other sources. These themes are so intertwined and widespread that they seem to travel together throughout the literature in an almost unending fashion. The prevalence of writing about the lack of discipleship in churches and Christians making solutions to the problem is so extensive that it could almost obscure the fact that there is a large gap in the literature.

The Relationship between the two Literature Review Themes

The two sub-theoretical frameworks of 1) a lack of church discipleship and 2) various church discipleship models that have been developed which attempt to solve the problem are

widely found throughout the literature. These sub-theoretical frameworks are so pervasive when researching the subject of church discipleship that the parallel fashion in which these two themes have been encountered throughout the literature on this problem is interesting. However, neither the identification of the lack of discipleship problem nor the variety of solutions which have been made to resolve it have made much, if any progress in rectifying the situation. Not only that, there is an abundance of sources that describe the problem as progressively getting worse. Clearly, the approach of developing another discipleship training solution in response to recognizing this problem is not ameliorating the issue. Something substantial is missing in the equation of these two themes.

Rationale for this Study and Gap in the Literature

The gap or "missing link" is the process of identifying what are the underlying reasons for the lack of discipleship in American Evangelical churches. Conducting further research to attempt to discover if the current church leadership paradigm is a cause of the problem is likely to be a much more effective way than joining the large number of people trying to resolve this problem by developing an additional church discipleship course. The literature shows that producing a new solution without determining what are the roots of the problem has not worked. The reality is that one needs to know what is really causing a problem before developing solutions which may be only addressing the symptoms of the lack of discipleship formation in Evangelical churches, and this study may help establish if church leadership exacerbates this problem. The separation between clerics and laity is an example of the church leadership issue, as it is a complex problem of that Copeland (2013) reveals has long-term roots (pp. 46-58). Clarifying this area can help spiritual researchers be able to develop more focused solutions.

There needs to be more data obtained in the gap between a researcher either having lamentations about the problem or trying to produce another discipleship program. Neither of these approaches has made any significant progress. This is especially true about new solutions since some of these other sources have probably already developed methods that are far superior to those this researcher could offer. Therefore, this researcher has focused his energies on investigating if the church leadership paradigm is affecting the shortage of disciple-making. To try to get the best possible insight into this important subject, this study utilized a mixed methods approach. This research used a combination of a two-part survey questionnaire to help get direction from the quantitative part of the study and used this information to help formulate the open-ended questions that were used to guide the phenomenological interviews for the qualitative portion of the research. The qualitative segment was comprehensive and used interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) to obtain the best possible understanding of what, if any, impact that church leadership has on the lack of discipleship formation in American Evangelical churches. Chapter three provides the research methodology that this study is using.

Rationale for this Study

Despite an overwhelming amount of well-intentioned solutions that have been developed to foster church disciple-making, there is a gap in the research of identifying what are the reasons for the lack of discipleship. This is a large gap since the Lord's command to make disciples is the main theme of Scripture as Wright (2018) and other sources have shown. Many sources have transitioned from finding that the church was making way too few disciples into providing solutions before taking the time to go through the process of clearly identifying the major underlying reasons that cause this problem. It appears that the lack of discipleship is viewed as such an urgent and important problem that the lack of a clear understanding of the

underlying reasons for it has rendered the solutions that have been made ineffective. In their

most recent analysis of how the church is doing, Barna's most recent President Kinnaman (2020)

does not describe the situation as having improved. This continues the trend that LifeWay

Research (2008), Ranier (2014), Barna (2001), and others have identified as little, if any,

apparent progress has been made on resolving this deep-seated spiritual problem.

This issue almost seems like a broken record. Many leaders keep following the same path

towards making new and improved solutions after they have encountered the problem of

minimal discipleship formation. It is not an easy process for people to get beyond their cultural

habits and this issue is no exception to this rule, as Hirsch and Catchim (2012) observe that they

consider the church to be stuck in a rut like Sisyphus rolling the rock up the mythological hill. (p.

16). This research tried to break the mold that Hirsch and Catchim (2012) describe by trying a

new approach that considered a topic which may be part of the gap.

This gap opened the door for this researcher to investigate the impact of church

leadership structure upon the shortage of discipleship. Many of the sources providing

discipleship solutions may be highly competent. Nevertheless, the issue remains unresolved

despite the enormous number of constructive solutions. It seems as if there are missing pieces to

the puzzle that need to be assembled for Christian leaders to be able to finally develop a holistic

strategy to fix it. Researching church leadership merited investigation. This researcher hopes that

studying this area can benefit future studies on this problem and become a stepping-stone

towards eventually providing a holistic solution to the issue of lack of discipleship in America's

churches. The research profile comes next, and then the study transitions to the chapter three that

addresses the research methodology.

Profile of the Current Study

This research utilized a mixed methods approach with quantitative surveys and qualitative phenomenology to investigate if the church leadership paradigm contributes to the shortage of discipleship formation. The study obtained church leadership's permission to anonymously survey members of Pennsylvania Evangelical churches. It provided informed consent forms and surveyed both leaders and laypeople using Qualtrics for the 28 quantitative survey questions to ascertain if there is a relationship between how churches are led and the shortage of discipleship formation. This research then conducted nine interpretative phenomenological (IPA) interviews for people to find out if there is a relationship between how churches are led and the shortage of disciple-making. Chapter three provides more detail on the methodology, the research procedures, the instruments involved, and the data analysis methods to conduct this mixed methods study.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter provides the methodology that was used in the research and addresses the sample, population, design, instrumentation, research procedures, data analysis, and the researcher's role. The study utilized an explanatory sequential design that combines the benefits of quantitative surveys with phenomenological research to thoroughly investigate the problem. The quantitative part of the study answered research question one and the qualitative section of the study answered research questions two through five. This chapter developed a plan that was implemented during the research phase of the study which addressed how the research questions were answered, which is explained in more detail later in the chapter.

Research Design Synopsis

The Problem

This mixed methods study researched if the way in which contemporary churches are led contributes to the lack of disciple making in American Evangelical churches. Although many studies have done an excellent job describing the scarcity of discipleship or producing solutions to make disciples , this research could not find any sources that enumerated what the causes of the problem were before making solutions. This study researched an area which may contribute to this problem of the shortage of disciple-making in Evangelical churches and may be able to help to eventually mitigate the problem by identifying if the church leadership paradigm may be exacerbating this phenomenon.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this mixed methods study was to determine if the church leadership paradigm contributes to the problem of a lack of disciple-making in Pennsylvania Evangelical churches.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided this study.

RQ1. What aspects of the church leadership paradigm may have contributed to the shortage of disciple-making in Evangelical churches?

RQ2. Can restoring the teaching and application of the priesthood of all believers help disciple making?

RQ3. To what degree, if any, has not following the five-fold team leadership that the Bible prescribes in Ephesians 4:11 exacerbated this problem?

RQ4. To what degree, if any, have cultural values such as materialism and pride contributed to the lack of focus on making disciples?

RQ5. Why does the Evangelical church continue pursuing familiar paths that have not been making many disciples?

Research Design and Methodology

This mixed methods study first used a quantitative survey, then used qualitative phenomenology. Creswell and Creswell (2018) describe mixed method as blending the strengths from quantitative and qualitative approaches (p. 215). They note that researchers need to do a complete job of both quantitative and qualitative research in mixed methods studies. Creswell and Creswell (2018) also observe that mixed methods combines the statistical strengths of quantitative research with qualitative research's stories and experiences. Roberts (2010) notes that mixed methods is increasingly being used for research (p. 144).

A quantitative questionnaire was used to survey a sample of around 390 Evangelical church members to ascertain to what extent these believers have been discipled and inquire about the causes for the shortage of discipleship in churches. A quantity of 390 is in the range of $+ - 5\%$ for the population that is being researched in the quantitative portion of this study. Participants were given informed consent forms before the study begins. In addition to

consenting to the quantitative survey questionnaire, there was a separate area in which respondents gave their consent to the qualitative portions of the study. The survey included both pastors and laypeople since it sought to get a sampling of laity and leadership alike. It also tried to obtain a diverse demographic sampling of different races, sexes, and ages.

The research then transitioned to the qualitative part of the study by purposively selecting nine participants who gave their consent to participate in detailed phenomenological interviews. Creswell and Creswell (2018) share that phenomenological research is a type of study in which the researcher describes people's experiences as they interview each one of them individually to get their point of view on a phenomenon (p.14). The interviews were arranged in advance to make it convenient for people to participate in the study. This researcher utilized a type of phenomenology that is called interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA). The reason for selecting this type of phenomenological approach was that this researcher wanted to explore the roots of this issue by digging deeper, and IPA is ideal for doing that. Smith, Flowers, and Larkin (2012) provide a detailed description of interpretative phenomenological analysis by explaining how IPA explores a phenomenon as it really is, as well as studying how people make sense of their experiences. (pp. 1-4).

Quantitative Research Methodology

The quantitative portion of this study came first in this mixed methods approach and the results from the survey questionnaire answered research question one and established a foundation for the qualitative phenomenological part of the study that followed. The survey questionnaire had 36 questions which investigated if there was a possible relationship between the way that Evangelical churches are being led and the shortage of discipleship formation. These questions were derived from information that the literature review revealed and answer

research question one. The IRB added three more questions at the beginning of the survey bringing the total number of questions that participants saw in Qualtrics to 39. Because Qualtrics had participants respond to 39 questions and all Qualtrics reporting is based upon 39 questions, going forward this study will use the number 39 when referencing the survey. This study planned and prepared for having church members complete the survey online at their convenience because the coronavirus had not subsided sufficiently to the degree that the surveys can be conducted in person in churches.

Population

The population for this study was adult Christians who attend an Evangelical church in Pennsylvania. Roberts (2010) notes that researchers must identify how many individuals are in the sample population, their location, and the reasons for including them in the research (pp. 149-150). The study had contemplated using a cluster sampling approach as each church that was selected in southcentral Pennsylvania is a cluster, but the IRB directed that the research be conducted on Evangelical churches in all of Pennsylvania. This researcher then randomly chose churches out of this population and contacted church leadership to find churches whose leaders were supportive of their church's participation in the quantitative survey.

This study focused on obtaining responses from church leadership, lay leaders, and general church members to get a sampling response from all groups. A random church population like this type was appropriate for responding to the 39 quantitative survey questions which answered research question one. The study surveyed a population of 390 church attending Pennsylvania Evangelical Christians and sampled both leaders and laypeople alike. This research does not want to over generalize the findings. It would be beneficial if further research is done to

pinpoint how pervasive this problem is in Evangelical churches across Pennsylvania, the rest of the United States, as well as throughout the western world.

Sampling Procedures

Machi and McEvoy (2016) describe how sampling applies to populations. An online sample size calculator showed that N is 390 for Evangelical churches in Pennsylvania. Roberts (2010) asks researchers to consider if the sample size and traits are properly described, if the sampling procedures are clearly stated, and if the sample is properly described (pp. 213-214). Creswell and Creswell (2018) assert that dissertations need to identify whether they are using a single stage or multi staged sample. The quantitative section of this research used a survey questionnaire that was conducted by Qualtrics sampled a group of 390 Evangelical Christians from Pennsylvania churches who were willing to have their adult church members participate in the online discipleship survey. Participants in the quantitative survey were given the opportunity to give their informed consent for the qualitative part of the study when they agreed to the quantitative survey. These churches were randomly selected, and this researcher obtained permission from the leadership to conduct the survey and chosen for participation. Participating churches were provided with the data as a benefit.

The survey questionnaire answered research question one which is "What aspects of the church leadership paradigm may have contributed to the shortage of disciple-making in Evangelical churches?" This researcher created an expert panel to ensure that the questions were easy to understand, not biased, and were valid for addressing research question one. The initial 36 questions before the IRB added three qualification questions are listed in Appendix F. These Questions were then converted to Likert Scale statements and the IRB added three qualification and consent questions so that the final survey had 39 Likert statements to respond to, which are

listed in Appendix G. Answering research question one quantitatively sets the stage for the IPA study which explored if there is a relationship between the church's approach to leadership and the problem of minimal church discipleship formation to answer the remaining four research questions.

Limitations of Generalization

Roberts (2010) observes that limitations are characteristics which are usually beyond a researcher's control and reduce the ability to generalize the study's findings. Although there may be great similarities in disciple-making in churches across America, and in the western world, this research will be limited to Pennsylvania adult Evangelical church members. It was beyond the scope of this study to survey and interview people from around the entire country, or in European or other western countries. Therefore, this study cannot overgeneralize its findings to too broad of a population because it will focus on Christian adults and consider a variety of Evangelical churches.

Ethical Considerations

Creswell and Creswell (2018) note that research plans need the approval of the institutional review board (IRB) before research can begin (p. 95). Permissions were obtained from church leadership and all participants signed the informed consent forms, without being pressured to do so. They also observe that participants' privacy should be respected and that they should not be exploited or deceived (pp. 98-100). These authors warn against plagiarism and falsifying data and maintain that communication should be conducted in a clear and straightforward language that is easily understood. Roberts (2010) shares that participants need to be given confidentiality, that the data collection process must be ethical, that permission must be obtained to record interviews, and that the data must be processed and analyzed in an ethical

fashion (pp. 36-39). She also exhorts writers not to have bias of any kind, including towards different groups of people, as well as towards the research data. Leedy and Ormrod (2013) want researchers to make the effort to make sure that their research does not harm any of the participants. These authors make it clear that there are many ethical guidelines that researchers need to follow when conducting research (pp. 99-108).

This study adhered to ethical standards by getting IRB approval, and formal permission from church leadership before any surveying was conducted. It was important that the leaders were interested in having their churches involved in this survey to have their members take part in the survey. Leaders who wanted their church to join in this survey initially contacted and requested that adult members participate in the survey. This study first contacted potential participants by having the church send emails to keep the contacts anonymous, and the informed consent forms were included at the beginning of the survey to make sure that only those who were willing to participate were doing so. No personal information was requested or obtained by email, and communication with participants used data security methods such as passwords to ensure that their information is kept private.

The quantitative survey questionnaires used Qualtrics as it is designed for secure online surveys. No records of the survey participants were retained as the survey was anonymous. The IRB's recommended data security practices will be followed to ensure participants' privacy will be protected. This researcher made efforts to provide maximum protection of the participants' information to keep them from being harmed. This researcher convened an expert panel to establish the face validity of the questions, and they added questions to fully answer Research Question one. This study the used Qualtrics to analyze the data.

Research Instrumentation

Roberts (2010) observes that the researcher needs to describe all of the instruments which were used to collect the data, including how the instrument was used and how it applied to the population and setting. The researcher also must include the instrument's reliability and validity, the type of response categories, and consistency (pp. 149-158). Creswell and Creswell (2018) agree with this (pp. 159-160). These authors recommend that quantitative researchers provide comprehensive information about the instrument they use in their study. Leedy and Ormrod (2013) encourage researchers to avoid instrumentation bias by having a balanced group of questions that do not steer the way in which participants respond (pp. 169-170).

The quantitative part of this study used a survey questionnaire as an instrument with 36 questions that were formulated to answer research question one. This instrument is listed in the Appendix E and did not measure any attributes of any of the participants. The 39 questions are designed to collect data to answer research question one. Answering the first research question established a foundation for the qualitative part of the study by clarifying the open-ended questions that participants were asked during the interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) portion of the study. This study convened an expert panel of six experts to consider the 39 questions which were developed and used a Likert Scale with choices that participants were able to choose from. These questions focused on different aspects of contemporary church leadership paradigms with respect to discipleship formation.

Validity

Roberts (2010) shares that researchers need to validate their studies (pp. 161-162). Creswell and Creswell (2018) maintain that effective research plans must consider how valid the instrument has been when it was used (pp. 160-161). Leedy and Ormrod (2013) want researchers

planning to use a mixed methods study to consider how quantitative and qualitative data are combined (pp. 311-319). The 39 survey questions were derived from information that the literature has shown. To establish face validity this researcher utilized an expert panel to consider these 36 questions. The expert panel consisted of six experts that included pastors, professors, and missionaries with extensive experience in the field of disciple-making, including some who had helped make disciples in challenging environments overseas. This expert panel established the face validity of the questions for answering research question one. This researcher focused on promptly developing this expert panel at the beginning of the research phase since it was a primary task which needs to be completed early so that the research could proceed to other steps.

Reliability

Creswell and Creswell (2018) note that the reliability of an instrument fosters an environment which helps with proper interpretation of the data (p. 155). Roberts (2010) explains that instruments need to be the same between interraters, as the instrument needs to be consistently reliable no matter which person is rating it (pp. 151-152). Leedy and Ormrod (2013) observe that reliability is the degree to which a measurement instrument keeps yielding the same results if the same item is repeatedly measured. After the expert panel established the face validity of the questions, this study also utilized Cronbach's Alpha to consider the correlation all split halves to establish the reliability of the data.

Research Procedures

The online questionnaire was conducted from a sample population of 390 adult Christian members of Pennsylvania Evangelical churches. Church leadership was formally contacted for permission before contacting any church members for the Qualtrics questionnaire. This study randomly found leaders of churches who believed in this research and contacted their members

and encouraged them to take part in this online survey. Informed consent forms were built into the Qualtrics questionnaire since people needed to give their consent to participate in the online survey. People who replied that they were willing to take part in the survey were sent the survey questionnaire with 39 questions. This survey sought to determine if there is a relationship between the contemporary church leadership and the lack of disciple making in Evangelical churches in the state of Pennsylvania.

The responses to the questions helped influence the open-ended questions that the qualitative part of the study used. This assessment was administered online as it was unable to be administered in a church due to the safety concerns with the coronavirus pandemic. This researcher used Qualtrics with a Likert Scale to measure the responses. This study tried to be fully prepared to receive and tabulate data once the survey questionnaires n completed. In preparing for the quantitative survey questionnaire to be administered, this researcher sought IRB approval for this study that investigated if the church leadership paradigm may have a relationship with the lack of church discipleship formation.

Data Analysis and Statistical Procedures

Roberts (2010) observes that researchers need to have tests and procedures for each research question. Creswell and Creswell (2018) share that researchers need to present information about the steps involved in analyzing the data (p. 162). Although this study utilized the 39 questions as an instrument to answer research question one in the quantitative part of this mixed methods study, the other four research questions were addressed in the qualitative portion of the research. Information was tabulated to determine how participants responded to the Likert scale survey questionnaire. The content of these responses was considered for directing the open-

ended questions that were asked during the interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA)

interviews to answer the remaining four research questions in the qualitative part of the study

Data Analysis

According to Leedy and Ormrod (2013), data analysis is primarily done deductively in

quantitative research by using statistical analysis. Creswell and Creswell (2018) maintain that

researchers need to report on the number of participants and how many people did or did not

return the survey. The quantitative research used the survey questionnaire to ask the 36 questions

and utilized Qualtrics to compile and analyze church member's responses to these questions.

This study also used Qualtrics to adapt the 36 questions to a Likert scale format like the Likert

scale that Styron (2004) created for keeping track of his research, which is presented in figure 1.

Figure 1.

	Questions			Strongly Agree	Agree	Mildly Agree	Mildly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1									
2									
3									
4									
5									
6									
7									
8									
9									
10									

The quantitative section presented the 39 Likert scale statements which are listed in the appendix to investigate and answer research question one and used the information as a stepping-stone to help answer the other four research questions on in the qualitative portion of the study. A small sample of nine participants who agreed to the IPA study on the informed consent forms were selected for the IPA part of the study, which answered the four remaining research questions. This researcher tried to have a combination of pastors, lay leaders, and lay people as IPA participants. One lay leader was willing to take part in the interviews but ultimately decided that the pastor was better suited to answer questions about disciple-making. Therefore, pastors were the only ones who participated in the interviews.

Statistical Procedures

Creswell and Creswell (2018) observe that the researcher needs to describe their procedure in detail. The statistics from the 39 questions are listed in Qualtrics and were analyzed to determine how the responses affect the four sub-headings of these questions which are a busy society, sharing the workload, leadership paradigm, and leadership style. The results of the 39 questions that answer research question one and are designed to act as a catalyst towards the qualitative portion of the IPA study, and were prepared in a descriptive fashion that laid the foundation for the IPA interviews. Although research questions two through five were answered in the qualitative section, these Likert scale answers provided foundational information for the IPA interviewed, and this research utilized Qualtrics to help tabulate and analyze the data. Qualtrics fostered pretesting and allowed the data to be downloaded directly to Excel and SPSS and complies with data security and privacy regulations. All these characteristics are essential to the reliability of statistical procedures throughout the data analysis process. Data security and compliance is especially important to this researcher as he has received extensive training on

complying with privacy and data security regulations during his many years working with large

financial institutions, which train everyone to comply with all data security and privacy

regulations. The four remaining research questions were addressed during the interpretative

phenomenological analysis portion of the study.

Qualitative Research Methodology

The qualitative phenomenological part of this mixed methods study came after the

quantitative portion of the research had been completed as church members were already given

the option to participate in the IPA part of the study on the informed consent forms they had

already signed. Creswell (2015) shares that phenomenology is exploring how different people

experience the same circumstances. Roberts (2010) describes this as learning about people's

perspectives of their experiences. Creswell and Creswell (2018) define phenomenology as a

research design where the researcher learns how participants have experienced a phenomenon

and writes about the participant's observations (p. 14).

The qualitative section of this research utilized interpretative phenomenological analysis

(IPA). Smith, Flowers, and Larkin (2012) define IPA as a qualitative approach which

investigates the way in which people make sense of their significant life experiences (pp. 1-4).

They also noted that participants need to be purposefully chosen from a homogeneous sample

and around six participants were recommended for IPA, but the study ended up interviewing

nine. In addition, these authors assert that phenomenological studies should not harm the

participant and that participants should be given the opportunity to review any of the sensitive

data before it is published.

This study followed the advice of Smith, Flowers, and Larkin (2012) in selecting a few

participants from the various churches and focused on interviewing church leadership and lay

leaders who gave their informed consent to answer research questions two through five in the qualitative part of the research. The qualitative IPA approach conducted nine in-depth interviews to deeply explore what the relationship is between church leadership and the shortage of disciple making in Evangelical churches. This IPA research answered research questions two through five and used pseudonyms to protect participants privacy and used passwords to ensure that participants were not harmed. Overall, this researcher followed the Bible's exhortation "And as you wish that others would do to you, do so to them," (Luke 6:31). Applying the golden rule to treating other people, as well as following the qualitative guidelines on how to treat participants, strengthened this study.

Setting

The setting for the qualitative portion of this study was the Evangelical churches that the participants are members of. Although participants may have been leaders or members of the church for many years, the coronavirus shutdown may have caused the church to temporarily suspend services, minimize meetings, and, greatly disrupt the church's environment. This researcher had originally contemplated driving to meet the participants at their churches to conduct the qualitative part in person. However, COVID-19 forced the IPA interviews to be conducted by video call. Although this may create limitations, this researcher recorded the interviews and tried to work around any limitations that he encountered.

Regardless of the format, the interviews were scheduled in advance after the participants had signed the informed consent forms during the online discipleship survey. The qualitative research was arranged so that the participants could select interview times and locations which were best suited for them. Appendix J includes the open-ended IPA questions for the phenomenological interviews which were modified after the quantitative research provided more

information about these matters. This researcher wanted to be flexible in case that conditions changed, and it becomes feasible to safely conduct in person interviews, but the ecological environment of the virus did not improve enough to fully permit it. The variety of church settings provided insight into the different discipleship environments within adult members of Pennsylvania Evangelical churches.

Participants

Creswell and Creswell (2018) maintain that phenomenological researchers need to purposefully select participants. Roberts (2010) has a sample participant letter and questionnaire for qualitative studies. These authors convey that it is important that participants in the qualitative interviews be asked open ended questions so they can fully express their experiences, and that researchers need to record and take detailed notes to gain an optimum understanding of what the participants' perspectives are. This researcher scheduled interviews with the participants after the informed consent forms for the recorded interviews were signed.

This research selected a sample from the group of people who participated in the quantitative survey that provided their informed consent for the IPA part of the study, as they were able to be part of the IPA sampling. Because the quantitative surveys were completed first in this study, this was a purposive homogeneous sample that seeks to have pastors and lay leaders as participants for the IPA portion of the study. Qualitative participants were asked open-ended questions that are exploratory in nature, as the questions were designed to elicit very detailed responses. The IPA interviews were recorded to capture all of the responses. After the interviews were over, this researcher watched the videos and went through the painstaking process of transcribing the notes from Qualtrics. This was conducted in order to try to get the

best possible understanding of everything that the participants communicated in order to best answer the research questions.

Role of the Researcher

Roberts (2010) shares that researchers need to go into the field to collect data as they interview participants in a qualitative phenomenological study because researchers explore people's perspectives and worldviews on issues (Roberts, p. 143). Creswell and Creswell (2018) observe that phenomenological researchers describe the essence of a situation and analyze data that participants have given them. Smith, Flowers, and Larkin (2012) believe that IPA researchers are involved in double hermeneutics because they need to make sense of the participant's interpretation of their experiences (p. 3). This researcher recognizes the need to be part of the process in this phenomenological study since the research utilized open-ended questions that are designed to probe what people believe. Priority was given to follow the practices of the researcher that these sources recommend while conducting interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA). Although being embedded in the research enhances the data collection process, efforts will be made so that being involved in the data collection did not detract from it in other ways. This researcher believes that the interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) part of this mixed methods study provided a great deal of information on the sources of the problem.

Ethical Considerations

Creswell and Creswell (2018) remind researchers that they should be careful how they store data, to avoid collecting harmful information, submit to their industry's code of ethics and apply to the IRB (pp. 97-99). Roberts (2010) gives guidelines to eliminate bias in scholarly writing and asks researchers to obtain informed consent before doing any interviewing. All the

ethical standards in the quantitative section of this mixed methods study were applied to the

qualitative research, although some aspects were different. This is because qualitative

phenomenology did not use online surveys and had a much closer involvement, although it was

conducted with far fewer people than the quantitative segment of the study. However, the general

ethical guidelines that have been previously stated under the quantitative ethical considerations

section still applied to the extended phenomenological interviews. Special attention was given to

the privacy of IPA participants as they were shown the information before it was published to

ensure that they were not harmed in this process. Every participant was spoken to individually to

keep confidentiality, and to protect the privacy of their personal information. This study adhered

to the ethical requirements of IPA research that Smith, Flowers, and Larkin (2012) maintain that

researchers need to follow.

Data Collection Methods and Instruments

Leedy and Ormrod (2013) note that qualitative research often utilizes multiple data

collection methods (p. 258). The information that was collected from the quantitative survey

questionnaire portion of this mixed methods format was utilized to enhance the open-ended

questions in the qualitative portion of this study. This data was taken from the responses of

individual Christians to the 39 survey questions that considered if the contemporary leadership

paradigm in Evangelical churches in Pennsylvania impacts the status of discipleship formation in

these churches. Once the quantitative part of this study was completed, this researcher selected

nine participants who gave their informed consent for taking part in the qualitative part of the

study. This researcher sought to conduct IPA interviews and this study attempted to interview a

diverse group of different racial, sexual and age demographic traits. The study was successful in

getting participants from different demographic backgrounds to take part in the phenomenological interviews.

Collection Methods

According to Creswell (2015) qualitative data collection includes participants, data collection, a phenomenon, and a variable (p. 61). Creswell and Creswell (2018) share that qualitative data collection methods include the collection of information via structured or semi-structured interviews and observations, the study's boundaries, documents and materials, as well as the mode that is chosen for recording the data. Leedy and Ormrod (2013) note that qualitative researchers almost always see an incomplete picture of the phenomenon being considered because it is extremely rare for a researcher to be able to look at all the data at one time. This study collected data from the 39 quantitative questions that were utilized in the quantitative interview to influence the questions being asked during the IPA interviews.

Using multiple sources fits with Leedy and Ormrod's (2013) assertion that qualitative studies often use more than one source (p. 258). The results of the quantitative instrument were also used to select participants. These individuals had already signed the consent agreement for taking part in the IPA study. This research also selected a sample to participate in the IPA study from leadership and laypeople alike to try to get an effective sampling of where the church was at in the area of disciple-making.

Instruments and Protocols

The interpretative phenomenological analysis part of the research had nine participants. The IPA interview questions were formulated based upon material that the literature review uncovered about any potential relationship between the way in which contemporary American Evangelical churches are relates to the lack of disciple making in Evangelical churches.

Interviews. The qualitative part of this mixed methods study utilized IPA, which is exploratory and descriptive in nature and it was recorded. Zoom meetings were primarily used since the pandemic prevented most interviews from being done in person. This researcher convened an expert panel who considered the open-ended questions and made recommendations to enhance their validity before the study began. Smith, Flowers, and Larkin (2012) note that phenomenological questions must be adaptable to the IPA interviews as they are very likely to change. (p. 58).

Observations. Interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) guided this researcher to make observations throughout the qualitative interview process. These observations included, but were not limited to, the process of getting permission, signed consent forms, the development of the open-ended questions from the literature review and through the quantitative survey format until they are used for the interviews. In addition, observations were also made during the IPA interviews, on comments that have been recorded, and after these exploratory interviews are over and notes are taken, and the data is being coded and analyzed. The researcher paid close attention to the interviews to any implications, non-verbal communications, and clues to their worldviews relating to this problem.

Procedures

The Institutional Review Board's (IRB's) approval was received and no work began until the IRB approved this study. IPA participants signed their qualitative informed consent forms before they were able to participate in the survey questionnaire part of the study. Conducting the IPA interviews began by arranging a convenient time for participants to answer a group of open-ended IPA questions. These questions investigated if the contemporary church leadership paradigm contributed to the shortage of discipleship formation in Pennsylvania Evangelical

churches. Research questions two through five were answered during this qualitative portion of the study. These questions were addressed during the exploratory method of interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) that included open-ended questions that incorporated feedback from response to the quantitative survey questionnaire.

This researcher formulated preliminary open-ended questions which were among the questions asked during the IPA interviews which are listed in Appendix J. These interviews were recorded, and confidentiality of the data was protected. This researcher ensured confidentiality by using pseudonyms for participants, not emailing private information, and applying data security and privacy measures. The initial IPA questions were preliminary in nature since Smith, Flowers, and Larkin recommend that IPA researchers be very flexible in conducting IPA interviews. This researcher applied the following advice of Smith, Flowers, and Larkin (2012) as they describe the way in which IPA questions are formulated and asked process:

> The plan for IPA interviews is an attempt to come at the research question sideways. Often, research questions are pitched at the abstract level and so it is not usually helpful or effective to ask them directly of the participant. Instead…the interview (is) an event which facilitates the discussion of relevant topics, and allow the research question to be answered subsequently, via analysis. IPA researchers usually use an interview schedule to help them with this. A schedule is a way of preparing for the likely content of an interview. The researcher typically sets out the questions as she would like to ask them (in an ideal world)…These things can and do change once an interview is underway, but the preparation of a schedule allows the researcher to set a loose agenda. If one has prepared an interview schedule (with questions) it is important to note that, while this will shape the interview, it will not guarantee its content. (p. 58)

Data Analysis

Creswell (2015) shares that data is coded in qualitative studies, and that sometimes this includes the identification of qualitative themes or chronological sequences. The qualitative data was analyzed in a descriptive fashion that did not attribute a numeric value like quantitative research does. Smith, Flowers, and Larkin (2012) describe data analysis in detail in their

excellent resource for interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) studies (pp. 79-99). They maintain that there is no right or wrong way to conduct this type of data analysis and encourage IPA researchers to be creative. These authors recommend that researchers read and study the data, initially code the data, look for emergent themes, find connections between these themes, move to the case of the next person who was interviewed, and then look for relationship patterns between cases.

This researcher had multiple ways of checking that each of the themes have been accurately portrayed. First, he convened an expert panel before the study began to help review the questions that were developed for the second half of the quantitative survey and the IPA open-ended interviews. This researcher also used Nvivo to look for themes in the data and listened to the guidance and direction that his dissertation supervisor, as it was essential that this study be valid, reliable, and trustworthy. Nvivo was very helpful in providing codes and themes that shed further light on what the participants were communicating.

Video recordings were made of the interviews to ensure that this researcher properly understood what each of the participants was communicating. The interviews then needed to be transcribed and some of these Qualtrics video recordings provided written transcripts of the data while others did not. Regardless of whether there was a Qualtrics transcript or not it took a great deal of effort to transcribe the interviews into written transcripts that Nvivo could analyze The data was coded in Nvivo after the interviews, and these were compared with the video information to obtain an accurate initial record of each interview. Since Smith, Flowers, and Larkin (2102) recommend that IPA studies be innovative, this researcher adjusted the questions based upon the responses that each of the participants provide. As mentioned before, an expert panel and Nvivo, along with coordinating with his dissertation supervisor helped keep the

inferences reliable, valid, and trustworthy. Although there was an initial group of questions which were derived from the literature review, these questions were far from being set in stone. This is because interpretative phenomenological analysis needs significant flexibility to adjust to responses that the participants share, as Smith, Flowers, and Larkin (2012) recommend. Data was organized according to each category and adjusted according to the direction of the responses to the phenomenon that is being explored.

Analysis Methods

After the quantitative portion of the study was completed, information was reviewed from the 39 Likert scale statements. Once the responses to these 39 survey statements had been recorded, coded, and descriptively analyzed, the open-ended questions were modified and adjusted to prepare for the detailed IPA interviews. These questions drilled down to try to obtain a clearer understanding by exploring the root causes of the problem. This researcher listened carefully while recording the interviews. After each interview was completed, this researcher discovered that Qualtrics had made transcripts of some of the interviews. However, these transcripts had so much extraneous data that it did not make much difference whether or not there was a Qualtrics transcript. It required a similar amount of work to start a new transcript from scratch as it did to edit and prepare the Qualtrics data into presentable transcripts of each interview.

The completed transcripts were then imputed into Nvivo to look for themes. Writing notes, which included non-verbal information as well as verbal content that from each interview were also analyzed. All of this provided a detailed transcript of each of the interviews. This data was initially coded, and while the data was being organized, this researcher looked for emergent themes in the data. As the phenomenological data was being analyzed in an interpretative

fashion, this research used an open form of coding. This research used Nvivo to code and organize the data.

Smith, Flowers, and Larkin (2012) observe that novice IPA researchers tend to overlook deeper levels of understanding by being too descriptive (pp. 65-66). They imply that, to a degree, IPA researchers should throw caution into the wind and try to catch glimpses of a person's heart felt beliefs instead of overly focusing on exterior details. After reflecting upon each interview, this researcher tried digging deeper to gain more understanding of the underlying subtleties of what each person is trying to communicate. This researcher summarized the findings of the study after this process was completed. This study hoped to shine as much light as possible on how the pattern of contemporary church leadership might contribute to the shortage of disciple making in churches problem. This may benefit future researchers by providing a clearer view of some of the reasons for the problem, which can enable them to make better solutions. Hopefully, this data can lead to resolving the problem of making too few disciples. Using an interpretative qualitative method allowed this researcher to drill down, analyze, and identify what are the underlying reasons for the problem.

Trustworthiness

Roberts (2010) observes that researchers describe validity in qualitative research as trustworthiness (p. 161). She maintains that studies need to establish credibility, and that studies attain credibility by having two or more inter-raters look at the same data and can find the same results. Creswell and Creswell (2018) note that qualitative validity necessitates that researchers need to check the data for accuracy while qualitative reliability signifies that the methods which the researcher utilized can be shown to be consistent on different studies or if followed by other researchers (p. 201).

Credibility

According to Creswell and Creswell (2018) credibility is widely discussed as a factor in the validity of qualitative research (p. 201). Nvivo was used to further enhance credibility on ongoing interaction during the study with the disciple-making literature. This was done by searching for themes in the transcripts to provide credibility for the study. Many sources assert that Christians often follow the wrong leadership paradigm. Besides these sources showing that the problem is deep seated, this researcher worked to provide a realistic assessment of the research, since credibility is essential. To accomplish that, this researcher used an expert panel and pilot test, and had good communication with his dissertation supervisor and team.

Dependability

Dependability is related to reliability. Creswell and Creswell (2018) define reliability as being when "the researcher's approach is consistent across different researchers and different projects," (p. 201). After reflecting on the problem of the church not making disciples, this researcher noticed that he has tendencies to be biased against the status quo of American Christianity. Therefore, this researcher sought to ensure that his belief did not color the findings, as it was essential to make this research topic dependable. It is his aspiration that he was able to develop the type of study that provides guidance like a road map that other researchers can use to replicate this study, and even go further with it, as this problem needs significant attention. Other researchers will be able to replicate this study by reviewing the literature and using the quantitative surveys and qualitative IPA mixed methods approach.

Confirmability

An audit trail has been established so that this research may be replicated as desired by future researchers. To this end, this researcher is making the data available to any other

researchers who would like to review it. The research offers collaboration of findings and cooperation in the development of further research and plan of action to share this critical topic are essential.

Transferability

Smith, Flowers, and Larkin (2012) describe transferability in IPA studies as the ability of readers to develop links between the analysis, the claims the literature has made, and their own experiences (p. 51). As mentioned before, identifying if the church leadership paradigm is related to this problem can provide an assist for future researchers developing new and improved methods of reducing the lack of discipleship problem. This is because some of the causes may be related to the leadership paradigm and will have been addressed. This researcher hopes that this study can be an encouragement to other Christian leaders who desire to build the kingdom of God. He hopes others can take further steps towards bringing the church back to following Christ's command to make disciples of all nations. Copeland (2012) observes that Christianity is still waiting for the priesthood of all believers that Luther wanted during the Reformation. Hirsch and Catchim (2012) take the impetus for Reformation further by chronicling that the church has had the incorrect leadership paradigm for centuries. These are some of the reasons of the need for a Reformation. Although it may require a little tweaking to adapt to different situations, this study can be transferred to other contexts, possibly to other types of churches and areas besides Pennsylvania Evangelical adult church members.

Chapter Summary

The research methodology and design laid a foundation for this mixed methods research. The study began with an online discipleship survey that consisted of 39 questions in Likert Scale format. After 390 respondents anonymously participated in the quantitative survey the

methodology then shifted to phenomenological interviews. These interviews were recorded and utilized Microsoft Teams and used interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA). The combination of quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews used a mixed methods approach to provide a comprehensive investigation of the research questions.

CHAPTER FOUR:

ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS
Overview

This study investigated if the way that Evangelical churches are led has contributed to the

lack of discipleship formation. The findings from this mixed methods study are subdivided

between the quantitative section and the qualitative section. RQ 1 was answered quantitatively

through the survey questionnaire while RQ 2-5 were answered qualitatively by interpretative

phenomenological analysis (IPA). The findings are listed after the following research questions.

Research Questions

RQ1. What aspects of the church leadership paradigm may have contributed to the
shortage of disciple-making in Evangelical churches?

RQ2. Can restoring the teaching and application of the priesthood of all believers help
disciple making?

RQ3. To what degree, if any, has not following the five-fold team leadership that the
Bible prescribes in Ephesians 4:11 exacerbated this problem?

RQ4. To what degree, if any, have cultural values such as materialism and pride
contributed to the lack of focus on making disciples?

RQ5. Why does the Evangelical church continue pursuing familiar paths that have not
been making many disciples?

Chapter four covers the compilation protocol and measures this researcher utilized for

collecting and reporting the quantitative data with Qualtrics and the qualitative data through

Microsoft Teams interview transcripts. This chapter also analyzes the research findings to

determine what has been found out. After addressing the mixed method manner in which the data

was obtained, the chapter evaluates using both quantitative and qualitative approaches to

determine this information. The compilation protocol is as follows.

Compilation Protocol and Measures

This research utilized an explanatory sequential design that utilized both quantitative and qualitative approaches. The quantitative surveys came first, and the qualitative section followed with interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) to dig deeper into the quantitative responses. The study focused on adult members of Pennsylvania Evangelical churches who were initially sent a link to participate in an anonymous quantitative online discipleship survey. The second part of the study was interviewing a group of respondents who chose to participate in the IPA interviews. The questions were based upon information from the literature review, and an expert panel was convened after that to further refine the questions. The IRB added three extra questions consent and qualification of being an adult Pennsylvania Evangelical church member to increase the number of questions to 39. These three extra questions changed the sequence of the 36 questions to Q4 to Q39 as the three qualification questions came first in the survey.

The survey utilized a Likert Scale and church leaders were mailed letters that invited them to have their congregation participate in the study. These invitation letters were first sent in early October 2020. It was challenging doing research during the Covid-19 pandemic as coronavirus and the accompanying regulations created issues for many of the churches that were being contacted. Pennsylvania was also a top battleground state in the 2020 election and people had been asked to participate in electoral surveys so much that most people were burned out on surveys. Despite these challenges the Lord made a way for this researcher to overcome the difficulties. Overall, the pandemic and lockdowns created such a disruption to the church that some Christian leaders seemed to be more receptive towards discussing discipleship than they might have otherwise been.

If church leadership chose to participate in the study, leaders were encouraged to send the link to the survey to their adult church members, who in turn could anonymously respond to the survey and the data was recorded by Qualtrics. Initial survey responses began arriving in mid-October 2020 after the first church sent in their approval form. The pandemic, ensuing lockdowns, and regulations caused churches to be very busy. This situation created an environment in which it took a substantial amount of effort to obtain survey responses. Despite these challenges the survey was eventually completed on February 26, 2021.

Demographic and Sample Data

This research was conducted anonymously with no questions pertaining to demographic questions like race, sex, or national origin. The survey was anonymous and did not indicate who the respondent was. The research population was adult members of Pennsylvania Evangelical churches as participants were asked to confirm if they were 18 or older. If respondents did not answer that they were 18 or older Qualtrics routed them to the end of the survey so they were not able to answer any of the questions. A similar principle applied to the question if they were members of an Evangelical church in Pennsylvania. If participants did not answer yes to being a Pennsylvania Evangelical church member they were also exited from the survey.

Approximately 1,500 Pennsylvania Evangelical church leaders were sent letters to participate in the study. These letters were followed up by phone calls and emails. The combination of these approaches and emails led to about 32 churches taking part in the study. The reason for using "about" is that a number of pastors said that they were willing to take the survey themselves, but nobody else in the church would participate while other pastors mentioned that they would only have a few staff or leaders take the survey. However, the majority of pastors said they forwarded it to adult members for them to participate. It was an

arduous process to obtain a sufficient number of completed responses to establish validity which probably would have been easier if only a few churches were providing a large quantity of participants each, but this research was conducted during the COVID-19 Pandemic and the 2020 election season. These issues made it a challenging time in which to complete the study.

This writer was thankful for any responses that could be obtained since so many people in Pennsylvania were burned out on surveys due to the Presidential election of 2020, and also preoccupied with problems that arose from the pandemic Although it took a great deal of work to gradually conduct a survey this way, it was apparent that obtaining one or more responses from a church would help to eventually lead to the completion of the survey. One pastor described the type of approach where one or a few people responded from a church as a "shotgun approach" for surveying adult church members of Evangelical churches in Pennsylvania. He said that he had done surveying as his secular profession for more than twenty years and asserted that having the survey scattered like buckshot throughout Evangelical churches statewide would result in a more accurate sampling than getting large numbers of responses from a few churches.

Quantitative Data Analysis and Findings

Research Question 1 Findings

RQ1 askes "What aspects of the church leadership paradigm may have contributed to the shortage of disciple-making in Evangelical churches?" To answer that question this study utilized a 36-question online discipleship survey to answer RQ1. Participants utilized a Likert scale to respond to the 36 survey statements which is available in Appendix F along with the raw data for each survey question response. Qualtrics gave the choice of obtaining the data in several different formats including .csv, Word, .pdf, and PowerPoint. This researcher found that .csv, Word, .pdf, and PowerPoint were all helpful, and created reports in each of these formats.

Viewing the data in a variety of formats provided different perspectives on the information. Appendix H includes samples of each of the types of data formats.

The data was exported from Qualtrics into a .csv file, then imported into an Excel spreadsheet and the responses were then coded numerically into ordinal numbers 1 through 5. The number 1 corresponded with a strongly disagree, 2 with disagree, 3 with neither agree nor disagree, 4 corresponded with agree, and 5 was strongly agree. There were 281 participants that answered almost all of the questions. The "non-responses" do not appear to be random as most respondents decided to quit the survey near the end. As a result, surveys in which respondents answered less than 86% of the questions were disqualified from analysis.

Participants who did not answer that they were 18 years or older, or that they were a member of an Evangelical church in Pennsylvania, were also eliminated from data analysis. In cases where respondents answered more than 86% but less than 100% of the questions, item medians were substituted for missing data. This occurred in eight surveys. In addition, questions 22, 33, 36, and 38 were reverse coded by having 1 represent "strongly agree" through 5 which represented "strongly disagree." For these questions, the phrasing of the questions was asked in a negative fashion. The data was transferred to IBM SPSS Statistics version 23 to conduct analysis. Three introductory questions of consent and participation screening made the final survey 39 questions in length. Including these additional questions made the survey questions range from 4 to 39 in Qualtrics. All of the questions fit into one of the seven groups that were used as scales, except for question 33 which did not. The Leadership Gap scales had only two questions, which caused it to have a low Cronbach's alpha. Despite this issue, the Leadership Gap did function as a scales because they were negative questions.

The questions were grouped together and were expected to consider different aspects of the same underlying areas to answer different aspects of RQ1. Principle components analysis (PCA) was conducted using Promax rotation on the groups of questions listed in each of the scales. This rotation was not very important because all of the scales stayed the same except for the Team Leadership scales. Analysis was conducted to determine Cronbach's alpha for each of the groups. If questions did not have a loadings greater than .5, the question was removed from that scale. Reliability analysis was also essential for a question to be included in the group. Every group except for the Team Leadership group was able to be loaded onto a single component. Although the Team Leadership group was in two different components it was appropriate to keep them as a single group because the highest Cronbach's alpha was derived from them being together.

The groups of questions were organized into scales to investigate if there was a relationship between the Evangelical church leadership paradigm and how churches are able to make disciples. Seven scales were developed which are the leadership direction and vision of disciple-making, church leaders, team leadership, members, senior pastor, making disciples, and the leadership gap scale. As noted, there are 36 survey questions, and the numbers listed above correspond with the survey questions. However, the numbers that have been exported from Qualtrics added three to each of the numbers to make the questions range from Q4 to Q39, which are listed in Appendix G. The scales used the Qualtrics numbering system and are broken down as follows:

1. Leadership Direction and Vision of Disciple-Making consists of questions 4, 5, 31, and 35.

2. Church Leaders scales includes questions 7, 8, 9, 14, and 15.

3. Members scales consists of questions 6, 11, 12, 18, and 19.

4. Senior Pastor scales includes questions 10, 13, and 37.

5. Making Disciples scales features questions 16, 17, 32, and 39.

6. Ephesians 4:11Team Leadership scales features questions 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, and 30.

7. Leadership Gap scales consists of questions 36 and 38.

The following is Table 1, which is a description of the various scales with Cronbach's alpha, means, standard deviation, and component matrix. The Leadership Direction and Vision of Disciple-Making scales has a Cronbach's alpha of .774, a mean of 4.10, and a standard deviation of .753. This is a detailed breakdown of these scales with questions using Qualtrics numbering of Q4 to Q39:

Table 1
LEADERSHIP DIRECTION AND VISION OF DISCIPLE-MAKING SCALES

Questions follow Qualtrics numbering	Mean	Standard Deviation	N	Component Matrix
Q4 Our church has a clear vision for making disciples	4.02	1.005	281	.808
Q5 Our church prioritizes disciple making every week	3.93	1.007	281	.860
Q31 Leaders clearly communicate the Great Commission	3.92	1.081	281	.754
Q35 When members receive Jesus as savior, they are told to grow in Him as their Lord.	4.54	.783	281	.659

The Church Leaders scales is Table 2 which has five items with a Cronbach's alpha of

.855, a mean of 3.48, a standard deviation of .884 and has the following traits:

Table 2
CHURCH LEADERS SCALES

Questions follow Qualtrics numbering	Mean	Standard Deviation	N	Component Matrix
Q7 Church leaders disciple others on a weekly basis	3.75	1.113	281	.822
Q8 Church Leaders are discipled by others weekly	3.45	1.020	281	.767
Q9 Leadership prioritizes Disciple-Making activities	3.84	1.073	281	.805
Q14 The Leadership Team has plenty of time to take care of Disciple-Making	3.30	1.103	281	.731
Q15 Leadership has an effective plan for making Disciples	3.09	1.239	281	.849

The Members scales has seven questions with a Cronbach's Alpha of .824, a mean of 3.09, a standard deviation of .872 as Table 3 has the following characteristics.

Table 3
MEMBERS SCALES

Questions follow Qualtrics numbering	Mean	Standard Deviation	N	Component Matrix
Q6 Our members devote at least one hour a week to grow as disciples	3.57	1.067	281	.660
Q11 Members spend enough time discipling others and being discipled	2.90	1.099	281	.809
Q12 The time and energy Members devote to Disciple-Making is sufficient for spiritual maturity	3.02	1.081	281	.813
Q18 All Members share the workload with the pastor and leadership	2.80	1.248	281	.654
Q19 Many Members join in the work of Disciple-Making	3.18	1.188	281	.822

The Senior Pastor Scales is Table 4 which has three items with a Cronbach's Alpha of .766, a mean of 3.70 and a standard deviation of .930. The detail of this scales is as follows.

Table 4
SENIOR PASTOR SCALES

Questions follow Qualtrics numbering	Mean	Standard Deviation	N	Component Matrix
Q10 The Senior Pastor consistently prioritizes Disciple-Making in ways members relate to	4.00	1.079	281	.892
Q13 The pastor has enough time and energy to take care of the church's Disciple-Making	3.36	1.268	281	.732
Q37 Our Pastor & Leadership Team's ministry style enhances Disciple-Making	3.92	1.081	281	.870

The Disciple-Making Scales has four items, a Cronbach's Alpha of .805, a mean of 2.97,

a standard deviation of .960 and information is in Table 5 as follows:

Table 5
DISCIPLE-MAKING SCALES

Questions follow Qualtrics numbering	Mean	Standard Deviation	N	Component Matrix
Q16 Much of our church's focus is on making disciples	3.20	1.237	281	.842
Q17 Our church has many disciple-makers	2.94	1.198	281	.806
Q32 Disciple-Making is top priority	2.97	1.137	281	.701
Q36 There is a gap between what is said about Discipleship and what takes place in our church	2.75	1.259	281	.781

The Team Leaders/Ephesians 4:11 scale is Table 6 and has eight items with a Cronbach's

Alpha of .801, a mean of .337 and a standard deviation of .774. It is depicted in Table 6 which is

as follows:

Table 6
TEAM LEADERS/EPHESIANS 4:11 SCALES

Questions follow Qualtrics numbering	Mean	Standard Deviation	N	Component Matrix
Q23 Besides Pastors other types of leaders help our church grow in discipleship	3.98	.928	281	.472
Q24 Our church has Evangelists on the Leadership Team	2.98	1.277	281	.705
Q25 Evangelists teach and show us how Disciples share their faith	344	1.212	281	.629
Q26 Our Church regularly hears Prophetic messages	3.86	1.273	281	.523
Q27 Prophets help balance truth and justice with Pastoral tendencies towards love and mercy	3.73	1.108	281	.624
Q28 Our church has been learning about the entrepreneurial roles of Apostles	2.78	1.223	281	.737
Q29 Apostles are essential to our church's leadership	3.28	1.240	281	.684
Q30 Apostles, Prophets, and Evangelists are on the ministry team	2.90	1.274	281	.764

The Leadership Gap scales has two items with a Cronbach's Alpha of .642, a mean of 2.67, a reverse mean of 3.33, and a standard deviation of 1.025. Detailed information on this scales is Table 7, which is as follows:

Table 7
LEADERSHIP GAP SCALES

Questions follow Qualtrics numbering	Mean	Standard Deviation	N	Component Matrix
Q36R There is a gap between what is said about discipleship and what takes place in our church	2.75	1.259	281	.859
Q38R Leadership's approach minimizes Disciple-making	3.90	1.126	281	.859

In addition to the breakdowns of each of the scales that shows Cronbach's alpha, mean, and other measures by questions, statistical analysis in SPSS provided a table of descriptive statistics which considers a Bootstrap view of the different BCa 95% Confidence Levels in the data of each of the scales. A look at this in Table 8 as follows reveals that the Leadership's Direction and Vision for Disciple-Making Scales has a minimum BCa 95% Confidence Level in the data that is above 4.0196. This is a much higher level of support for this group of questions than most of the groups of questions in the other scales. In other words, this scale reveals that survey participants responded with an enthusiastic level of support that leaders do a positive job conveying their vision about how the church plans on making disciples. Yet the level of support for some other scales is lower in a way that is statistically significant. This can be seen in the Descriptive Statistics table 8 which follows. Table 9 is the Correlations table and is another table that merits consideration and appears after Table 8 which is the Descriptive Statistics table.

Table 8
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

Descriptive Statistics

		Statistic	Bootstrap[a]		BCa 95% Confidence Interval	
			Bias	Std. Error	Lower	Upper
LDV: Vision that Prioritizes Discipleship	N	281	0	0	.	.
	Minimum	1.50				
	Maximum	5.00				
	Mean	4.1050	-.0006	.0441	4.0196	4.1895
	Std. Deviation	.75274	-.00200	.03499	.68574	.81505
MemSup: Energetic Support and Participation in Discipleship	N	281	0	0	.	.
	Minimum	1.00				
	Maximum	5.00				
	Mean	3.0940	-.0009	.0514	2.9943	3.1915
	Std. Deviation	.87178	-.00276	.03019	.81524	.92258
SPast: Pastoral Prioritization of Discipleship	N	281	0	0	.	.
	Minimum	1.00				
	Maximum	5.00				
	Mean	3.7046	-.0007	.0545	3.5979	3.8078
	Std. Deviation	.92975	-.00279	.03796	.85762	.99538
ChLds: Church Leaders' Prioritization of Discipleship	N	281	0	0	.	.
	Minimum	1.00				
	Maximum	5.00				
	Mean	3.4840	-.0005	.0520	3.3829	3.5836
	Std. Deviation	.88418	-.00254	.03518	.81988	.94501
DisMk: Actual Prioritization of Discipleship	N	281	0	0	.	.
	Minimum	1.00				
	Maximum	5.00				
	Mean	2.9653	-.0008	.0565	2.8541	3.0738
	Std. Deviation	.95986	-.00268	.03339	.89651	1.01808
TmLd: Emphasis of Eph. 4:11 Team Model	N	281	0	0	.	.
	Minimum	1.13				
	Maximum	5.00				
	Mean	3.3688	-.0006	.0460	3.2785	3.4573
	Std. Deviation	.77356	-.00182	.03003	.71721	.82781
LdGap: Gap that Minimizes Discipleship	N	281	0	0	.	.
	Minimum	1.00				
	Maximum	5.00				
	Mean	2.6726	.0004	.0608	2.5552	2.7918
	Std. Deviation	1.02536	-.00310	.03436	.96086	1.08284
Valid N (listwise)	N	281	0	0	.	.

a. Unless otherwise noted, bootstrap results are based on 10000 bootstrap samples

Table 9
CORRELATIONS

Correlations		LDV: Vision that Prioritizes Discipleship	MemSup: Energetic Support and Participation in Discipleship	SPast: Pastoral Prioritization of Discipleship	ChLds: Church Leaders' Prioritization of Discipleship	DisMk: Actual Prioritization of Discipleship	TmLd: Emphasis of Eph. 4:11 Team Model	LdGap: Gap that Minimizes Discipleship
LDV: Vision that Prioritizes Discipleship	Pearson Correlation	1	.593	.710	.694	.695	.455	-.612
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	281	281	281	281	281	281	281
MemSup: Energetic Support and Participation in Discipleship	Pearson Correlation	.593	1	.664	.740	.799	.487	-.589
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	281	281	281	281	281	281	281
SPast: Pastoral Prioritization of Discipleship	Pearson Correlation	.710	.664	1	.789	.735	.509	-.643
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	281	281	281	281	281	281	281
ChLds: Church Leaders' Prioritization of Discipleship	Pearson Correlation	.694	.740	.789	1	.825	.508	-.633
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000		.000	.000	.000
	N	281	281	281	281	281	281	281
DisMk: Actual Prioritization of Discipleship	Pearson Correlation	.695	.799	.735	.825	1	.580	-.759
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000		.000	.000
	N	281	281	281	281	281	281	281
TmLd: Emphasis of Eph. 4:11 Team Model	Pearson Correlation	.455	.487	.509	.508	.580	1	-.373
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000		.000
	N	281	281	281	281	281	281	281
LdGap: Gap that Minimizes Discipleship	Pearson Correlation	-.612	-.589	-.643	-.633	-.759	-.373	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	281	281	281	281	281	281	281

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

This data has been looked at from a variety of angles in SPSS as the statistician furnished Histograms, Anovas, Factors, Scree Plots, Component Scores Coefficients, and other measures. Eliminating one or more questions from the seven scales was also considered in this process of measuring these items, but Cronbach's alpha provided a bottom line from which to determine if a question fit into a scale. Although one question was eliminated from one of the scales in this process, the remaining questions in these seven groups of scales all had a Cronbach's alpha of less than 0.5. The Qualtrics data was exported into .pdf, word and PowerPoint formats and the .csv file that was imported into an Excel spreadsheet. The data was then converted into a numeric fashion as it was much easier to consider ordinal numbering 1 through 5 instead of the 5 verbal responses that ranged from strongly agree to strongly disagree. With this reflection of the data in mind, this study now transitions to answering Research Question 1.

Research Question 1 Analysis

RQ1 was stated as "What aspects of the church leadership paradigm may have contributed to the shortage of disciple-making in Evangelical churches?" RQ1 was answered by evaluating the data which had been exported from Qualtrics into Excel and then into IBM SPSS Statistics version 23. The Descriptive Statistics table that is referenced in the data analysis section includes a bias-corrected and accelerated (BCa) bootstrap view of the 95% confidence level in the data. This table reveals that participants have a higher level of confidence in the Leadership's Direction and Vision of Disciple-Making than they do in the other scales, which is especially true of both the Disciple-Making and the Members involvement with disciple-making scales. The BCa reveals a very high level of support for the church having a vision or theory for disciple-making, which is above 4.0196. However, the BCa numbers were significantly lower for doing disciple-making or members participating in discipleship as they were only above 2.8541 and 2.9943 each.

This is a statistically significant difference between respondents enthusiasm for their church's vision for disciple-making that it was above 4.0, but less confident about how much disciple-making and member participation are happening as both numbers are less than 3.0. Something is causing pastors and members who participated in the survey to be positive about their church's intentions and plans for disciple-making but to be more subdued about how much disciple-making was really being done in their church. It is likely that at least a portion of this is due to vision being aspirational in nature, as leaders provide a direction that they wish the church to go. As a horse comes before a cart, vision comes ahead of action. Another look at the Descriptive Statistics table shows this difference between the vision for disciple-making that is being shared and member participation and actual disciple-making.

Table 8
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

Descriptive Statistics

			Bootstrap[a]			
					BCa 95% Confidence Interval	
		Statistic	Bias	Std. Error	Lower	Upper
LDV: Vision that Prioritizes Discipleship	N	281	0	0	.	.
	Minimum	1.50				
	Maximum	5.00				
	Mean	4.1050	-.0006	.0441	4.0196	4.1895
	Std. Deviation	.75274	-.00200	.03499	.68574	.81505
MemSup: Energetic Support and Participation in Discipleship	N	281	0	0	.	.
	Minimum	1.00				
	Maximum	5.00				
	Mean	3.0940	-.0009	.0514	2.9943	3.1915
	Std. Deviation	.87178	-.00276	.03019	.81524	.92258
SPast: Pastoral Prioritization of Discipleship	N	281	0	0	.	.
	Minimum	1.00				
	Maximum	5.00				
	Mean	3.7046	-.0007	.0545	3.5979	3.8078
	Std. Deviation	.92975	-.00279	.03796	.85762	.99538
ChLds: Church Leaders' Prioritization of Discipleship	N	281	0	0	.	.
	Minimum	1.00				
	Maximum	5.00				
	Mean	3.4840	-.0005	.0520	3.3829	3.5836
	Std. Deviation	.88418	-.00254	.03518	.81988	.94501
DisMk: Actual Prioritization of Discipleship	N	281	0	0	.	.
	Minimum	1.00				
	Maximum	5.00				
	Mean	2.9653	-.0008	.0565	2.8541	3.0738
	Std. Deviation	.95986	-.00268	.03339	.89651	1.01808
TmLd: Emphasis of Eph. 4:11 Team Model	N	281	0	0	.	.
	Minimum	1.13				
	Maximum	5.00				
	Mean	3.3688	-.0006	.0460	3.2785	3.4573
	Std. Deviation	.77356	-.00182	.03003	.71721	.82781
LdGap: Gap that Minimizes Discipleship	N	281	0	0	.	.
	Minimum	1.00				
	Maximum	5.00				
	Mean	2.6726	.0004	.0608	2.5552	2.7918
	Std. Deviation	1.02536	-.00310	.03436	.96086	1.08284
Valid N (listwise)	N	281	0	0	.	.

a. Unless otherwise noted, bootstrap results are based on 10000 bootstrap samples

The descriptive statistics table has a number of abbreviations which begins with LDV, which stands for Leadership Direction and Vision of disciple-making. The next abbreviations are Mem Sup which stands for Member Support and participation in disciple-making, and SPast which refers to a Senior Pastor's prioritization of disciple-making. ChLds in the next row stands for Church Leaders' prioritization of disciple-making, and subsequently TmLd is an abbreviation for Team Leadership disciple-making. The last abbreviation, LdGap, refers to a gap between what is said about disciple-making and what is actually done. In addition, there may be other reasons for the lower level of belief in the church making disciples or members doing disciple-making than the vision the church provides about making disciples.

The reality is that the data reveals a significant difference between what people hear about their church's vision for disciple-making and what is actually taking place in their church, which is a gap which needs to be further explored. An explanation may be found in the next highest BCa levels besides the Leaders Direction and Vision for Disciple-making. The Church Leaders scale with a BCa of above 3.829, and senior pastors with a BCa above 3.579, have the next highest bootstrap 95% levels of confidence in the data are the. These numbers suggest that respondents may be expecting Church Leaders and senior pastors to do the disciple-making. These responses came from both pastors and members, because many pastors indicated that they were either the only person or one of a few taking the survey for the church. Thus, these views reflect both church leaders and members.

Figure 2
GRAPH OF LEADERSHIP VISION AND SENIOR PASTORS' DISCIPLE-MAKING
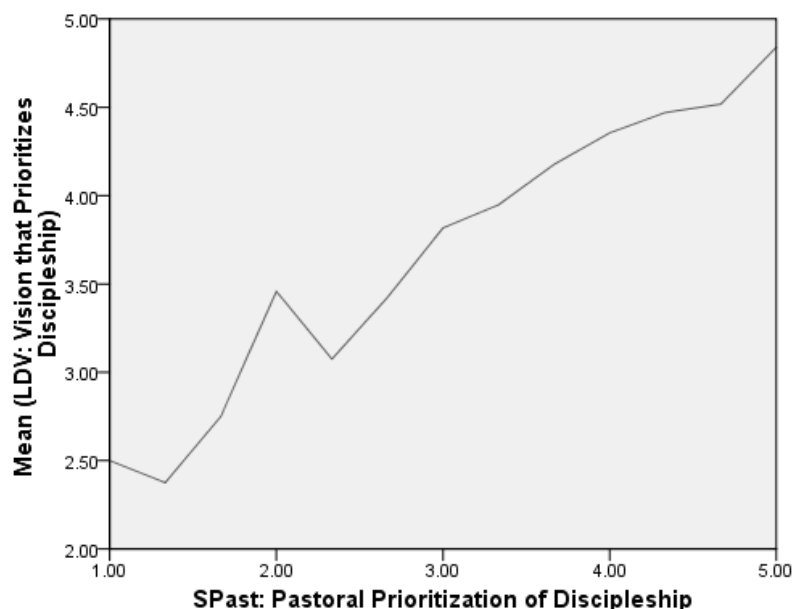
The above Figure 2 shows that senior pastors leading disciple-making had the highest correlation with Leadership Direction and Vision for disciple-making, as many participants appear to believe that the Senior Pastor is responsible for disciple-making. The LDV prioritizing disciple-making and Church Leaders leading also shows a similar relationship. Respondents who agree that Church Leaders provide vision for disciple-making mostly agreed that the Senior Pastor is leading disciple-making in their church. The relationship between leaders casting vision for disciple-making in the church and both senior pastors and church leadership doing the disciple-making also needs to be further explored during the qualitative portion of the study.

Besides these topics, Team Leadership is a third subject for consideration. Team Leadership/Ephesians 4:11 is a different scale which had the lowest Correlation Coefficient's across the board in the Spearman's rho table. The Pearson's Correlation in the Correlations table also shows Team Leadership with a low correlation as related to almost all of the other scales. By most measures, the Team Leadership scale had lower numbers than the other scales did.

There are some possible explanations for having Team Leadership/Ephesians 4:11 that includes Apostles, Prophets, and Evangelists having a much lower support than the more commonly found Pastors and Teachers. It could be that church members are unfamiliar with these positions that have not been as frequently utilized in the church. It may also be that the church may not believe there is much need for these positions, or that the church leadership is oriented around one or more pastors. Whatever the cause is, there is a statistically significant variation between the Team Leadership/Ephesians 4:11 scale and the other scales as shown in Table 10 which is as follows.

Table 10
PIVOT TABLE CORRELATIONS

Pivot Table Correlations — File Edit View Insert Pivot Format Help

Correlations

			Q38 Our leadership's approach has minimized disciple-making.	Leadership Direction and Vision	Members	Senior Pastor	Church Leadership	Team Leadership	Disciple Making	Leadership Gap
Spearman's rho	Q38 Our leadership's approach has minimized disciple-making.	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	-.560**	-.442**	-.552**	-.493**	-.279**	-.501**	.844**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
		N	277	277	277	277	277	277	277	277
	Leadership Direction and Vision	Correlation Coefficient	-.560**	1.000	.639**	.673**	.713**	.443**	.722**	-.627**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
		N	277	277	277	277	277	277	277	277
	Members	Correlation Coefficient	-.442**	.639**	1.000	.673**	.739**	.466**	.795**	-.592**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
		N	277	277	277	277	277	277	277	277
	Senior Pastor	Correlation Coefficient	-.552**	.673**	.673**	1.000	.774**	.486**	.733**	-.634**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.	.000	.000	.000	.000
		N	277	277	277	277	277	277	277	277
	Church Leadership	Correlation Coefficient	-.493**	.713**	.739**	.774**	1.000	.514**	.833**	-.630**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.	.000	.000	.000
		N	277	277	277	277	277	277	277	277
	Team Leadership	Correlation Coefficient	-.279**	.443**	.466**	.486**	.514**	1.000	.571**	-.353**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.	.000	.000
		N	277	277	277	277	277	277	277	277
	Disciple Making	Correlation Coefficient	-.501**	.722**	.795**	.733**	.833**	.571**	1.000	-.743**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.	.000
		N	277	277	277	277	277	277	277	277
	Leadership Gap	Correlation Coefficient	.844**	-.627**	-.592**	-.634**	-.630**	-.353**	-.743**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.
		N	277	277	277	277	277	277	277	277

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The different scales were developed to answer RQ1 which is: What aspects of the church leadership paradigm may have contributed to the shortage of disciple-making in Evangelical

churches? The scales reveals three areas which contribute to the problem. The first is the gap between the Vision for Disciple-Making that Leadership conveys and the Disciple-Making activities and Discipleship that Members are doing. The next is the relationship between Leadership Vison and Senior Pastors and Church Leadership all having high numbers suggests enthusiasm for leaders doing the disciple-making. The third aspect is that the Team Leadership scale has the lowest Correlation. These scales were comprised of questions that an expert panel developed, and they asserted that the 39 questions answer RQ1. These three areas need to be further examined during the phenomenological part of the study. The qualitative part of the research may also reveal other areas which exacerbate the shortage of disciple-making in Evangelical churches. However, the quantitative surveys have already revealed three aspects of the church leadership paradigm as part of the problem.

Evaluation of the Quantitative Research Design

Conducting a quantitative survey was an informative process, beginning with Liberty's coursework that provided a foundation for doing the research. Formulating the questions, convening an expert panel, and obtaining the approval of the Institutional Review Board (IRB) contributed to the learning experience. After these steps were accomplished, the questions were presented in Qualtrics, which gave participants the ability to take the survey by a phone as well as by a computer or iPad. The IRB's requirement for consent caused there to be three additional questions at the beginning of the Qualtrics survey, bringing the total of questions to 39.

Quantitative data was then translated into scales so that the data could be interpreted to determine what it revealed. A statistician helped with the process of formulating seven scales to analyze the data. Six of the scales were positively related and had at least three questions each, but the seventh scale had only two questions, which were both negatively related. The

quantitative portion of the research design was helpful in focusing the study, but it was important that the research design did not end here. This study now transitions to the qualitative part of the study that used interpretive phenomenological analysis to do interviews to dig deeper into these three areas and possibly other areas which affect discipleship formation in Evangelical churches.

Qualitative Data Analysis and Findings

Research Question 1 was answered quantitatively through the online discipleship survey. Research Questions 2 through 5 were answered qualitatively using interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA). The following are research questions 2 through 5.

RQ2. Can restoring the teaching and application of the priesthood of all believers help disciple making?

RQ3. To what degree, if any, has not following the five-fold team leadership that the Bible prescribes in Ephesians 4:11 exacerbated this problem?

RQ4. To what degree, if any, have cultural values such as materialism and pride contributed to the lack of focus on making disciples?

RQ5. Why does the Evangelical church continue pursuing familiar paths that have not been making many disciples?

Overview

These phenomenological interviews were conducted using Microsoft Teams. Nine recorded interviews were done, which provided further insight into the relationship between church leadership and the shortage of disciple-making in Pennsylvania Evangelical churches. Permission was acquired before any of these interviews were done. In addition to obtaining permission, participants were informed when the interviews were scheduled and that they would be recorded. These nine Christian leaders who were interviewed consented to being recorded. Besides thi, at the beginning of the interview each participant was asked if it was okay to begin the recording to ensure that every one of them still approved of their interviews being recorded by Microsoft Teams.

After these in-depth interviews were completed in Microsoft Teams, they were transcribed into Microsoft Word documents a process which included formatting, editing, and transcribing each interview individually. Pseudonyms were then used for names and other

identifiable information to maintain the anonymity of each of the participants. The interviews were conducted in a manner to ensure that participants were not harmed in the process. Qualitative research guidelines were followed, and this researcher treated participants as he would like to be treated. Taking these steps provided a solid foundation for focusing on the results of the phenomenological study.

Compilation Protocols and Measures

The quantitative part of the research provided an opportunity to make a list of Christian leaders who were interested in being interviewed to further investigate the shortage of disciple-making in Pennsylvania Evangelical churches. This was because the time-consuming process of administering the online discipleship survey required a significant amount of communication with pastors and other leaders to determine if their churches would be participating in the disciple-making survey. Permission had already been granted for the interviews during this process of securing participation in the survey. Many of these conversations with Pennsylvania pastors went so well that it opened the door to asking if they were interested in being interviewed on the subject later, and a handful of them responded that they were interested in doing so.

The group that was receptive to being interviewed were contacted after the survey was completed. Out of that group, nine pastors confirmed that they were willing to be interviewed. Participants were told that these interviews would be recorded interviews through Microsoft Teams and all nine provided their consent. Mutually convenient interview times were arranged, and participants were sent invitations for the recorded video calls. Although there were a few technical issues, the nine interviews were completed on a timely basis. All nine church leaders who were interviewed were pastors, although one of the participants described herself as a contract pastor as she had not quite finished her ordination.

The interviews began by asking the participants to describe what the best practices that their church utilized for disciple-making were, as these practices could be a source of inspiration to other Evangelical churches. Some pastors responded with long and descriptive answers about the different approaches their church took or resources which their church used to foster discipleship, while others gave more succinct answers which resulted in quicker follow-up questions. When the interviews were completed, they were individually transcribed and edited into Microsoft Word documents. After this was done each of the interviewee's name and identifying information was replaced with pseudonyms to protect their identities.

Once every participant's information had been replaced with pseudonyms the transcripts were imported into Nvivo to be queried, coded, and analyzed to determine the most important themes of each transcript individually and collectively. Nvivo provided a different perspective on all of the transcripts which helped to strengthen the credibility of the study. This software also caused this researcher to reflect on each of the interviews in the process of seeking for themes. Although analyzing all nine transcripts in Nvivo was demanding, this process provided more insight into the content of the phenomenological interviews.

Demographic and Sample Data

The demographic and data for the interview participants was derived from the survey sample, which was comprised of adult church members of Pennsylvania Evangelical churches. Because the surveys were anonymous there was no way to be certain, but the conversations with the pastors who participated in the interviews seemed to indicate that all but one participated in the survey. The only interviewee who did not take part in the survey was one who received the information about the survey too late as the survey had already ended. All respondents were

adults, since this was a precondition for taking the surveys. Seven of the pastors were male and two were female, while all of the pastors were Caucasian except for one who was Hispanic.

This group of nine pastors who participated in interviews came from a sample that was taken out of approximately1,500 churches who were contacted about joining the online discipleship survey on discipleship formation in Pennsylvania Evangelical churches. About 10 percent of the churches, or close to 150 of the 1,500 of the churches that were initially contacted, responded positively, and about 32 of the churches appear to have had one or more members take part in the study. There is no way to know the exact sample size of churches this group of nine pastors who were interviewed was taken from because the survey was anonymous and sent to churches throughout Pennsylvania.

Another characteristic of the sample of Evangelical churches is that some mainline churches were part of the data bases that were contacted for the survey as the lists included some Methodists, Presbyterians, and Lutherans. Some of the members of these churches may not consider themselves to be Evangelical. However, this aspect of the sample appeared to have had little, if any impact on the group of pastors who took part in the interviews. This is because none of them expressed any concern about the interviews being about Evangelical churches. Beyond that, only one participant came from a background that might have had some non-Evangelical orientation. Future research may need to be conducted without including any denominations which may have members who do not consider themselves to be Evangelical. Another approach would be to instead describe the survey as being for all Protestant churches if some non-Evangelical denominations are included.

Data Analysis and Findings

The nine interview transcripts were imported into Nvivo to analyze the data. Nvivo

provided both a micro view of the words in each of the interviews and a macro view that

revealed themes and trends in each interview. In addition, Nvivo was also able to show themes in

all of the interviews together. Separate tables were developed to analyze the data for each

interview. There are also observations which come after each table which are based upon data

that Nvivo provides, the transcripts, and the interviews themselves.

Dr. Mike Aiello

Evaluation of the Dr. Mike Aiello Interview Transcript. The following table

represents an Nvivo-based data thematic of the Aiello transcript.

Table 11
DR.AIELLO INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

Codes			Query for important word frequency	
Catechesis	2		Church/Churches	48
Declining Church	1		Discipleship/Disciple/Disciples	40
Disciple-Making	4		Pastor	19
Discipleship leader	1		Christian	10
Evangelism needed	1		Sunday School Curriculum	8
Leading Change	3		Class	8
Politics	3		Catechesis	5
Persecution	1		Course	5
Sunday School Curriculum	6		Worship	5
Too busy	1		Congregation	5

Observations on the Interview of Dr. Mike Aiello

According to the interviewee, Dr. Mike Aiello pastors a traditional church that is very

slow to change. He said that leadership has introduced disciple-making, by using Catechesis,

which forms disciples with the Apostles Creed, the Ten Commandments, and the Lord's Prayer,

but gave the impression that it has required great patience to lead the church into disciple-

making. Dr. Aiello provided different examples of how he fosters disciple-making and weaves it

into the fabric of the church. Like the other Christian leaders that have been interviewed, he shared that the Covid pandemic had adversely affected the church and indicated that their goal was to have everybody attend services in person.

He recommended a discipleship book called *Grounded in the Gospel* and said that he has Bible study classes with teenagers and a variety of other age groups as he is trying to foster discipleship. Dr. Aiello shared that even though many describe themselves as being too busy for church activities like disciple-making, they seem to be preoccupied with politics. He continues to develop different curriculum and groups to try to lead the congregation into greater disciple-making. This pastor wants Christians to stop being inwardly focused and to instead start focusing outwardly as witnesses to the world. Dr. Aiello also maintains that persecution can help purify the church from cultural influences like politics and that it would be good for the church. He shared that he likes to introduce the congregation to organizations like *Voice of the Martyrs* as he wants Christians to be aware of the challenging conditions that other Christians must live with.

Dr. Joel Jones

Evaluation of the Dr. Jones Interview Transcript. The following table represents a

Nvivo-based data thematic analysis of the Jones transcript.

Table 12
DR JONES INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

Codes			Query for important word frequency	
Black Lives Matter	3		Church/Churches	90
Church History	1		Jesus Christ	45
Church Vision	2		Grace/Gracious	44
Consensus Team Leadership	1		Christian/Christians	39
Disciple-Making	6		Extreme/Extremes	24
Evangelism	3		Prophetic/Prophets/Prophecy	21
Fortress self-protection approach	1		Disciple/Disciples/Discipleship	21
Government	2		Government	20
Grace	7		Black/Minority	13
Great Commission	1		Nationalism	10
Moderation, not extremes	5		Trump	8
Nationalism can be idolatry	2		Political/Politicized	7
Politics	3			
Power Corrupts the Church	3			
Prophetic Witness	6			
Spiritual War	1			
Transgender	3			

Observations on the Interview of Dr. Joel Jones

Dr. Joel Jones imparted a message of grace. He described himself as a centrist who has

tried to moderate Christians from either of the political extremes in order that they can have

fellowship with one another. Dr. Jones shared how their church uses a seven-part ministry plan

with grace as its foundation, and notes that their church tries to be good in all seven areas. He

addressed disciple-making throughout the interview and shared the importance of the church

being a good prophetic witness to both the unsaved world and to the people who are at either end

of the political extremes. He expressed great concern about what he called Christian nationalism,

which he described as an effort of trying to combine the church with governmental power, and

he thought this approach compromised the church's prophetic witness. Dr. Jones was also worried that the speed with which transgender is being promoted in the culture will lead to an even more extreme deeper reaction from conservatives in 2024.

Dr. Jones described himself as a pacifist who is trying to pull people in from the extremes as he believes Christians need to be a moderating force. He mentioned that the polarization was getting so bad it could even lead to a civil war and asserted that someone needs to take the role of peacemaker. Dr. Jones shared how he had recently spoken at a Black Lives Matters rally and that subsequently some people accused him of being a member of a Marxist organization. Dr. Jones explained that the police had asked him to speak at the rally, and that he was able to share the gospel with 1,000 people who would never go to church, and that the rally was peaceful. He believes in being "in the world but not of the world," and wants the church to be more focused on making disciples and being voices of grace to overcome the dangers of being too polarized.

Dr. Al Smith

Evaluation of the Dr. Al Smith Interview Transcript. The following table represents a Nvivo-based data thematic analysis of the Smith transcript.

Table 13
DR.SMITH INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

Codes			Query for important word frequency	
Anachronistic Leadership	2		Church/Churches	132
Consensus Leadership	2		Pastor/Pastors	45
Declining Church	4		Disciple/Disciples	23
Denominational Leadership	5		God	16
Disciple-Making	3		Jesus	14
Leading Disruptive Change	3		Black	11
Racism	3		Discipleship	6
Resistant to Change	4		Consensus	5
Reviving a Declining Church	3		Dying	3
Transgender/Sexual Orientation	2		Evangelism/Evangelistic	2

Observations on the Interview of Dr. Al Smith

Dr. Al Smith shared that he became pastor of a church that had traditional leadership who had not observed how rapidly their church was declining and were resistant to change. In his third year, Dr. Smith knew that the church was dying as he had to do 52 funerals that year, but when he presented this issue to the Elders and tried to change the church's trajectory, they were stubbornly resistant to change. He described himself as a leader who used disruptive change to make changes, but said his church's Elders and many pastors acted are managers who were very resistant to change. This church was part of a denomination which Dr. Smith had promised not to leave. Although this denomination had some anachronistic views that really bothered him and contributed to the problems, Dr. Smith kept his word and never left the denomination.

A major factor as to why the church was declining is that it was an upper-class white church in an area which had become predominantly black. He shared how he discovered that the church had previously discriminated against blacks and had a lot of racial baggage. When he found out about the historical racial injustice and apologized for it to an African American pastor in front of the church, the Elders became enraged at him and almost fired him. These leaders were so anachronistic that they insisted that he never apologize ever again for how anybody at the church had conducted themselves. Their resistance to change was so strong that they took the side of racists as opposed to following Dr. Smith's lead.

Despite all that was arrayed against him, Dr. Smith was such a disruptive leader of change that he was determined to transform the church. He got information from C. Peter Wagner, Bill Hull and others on how to transform a declining church and turn it into a disciple-making church, and eventually succeeded in getting the church to move to another building. They also integrated the church, and many who were the most resistant to change left the church

during this process. In addition, he had transformed the church so that decisions were made by consensus, disciple-making was a priority, and one of the new pastors is African American. Pastor Al Smith retired in April 2021 and could not conceive that the new pastors would stay in the traditional denomination since none of them were bound by a promise to stay in the denomination that had so much baggage.

Dr. Craig Thomas

Evaluation of the Dr. Craig Thomas Interview Transcript. The following table represents a Nvivo-based data thematic analysis of the Thomas transcript.

Table 14
DR. THOMAS INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

Codes			Query for important word frequency	
Church History	5		Church/Churches	92
Covid Pandemic	1		Christian/Christians	31
Disciple-Making	4		Persecution/persecuted	21
Great Commission	3		Pastor/Pastors	39
Luther	3		Extreme/Extremes	18
Politics	5		Disciple/Disciples	18
Power Corrupts the Church	3		Early Church	13
Reviving Declining Church	1		Roman	11
Roman Emperors	4		History	10
			Political	9
			Constantine	7
			Luther	6
			Emperors	4

Observations on the Interview of Dr. Craig Thomas

Dr. Craig Thomas is the pastor of Redeemer Church and an instructor at a Christian University who has a PhD. in Early Church History. He repeatedly recommended that Christians learn from church history but noted that we often do not do so. Dr. Thomas described how Roman Emperors were considered divine, and that the early church's refusal to worship them led

to their being persecuted. He also observed that although they experienced persecution, the early church was strong in the faith. Dr. Thomas mentioned that there are church members who are upset that the political climate is now against Christianity. He shared that he disagreed with those members who wanted a favorable political climate by citing Tertullian from the early church as maintaining how persecution is good for the church.

Dr. Thomas referenced how Jesus did not build His church around pollical power, and that governmental power usually corrupts the church, as Jesus wants His followers to be servants, not those who were seeking power. He cited 2 Timothy 3:12 on "everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus shall be persecuted." The discussion of persecution continued with Dr. Thomas observing that it is counterintuitive to think that persecution is good for the church, but that the Bible and history show that it is. Dr. Thomas furnished a substantial amount of information about how their church makes disciples and mentioned how the Covid pandemic has impacted his congregation. He also provided information on how their church is involved in the Great Commission while blending in his knowledge of the early church and the importance of history in the process.

Pastor Bill Drake

Evaluation of the Interview Transcript of Pastor Drake. The following table

represents a Nvivo-based data thematic analysis of the Drake transcript.

Table 15
PASTOR DRAKE INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

Codes			Query for important word frequency	
Christ-centered	1		God/Jesus	73
Church vision	1		Discipleship/Disciples/Disciple	70
Covid Pandemic	2		Pastor	51
Disciple-making	8		Church/Churches	48
Disciple-making definition is needed	8		Bible	27
God's will	1		Good/Love	26
Leading change	1		Pray/prayer	19
Lukewarm Church	6		Believe	17
Persecution	5		Christian/Christians	17
Priesthood of all Believers	6		Remnant	7
Reviving Declining Church	1			
Remnant of Disciples	2			
Too busy	1			

Observations on the Pastor Bill Drake Interview

Pastor Bill Drake began with the definition of disciple-making, and took the time to

clearly articulate what he and his church believed disciple-making was. He referenced material

from pastor Rick Warren on the progression of transforming people into disciples. Pastor Drake

asserted that discipleship formation needs to be Christ-centered, Bible-based, and must not

overlook the cost of discipleship. He also recognized the importance of prayer for this process

and maintained that knowing God's will is our most important work. This pastor also shared that

disciple-making is not just for the pastor as he and his church believe that all parts of the body of

Christ (priesthood of all believers) need to apply what they have learned by being involved with

disciple-making.

Pastor Drake mentioned the church of Laodicea in Revelation 3 several times and said

that many Christians are asleep (or living lukewarm lives). He responded to the survey's finding

that the disciple making vision is high by asserting this is because pastors repeatedly share it, but that the application of the vision is much lower since many people did not want to make the effort to be a disciple who makes other disciples. This pastor explained that disciple is an active word and not a passive word, and that he wants members to be doing the work. Pastor Drake does not want churches (or disciples) to be pastor dependent as he believes that pastors should be coaches and that disciples need to mature over time.

He also discussed persecution in light of the book of Revelation and explained how persecution can help Christians to mature and be part of the remnant of disciples in the book of Revelation. Pastor Drake described a remnant of the faithful in the context of a great falling away as like the wheat being separated from the chaff. He said the devil is the ultimate source of persecution and believes that not everyone in church pews is a disciple. Pastor Drake is concerned that the church is making converts but not many disciples. This pastor again mentioned the importance of defining what a disciple and asserted that disciples are willing to spend time in prayer and other Christian activities.

Pastor Gail Hall

Evaluation of the Interview Transcript of Pastor Hall. The following table represents

a Nvivo-based data thematic analysis of the Hall transcript.

Table 16
PASTOR HALL INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

Codes			Query for important word frequency	
Applying Biblical Truth	4		God	71
Asking Questions	1		Church/Churches	50
Consensus Leadership	1		Pastor	42
Declining Church	2		Disciple/discipleship/discipling	39
Disciple-making	4		Jesus Christ	28
Discipling kids to reach their parents	1		Good	26
Feel Good Theology	5		Truth	21
God's Truth	3		Spiritual	14
Leading Change	3		Women	12
Prophetic Witness	3			
Relationship with God through Jesus	1			
Resistant to change	1			
Reviving Declining Church	1			
Women	3			

Observations on the Interview of Pastor Gail Hall

Pastor Gail Hall described herself as a person who likes to apply what she learns to her

life as well as get others to apply what they learn to their own lives. If a subject is an area that

she is unfamiliar with she asks questions of other pastors who are knowledgeable about that area

for information that can be communicated to the person. She does not like feel good theology in

which people prioritize their feelings over what the Bible says, and does not mince words about

it. Pastor Hall is more of a leader and less of a manager as she describes herself as mostly

pushing people out of their comfort zones and being less comforting of people. She is

unwavering about God's standards and said that she has been called many names because of her

refusal to compromise on the truth of God's Word. However, pastor Hall says that she is willing

to be creative when it comes to making disciples.

Pastor Hall and has found that sometimes the older generation is too resistant to change to become disciples. Therefore, she disciples their children first and tries to get them to reach their parents so that they themselves can be transformed into disciples. A significant percentage of her calling seems to be prophetic since pastor Hall seems preoccupied with different aspects of truth. Whether it is the truth of God's Word, the application of God's truth, or her determination to not compromise God's standards, she seems almost transfixed on truth and justice and is much less concerned about what people feel about her. Pastor Hall shared that this approach has helped transform her church since her church is no longer considered to be spiritually lacking by Christians in her area as it used to be viewed before she became the leader. She described her discipleship efforts are bearing fruit, and said when people really get to know her they appreciate the fact that she loves them enough to tell the truth about their spiritual situation so that they can grow and draw closer to Jesus as a result.

Pastor Jerry Latish

Evaluation of the Interview Transcript of Pastor Latish. The following table represents a Nvivo-based data thematic analysis of the Latish transcript.

Table 17
PASTOR LATISH INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

Codes			Query for important word frequency	
Covid Pandemic	3		Disciple/disciples	54
Declining Church	1		Pastor/Pastors	49
Disciple-making	9		Church/Churches	37
Disciple-making definition is necessary	5		America/American	15
Disciple-making shortage	3		Countries/Country	12
Evangelism	1		Believe/Believers/Faithful	12
Leading Change	2		Journey Overseas	11
Pastors	4		Persecution/Persecuted	6
Persecuted/Persecuted Church	4		Pandemic	5
Resistant to Change	1		Seminaries	4
Reviving Dying Church	1			
Seminaries	2			

Observations on the Interview of Pastor Jerry Latish

Pastor Jerry Latish is experienced at making disciples in the Asia-Pacific region as well as in persecuted countries with the organization in which he serves, and is trying to replicate his success with the American church. He said that their organization defines disciple-making as disciples making disciples, who in turn make disciples to the next generation. He shared that is that it is essential for disciple-making to reach the next generation. Pastor Latish said this goes way beyond equipping somebody as it is transforming them to be part of Great Commission disciple-making.

He explained that the Exponential organization researched the American church and did not find any churches that were making disciples who were committed to producing disciples who made disciples to the next generation. Pastor Latish said that it is not uncommon to find this type of discipleship practice overseas, but it is very rare in America, and he is concerned that the pandemic may have made matters worse with more people staying home. He shared that multi-generational discipleship is occurring more frequently in areas where there is persecution. This pastor also mentioned that they are trying to foster this type of discipleship here in the United States, but that it has been a difficult struggle. Pastor Latish mentioned that a large sector of the church in America is resistant to their disciple-making efforts, and that the biggest resistance comes from Christian leaders who are mostly in positions of influence like pastors. However, he is not focused on the resistance, as he prefers to have a glass half-full outlook and focus on positive opportunities for disciple-making.

Pastor Cindy Miller

Evaluation of the Interview Transcript of Pastor Miller. The following table

represents a Nvivo-based data thematic analysis of the Miller transcript.

Table 18
PASTOR MILLER INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

Codes			Query for important word frequency	
Anachronistic Leadership	2		Church/Churches	61
Bishop	3		Pastor/Pastors	22
Bound by Conscience	2		Denominational Leadership	14
Consensus Leadership	2		Seminary	14
Declining Church	5		Disciples	10
Denominational Leadership	12		Scripture	10
Leading Change	3		Congregation	8
Luther	1		Transgender/Gay/Lesbian	6
Resistant to Change	3		Candidacy	5
Secular Denomination	1		Luther	5
Seminary	10		Bishop	4
Transgender/Sexual Orientation	4			
Viable Church	1			

Observations on the Interview of Pastor Cindy Miller

Cindy Miller explained how she became a contract pastor for Bible Church after their

denomination said that their small church was too far away from other churches for them to

continue supplying pastors. She described the denominational leadership of their church as being

non-responsive and lacking love while her church tried to figure out alternatives for meeting.

The denomination also seemed to have an anachronistic leadership style. Besides issues with the

church's leadership structure, the seminary Cindy was attending was acquired by another

Seminary. The new Seminary had mainstream secular values that prioritized cultural values like

what transgender advocates promote over making disciples and other biblical values.

The new Seminary's turn away from godliness was so strong that Cindy decided not to

finish ordination even though she was right on the verge of completion. She described feeling

like she and her small Bible Church were having to stand against pressures from the Seminary, the denominational leadership, and the world. Although her congregation was older and one might think that they would usually be against making changes, she said that the congregation had decided they would rather consider leaving the denomination than to endure their apathetic treatment and trends towards ungodliness. She seemed humble and was not focused on power as she had jettisoned her hopes of being ordained despite only having one small task remaining to complete, and did not ask for people to call her pastor. With respect to the sharing of ministry duties, she says that members of the congregation share in the workload, as she does not think a pastor should do almost all of the work. Cindy cited Martin Luther's reference to having a bound conscience by saying that her conscience bound her to try to help lead the church away from these unfortunate situations and try and be a church that follows Jesus and makes disciples.

Pastor Pablo Ortiz

Evaluation of the Interview Transcript of Pastor Ortiz. The following table represents a Nvivo-based data thematic analysis of the Ortiz transcript.

Table 19
PASTOR ORTIZ INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

Codes			Query for important word frequency	
Christ centered	1		Pastor	61
Covid Pandemic	2		Church/Churches	47
Declining Church	3		God/Jesus Christ	29
Disciple-making	4		Disciple/Disciples/Discipleship	22
Discipleship Leader	1		Politics/Political	12
Leading Change	1		Power	12
Persecution	3		Lord	9
Politics	4		Transgender	8
Power Corrupts the Church	9		Orthodox	5
Priesthood of all Believers	1		Pandemic	5
Prophetic Witness	1			
Remnant of Disciples	1			
Reviving Dying Church	1			
Secular Denomination	2			
Transgender/sexual orientation	6			

Observations on the Interview of Pastor Pablo Ortiz

Pastor Pablo Ortiz articulated how the church's power that it has obtained in relationship with the state has hurt the church and maintains that the church is stronger when it stands on its own without the relationship of state power. This applies to disciple-making and other important duties, and he mentioned that the church has had a close relationship with the state since the Roman Emperor Constantine. In a related manner, pastor Ortiz also spoke about the need for contemporary Christians to stop focusing on politics and political solutions. He cited the culture's advocating transgender and sexual orientation as problems a number of times, but encouraged followers of Jesus to stop using governmental power to solve these spiritual issues.

Pastor Ortiz also shared that it may take persecution to finally get the church to stop looking to the state for solutions. He shared about the importance of disciple-making and how those who are disciple-makers need to be able to both receive and give like the Sea of Galilee with water flowing in and out instead of the Dead Sea that only has water flowing in but none out. This pastor said he was currently practicing that as he was on a retreat to recharge himself spiritually for the ministry ahead. Pastor Ortiz asserted that disciples need to stay connected to Jesus Christ, like the vine and the branches, so that Jesus gives them the spiritual vitality with which to disciple others.

Evaluation of the Findings

After considering the detailed data that Nvivo provided for each of the interviews, it was also important to reflect on the Nvivo results for all of the nine transcripts as one group. The data from this group was compiled and put into one table (Table 20) for all of the interviews. Looking at the codes as one group revealed some similarities like that all were pastors. There were also slightly more codes that could fit on the table. Similar codes like denominational leadership and

bishop were combined, which helped to fit virtually all the codes on this. Only the few codes that

occurred only once in all transcripts were not included, with one exception, and that exception

was a code that only occurred twice. The vast majority of codes, including all that occurred more

frequently provide a global Nvivo view on the following table.

Table 20
COLLECTIVE INTERVIEW CODES

Codes			Codes continued	
Disciple-Making	48		Christ-centered/Remnant of Disciples	7
Denominational Leadership/Bishop	21		Resistant to Change	7
Declining Church/Discipleship Shortage	19		Black Lives Matter/Racism	6
Persecution	19		Church History	6
Politics/Government	19		Discipleship Leader	6
Leading Change	18		Feel Good Theology	5
Power Corrupts the Church	17		Consensus Team Leadership	5
Transgender/sexual orientation	15		Moderation, not Extremes	5
Definition of Disciple-making is needed	13		Sunday School Curriculum	5
Covid Pandemic	12		Anachronistic Leadership	4
Seminary	11		Luther	4
Prophetic Witness	10		Pastors	4
Great Commission/Evangelism	10		Roman Emperors	4
Priesthood of all Believers	9		Secular Denomination	4
Reviving Declining Church	9		Catechesis	3
God's Truth/Applying Biblical Truth	8		Church Vision	3
Grace	8		Nationalism can be Idolatry	3
Lukewarm Church/Too Busy	8		Women	3

Analysis of the Interviews

Disciple-making was the most prevalent code in Nvivo and it permeated queries and the

phenomenological interviews, especially since the interviews began by asking each of the

participants to share about their church's best disciple-making practices. In addition to these

initial questions, the interviewees were repeatedly asked about disciple-making throughout the

interviews, and often brought it up themselves since the research was about it. The references to

disciple-making covered the whole spectrum as many responses were neutral, others were

positive, while still others described the word in a negative way. There was a wide range of

situations in which participants mentioned disciple-making. Several pastors described how their church had excellent resources for best practices, however, other pastors were remorseful about the difficultly they were having transitioning church members into being disciples who are able to make disciples themselves.

Nvivo helped to reveal many other themes besides the diversity of contexts in which disciple-making was utilized. Some participants spoke about significant problems within the denominational leadership of their type of churches while others described a church or churches that were waning in influence and/or discipleship formation. Several other participants shared that persecution is either coming to the American church, or has already arrived here, and that it is purifying for the church. The context of these type of comments is that quite a few of these Christian leaders assert that politics and the effort to obtain power through the government corrupts the church. These pastors hoped to help lead their church to change from the power-oriented approach and described the desire to obtain power through governmental institutions as the opposite of the servanthood and humility that Jesus Christ taught His church to be.

Several of the Christian leaders spoke about how the transgender and sexual orientation agenda is sweeping American cultural and governmental institutions. They shared about ways in which it is contributing to a type of persecution that is like a wake-up call which is causing churches to fundamentally rethink their relationship with the state. There was discussion as to how the Lord may be allowing this to help cause the church to stop looking to the state for power. Other pastors were adamant about the importance of providing a clear definition of disciple-making so that it can be more widely applied. The way to analyze this further is to apply the data to answer Research Questions 2 to 5.

Answering RQ2-RQ5

RQ2. Can restoring the teaching and application of the priesthood of all believers help disciple-making?

There are thirteen codes that affirm this in Nvivo (nine pertaining to the priesthood of all believers, and four related to Martin Luther), and other codes that support this practices in a negative fashion. Several of the seventeen codes about power were in relation to the Roman Catholic practice of a priest up on stage and laypeople beneath them, directly opposing the priesthood of all believers. The data reveals that restoring the priesthood of all believers like the early church did before it became the state religion of Rome would benefit the church. Strengthening the church with more people participating in the work of the ministry can buttress a church's disciple-making activities.

RQ3. To what degree, if any, has not following the five-fold team leadership that the Bible prescribes in Ephesians 4:11 exacerbated this problem?

Although the Ephesians 4:11 team leadership scale had significantly lower numbers in the quantitative portion of the study, the interviewees did not make many comments related about five-fold team leadership. A query of Nvivo reveals five codes on Consensus Team Leadership and Pastor Bill Drake did speak about his denomination's appreciation for prophetic ministry, but there was not much other discussion about to this topic. Despite the fact that there is a lack of Nvivo data supporting having apostles, prophets, and evangelists on the leadership team, there are numerous codes which reveal problems with Christian leadership. The issues that a couple leaders shared with their denominational leadership, bishop, anachronistic leadership reveal foundational problems with church leadership that none of these leaders said helped to enhance discipleship. Beyond this, the declining church, and resistance to change also appear to possibly contribute to the shortage of disciple-making. Although it is a subject that was not

definitively addressed during the interviews, it is a topic that additional research would be helpful to get a more conclusive answer to this question.

RQ4. To what degree, if any, have cultural values such as materialism and pride contributed to the lack of focus on making disciples?

The Nvivo categories were filled with references to cultural values. The influence of culture upon the church was such a pervasive theme throughout the interview process, that it merits looking at the different codes which Nvivo has compiled. Denominational leadership and bishop are the second most frequently occurring in Nvivo with twenty-one codes. Virtually all, if not all, of the discussions about both were about the adverse culture influences that the denomination and Bishop were projecting onto churches and individual Christians. The next three categories of declining church, persecution, and politics were tied for third with eighteen codes each in Nvivo. All three of these codes were substantially a result of cultural patterns of behavior. The reasons for the declining church were primarily due to cultural influences. Although persecution was a result of culture turning against the church, some pastors shared that persecution was good for the church as it causes the church to increase its focus on God and decrease its alignment with culture. The politics and government code was primarily about the church trying to gain greater political power through elections, but this increased power came at the church culturally compromising with politics and government.

Four of the top five codes refer to cultural values, but its impact is even greater than this. The leading change code was primarily trying to guide the church away from cultural pitfalls and towards making disciples, while transgender and sexual orientation are major cultural trends that are distracting the church from focusing on disciple-making. Many of the other codes in Nvivo describe culture influencing the church. The seminary, prophetic witness, the Great Commission, reviving declining churches, God's truth and applying biblical truth, the definition of disciple-

making is needed and the lukewarm church are codes that either positively or negatively relate to culture. This shows that culture has a powerful impact on the church.

The phenomenological interviews have overwhelmingly shown that culture has played a significant role in distracting the church from making disciples. Although it is not clear how much is due to materialism and pride, feel good theology, secular denomination, and nationalism can be idolatry, are codes which were mostly about followers of Christ being more proud of their cultural identity than they are being a disciple of Jesus Christ. The participant's comments that led to these codes could at least partially be described as the prosperity gospel. The codes for being too busy, a lukewarm church, declining church, and power corrupting the church are also orientated towards a health and wealth type of gospel that includes both pride and materialism. In summation, these codes and the pride some denominational or anachronistic leaders have in their position indicate that pride and materialism are a significant part of the impact that culture is having upon the church.

RQ5. Why does the Evangelical church continue pursuing familiar paths that have not been making many disciples?

This question was addressed in a variety of ways with many of the pastors sharing one or more of the following points about the church being in decline, resistant to change, focused on politics, busy, or too preoccupied with secular power. Pastors Pablo Ortiz spoke about the church's historical desire for power from its relationship with the state, and how this long-term phenomenon that focuses on politics has greatly harmed the church. Pastor Ortiz mentioned that persecution may finally be enough of a catalyst to get the church to change from its familiar path of focusing on political power and instead look to the Lord, which he maintains makes the church stronger. Dr. Joel Jones also expressed similar beliefs that by Evangelicals taking the familiar path of seeking political power that the church has weakened its prophetic witness.

Dr. Craig Thomas piggybacked on these other pastor's concerns by telling how governmental power frequently corrupts the church and that Jesus wanted his followers to not copy the worldly pattern that seeks power but to instead be humble servants. Dr. Mike Aiello shared how many of the members who often call themselves too busy to get involved in disciple-making activities such as their small groups or Sunday School are often very active in politics. Dr. Aiello sounds like he has tried many approaches to get members interested in disciple-making but spoke as if he believes that persecution may ultimately be what causes Christians to stop looking to political power. Towards this end, he said he makes an effort to introduce members to the Voice of the Martyrs which shares about how persecuted Christians live.

Dr. Al Smith described a church that was so set in its ways that leaders would not vary from their familiar path even when they knew the church was dying, including becoming very angry when he apologized for the church's historical racism. Pastor Gail Hall shared that members in her church were so set in their ways that she describes figuratively "pushing them off a cliff" to try to get them to go beyond the paths that they are so familiar with. She leads a type of change that is so disruptive to try and get people beyond their comfort zones. Pastor Jerry Latish had a substantial amount of success making disciples in the Pacific region he came from but has had a very difficult time making disciples who themselves make disciples in the United States. He describes much of the American Evangelical church as being so established in their familiar paths that many are effectively resistant to the disciple-making message.

These observations about the Evangelical church from a variety of Pennsylvania pastors indicate reveal tendencies for Evangelical churches in Pennsylvania to keep following the status quo which has not been making many disciples. The Nvivo analysis of the transcripts shows that the church yearns for political power through elections. Dr. Jones expressed great concern about

the speed and zeal with which the culture is promoting transgender, as he is concerned that it will provoke an extreme reaction from Christian Evangelicals in 2024. Pastor Ortiz mentioned how the church seeking power through the state and other traditional leadership styles are familiar paths that trace back to Constantine. These Christian pastors describe the Evangelical church in this state as cleaving to familiar paths and generally being resistant to change. It seems like followers of Christ will not change from familiar paths with almost anything short of what Pastor Gail Hall said is pushing them off a cliff. However, as many of these Christian leaders alluded to, the persecution which has begun may finally become enough of an impetus to get followers of Christ to change from following the familiar paths that have not been making many disciples.

Evaluation of the Qualitative Research Design

In addition to what the quantitative survey revealed, the phenomenological interviews provided more detail about the relationship about the church leadership paradigm and disciple-making in Pennsylvania Evangelical churches, The nine pastors who participated in the interviews covered a wide range of topics that focused on different aspects of disciple-making. Queries to Nvivo manifested such themes as needing a clear definition of disciple-making, to leading change, to the church being in decline. In using interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) to consider the interviews, it was important to consider codes that are positive in addition to those that are negative. Grace is an example of a positive code that repeatedly came up during one of the interviews.

Grace is one of the most positive codes found in the interviews. What made it such an intriguing word is the context is which Dr. Jerry Jones was saying the church needed to be gracious. He was not promoting an "anything goes" type of grace like has been used by different churches or denominations to accept cultural practices which the church or denomination had

historically viewed as sinful like Pastor Cindy Miller described experiencing after the seminary she attended was acquired by new leaders used cheap grace to promote unbiblical cultural practices. What made the grace which Dr. Jones shared very constructive for the future of the Evangelical church in Pennsylvania, is that he was not using grace as a license for sin. Dr. Jones was being realistic, as he shared that he sees the dangers of transgenderism and drugs on the one hand, but also sees the legacy of racism and segregation on the other and did not encourage either of these sins that he called "extremes." He was not using cheap grace to gloss over how thoroughly our culture has fallen from God's holy standards, as he observed how politics had been far more disruptive to his church than the Covid-19 pandemic or the lockdowns. This pastor described his role as an independent who wanted to bring Christians in from political extremes so they can have fellowship.

What Dr. Jones was doing was referencing a biblical grace that fully recognizes the sins of the culture but should choose a middle ground where it can be a prophetic witness. Instead of choosing either extreme of condoning sin or prioritizing electoral power he recommended the church be independent to be a clear witness. He was concerned that the rapid advance of the transgender movement could lead to a strong backlash from Evangelicals who are so focused on this that they lose graciousness and imitate our past President's ungracious words. This pastor wants the church to model themselves more after Jesus Christ and less after angry politicians, as he believes that provides the church with a much better foundation for sharing the faith.

In evaluating this research design, this section looked into the grace that Dr. Jones was describing in detail. However, it is not the only area that doing IPA interviews revealed. Despite the fact that it took a significant amount of work to schedule, conduct, transcribe, and analyze the interviews, it was beneficial to the study to be able to make sense of this aspect of grace as well

as other words and concepts that the various pastors shared. In Chapter five this study will

consider the findings of both the quantitative study and the qualitative interviews to determine

information which can further enhance discipleship formation in Pennsylvania Evangelical

churches.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSIONS
Overview

This study used both quantitative and qualitative research to investigate if there is a relationship between Evangelical church leadership and the shortage of discipleship formation in Pennsylvania Evangelical churches. The research began with an online discipleship survey that used a Likert Scale and contacted 1,500 churches to get approximately thirty-two churches to participate in the survey. This quantitative survey asked thirty-nine questions to help investigate aspects of disciple-making in Pennsylvania Evangelical churches and used Qualtrics to analyze the data. The survey was followed up by phenomenological interviews that dug deeper to gain more insight on the subject. Nine interviews were conducted with Pennsylvania Evangelical pastors and this chapter considers both approaches to reach conclusions of the study.

Research Purpose

The purpose of this mixed methods study was to determine if the church leadership paradigm contributes to the problem of a lack of disciple-making in Pennsylvania Evangelical churches.

Research Questions

The following are the research questions for this study.

RQ1. What aspects of the church leadership paradigm may have contributed to the shortage of disciple-making in Evangelical churches?

RQ2. Can restoring the teaching and application of the priesthood of all believers help disciple making?

RQ3. To what degree, if any, has not following the five-fold team leadership that the Bible prescribes in Ephesians 4:11 exacerbated this problem?

RQ4. To what degree, if any, have cultural values such as materialism and pride contributed to the lack of focus on making disciples?

RQ5. Why does the Evangelical church continue pursuing familiar paths that have not been making many disciples?

Research Conclusions, Implications, and Applications

Jesus commanded his followers to go and make disciples in Matthew 28:19. Sources revealed that the church in America is not making many disciples. This study researched the Evangelical church leadership paradigm to see what aspects of leadership may have impeded disciple-making in Pennsylvania Evangelical churches. Chapter 5 draws conclusions by considering the implications and interpretations of the analysis that was conducted in Chapter 4. It then provides some information for churches to consider applying.

Analysis and Implications of RQ1

The analysis for Research Question 1 found that the Leadership Vision and Priority of Disciple-Making scales had the highest BCa confidence levels which shows that churches have a strong vision for making disciples. The church leaders and senior pastors scales were the next highest which indicates that senior pastors and church leaders may be leading their churches in disciple-making. However, both the Members involvement with Disciple-Making scales and the Disciple-Making scales had significantly lower average numbers. The scales indicate that one of three things are going on. One possibility is that senior pastors and church leaders are sharing and following-through on their disciple-making vision, but the church members are not getting on board with what the leaders are doing. Secondly, it may be that the leaders are providing rhetoric about making disciples, but their actions are not matching what their words are saying. There is also a chance that some combination of the two is what is taking place.

The phenomenological interviews helped to shed some more light on this. Dr. Smith, Dr. Thomas, and Pastor Drake were at least somewhat frustrated by members not getting involved with discipleship. Although Dr. Aiello was self-controlled in how he expressed his feelings, it

became apparent that he was bothered by the lack of laypeople participating in the disciple-making program, and he repeatedly expressed that he was trying to transform a very traditional church. Pastor Drake was upfront about church members filling the pews, but not being disciples, and even at the end described how the lack of discipleship among some church members is so lacking that he considered them not saved. On the other hand, pastor Jerry Latish and Pastor Cindy Miller described substantial problems with Christian leadership impeding disciple-making. Pastor Latish did not mince words in maintaining that many Christian leaders are resistant to their disciple-making efforts that focus on disciples making disciples. Pastor Miller described the seminary she had been attending coming under new leadership who advocated for LGBTQ values. She asked something like how can you make disciples if you are more focused on accommodating people's sexual orientations that contradict the Scriptures?

Some of the problem is that leaders are not making disciples while other portions are member's lack of participation. Further research is needed to get a better gauge of which one of these reasons contributes more to the shortage of discipleship formation in Evangelical churches as both reasons are exacerbating the problem. The fervency of how Pastor Latish described a very strong opposition to a disciple-making method that he said has a proven track record of working outweighed the more subdued way in which some other Pastors expressed some concern. The two primary reasons for the gap between leadership vision for making disciples are the members not participating in disciple-making and leaders being resistant to doing it.

Analysis and Implications of RQ2

The quantitative section revealed a gap between the leader's vision for disciple-making and members involvement in disciple-making. This gap was further buttressed by the qualitative section because it is hard to overstate the degree to which restoring the priesthood of all believers

enhancing disciple-making received favorable codes in Nvivo. The answer is yes, that restoring this biblical practice can help with discipleship formation. It may have been an even more resounding yes if the context of it is pastors who participated in the interviews. If pastors provided this strong of support for restoring the priesthood of all believers, it seems plausible that affirmation would have been even more fervent if some church members were being interviewed. This is because pastors, like others, can have tendencies towards liking power, as they would lose some power if it the priesthood of all believers was restored. Although this researcher aspired to interview members and lay leaders, the reality is that did not work out as only pastors participated in the interviews. Despite this, Nvivo revealed strong pastoral belief for restoring the priesthood of all believers, which supported what the quantitative research found.

Analysis and Implications of RQ3

Although the surveys did have a significantly lower number for the Team Leadership scale, the phenomenological interviews were much less definitive in answering to what degree, if any, has not using five-fold team leadership exacerbated the shortage of disciple-making than the quantitative section. However, the interviews did reveal a partially related code, which is the church being seduced by power from governmental institutions. It is a human tendency among those in power to not want to share their authority with others. Adding apostles, prophets, and evangelists to the leadership team can decrease the power which others wield. Therefore, some may prefer the current arrangement whereby they have more power.

For example, when Dr. Craig Thomas was asked about team leadership, his response gave strong hints that he preferred the status quo where he is recognized as being both a pastor and a teacher. Although his other responses seemed so genuine, this was by far the least convincing of his responses because he sounded like he preferred pastors and teachers being in

power, since his other answers provided biblical or historical reasons supporting the positions that he took. Although Dr. Thomas and others may have imperfect motivations, it is clear that this area was not fully enough addressed in this study.

On the other hand, Pastor Bill Drake gave the impression that he had no interest in power and said he intentionally no longer speaks from a stage. Pastor Drake was also very down to earth throughout the interview, and wants the whole body of Christ to become disciples. Pastor Drake said his church and denomination believes in prophets and prophecies and seemed to prioritize this over his own personal power. As stated in Chapter 4, finding out if reactivating five-fold team leadership would enhance disciple-making should be a subject for further study that can follow-up on the quantitative results that indicate there may be more to this area.

Analysis and Implications of RQ4

Research Question 4 investigated to what extent, if any, have cultural values distracted from the church making disciples? This question primarily focused on cultural values influencing the church. As with Research Question 2, Nvivo provided a substantial number of codes in reference to culture influencing the church. As Chapter four mentions, most Nvivo themes show that culture is negatively impacting the church. The online discipleship survey did not address this question. However, the IPA interviews provided a substantial amount of material that agreed with what the sources in the literature asserted, which is culture is adversely affecting the church's ability to make disciples. As mentioned in Chapter 4, there was not a major response to problems with materialism or pride, but that the overall culture is having a significant impact on Evangelical churches making disciples.

Analysis and Implications of RQ5

Research Question 5 asked "why does the Evangelical church continue pursuing familiar paths that has not had much success in making disciples?" Nvivo revealed how the church has been corrupted when it has governmental power, yet according to pastor Pablo Ortiz many Evangelicals still seek political solutions to spiritual problems as he described how the lack of disciple-making is a spiritual dilemma. He shared that the church has frequently prioritized seeking political power through elections, outlining the history of the church getting power from the state tracing back to Constantine. Other pastors also spoke of the dangers of continuing on this familiar path, as Dr. Joel Jones was disturbed by what he called Christian nationalism, which he described as a fervemt attempt of the church trying to get power from the state.

Dr. Craig Thomas continued this discussion of a significant portion of the Evangelical church pursuing the familiar path of power through the state. He shared that some of the members of his church are very concerned about the political climate turning against Christianity and wanted things to go back to how it was with a favorable political climate through the state. He said he disagreed with those members following this familiar path, and cited Tertullian in explaining that persecution is constructive for the church. Dr. Thomas said that it is counter-intuitive to think that persecution helps the church, but that both the Bible and Christian experience shows that it does. Pastor Jerry Latish was the most outspoken in his criticism of Evangelical churches pursuing familiar paths that do not produce many disciples. His background includes a number of experiences in which he has been able to make disciples. Pastor Latish pastored a church in his home country, where they successfully made disciples. He also is part of a missions organization that has been able to succeed in making disciples who make other disciples in a number of countries. This pastor says the ministry has encountered the

biggest resistance to formulating discipleship from within Christian leadership in the United States. He noted this in passing as he said their ministry was not focused on this opposition, but discussed it in the context of pastors and seminary leaders who preferred the familiar path they were accustomed to following.

There is no silver bullet to answer why Evangelical churches continue to pursue familiar paths that do not produce many disciples. Evangelical churches have developed habits like prioritizing state power over centuries, which effectively relegates making disciples to a lower priority. The saying that human beings are creatures of habit has some application in answering this question because the familiar paths are so entrenched that the resistance to change from influential Christian leaders is very high, according to pastor Latish. Nvivo reveals that several of the interviewees shared that the persecution that seems to be beginning in America may finally be enough to get Evangelical churches to change and seek the Lord as to what is happening. Dr. Thomas and pastor Ortiz observe that the path of state power is so familiar because it has been a practice going all the way back to the third century A.D. with the Roman Emperor Constantine. It is no easy process to get Evangelical churches to reconsider looking to political solutions for power instead of to spiritual solutions since this practice has been going on for such a long time.

Synopsis of the Research Findings

This mixed methods study had findings from both the quantitative surveys and from the qualitative interviews. These ranged from the various scales used to measure the online discipleship survey to the information that Nvivo revealed as pertinent to the subject. Investigating why there is a shortage of disciple-making in Evangelical churches and how the church leadership paradigm may be related to this problem is a complex subject. Although it is a

multi-faceted issue, this study shed a significant light on the subject, beginning with the quantitative scales which were developed.

Leadership Direction and Vision for Disciple-Making

The scales showed that the vision that church leaders cast for making disciples is significantly higher than other scales. Survey respondents indicated that the direction that was given about the importance of disciple-making was unambiguous and pronounced. However, this was not the case for all other scales which measured discipleship formation. The members and making disciples scales have significantly lower measurements. There are two possible explanations for why the vision and direction for disciple-making is so high but the actual making of disciples or members participation is much lower, and neither one are biblically sound. The first possibility is for why church leadership casting vision about disciple-making is much higher than what is really happening is as follows.

Pastors and Church Leaders are doing the Disciple-Making, but Members are not

The church leaders and senior pastors scales had high numbers that were the next highest after the leadership direction and vision scales. This could indicate that senior pastors and church leaders are both providing vision and doing disciple-making themselves, but that the members and laypeople are not joining in. There was some support for this position as several pastors shared that they were generally frustrated with the members not participating in the disciple-making efforts. These senior pastors described how many of the members were basically willing to come to the worship service but did not want to get involved with Sunday School, small groups, being discipled, or discipling others. Besides this group of interview participants, there was another group that described a different reason as being the primary cause for the gap

between leadership vision and direction and the discipleship formation that is actually taking place in the church. This other version of the situation is as follows.

Church Leaders talk about Disciple-Making, but their Actions do not match their Words

Another group of interviewees placed the primary reason for the problem as being that senior pastors and other church leaders have a substantial number of platitudes about the importance of making disciples, but that it is mostly rhetoric. The believe leaders are generally not acting on the vision they are casting. There are different ranges of this, as some churches may do minimal action in this direction, while others may do none. However, the pastors who described this scenario were adamant that there is a large gap between what is being said and what is really happening on disciple-making. It would take further research to try better determining whether the majority of the blame lies with the laypeople or with the pastors, or some combination thereof. However, focusing on which group is primarily to blame misses the main point, which is as follows.

Neither Leaders or Members Omitting Disciple-Making is Biblical

It really does not really matter which one of these reasons is primarily responsible for this problem as the Scripture does not excuse making fewer disciples. This includes any combination of both. The command Jesus gave to make disciples is a primary mandate of the Bible, so followers of Christ should be doing their uttermost to see that it is obeyed. Like the servant who told Jesus that he " was afraid and I went and hid your talent in the ground" in Matthew 25:25, Christians who have other priorities other than the Lord's priorities are choosing to go their own way instead of obeying Jesus Christ. This researcher hopes that those who minimize disciple-making do not meet a similar fate as the person who has one talent. Philippians 2:12b tells disciples to "work out your own salvation with fear and trembling," as Christians need to

earnestly obey God. It is better to find and prioritize remedies for both of these reasons than to focus on establishing blame as all attention needs to be focused on resolving this problem.

The Ephesians 4:11 Team Leadership scale had a Significantly lower score

Survey responses can sometimes be overly optimistic as people like to put their best foot forward. Despite this, when the survey was transformed into numeric scales for conducting analysis the Team Leadership/Ephesians 4:11 scale had a lower score than almost all the other scales. The difference was significant as the scores on the Team Leadership scales were negative. This was very different than all the other scales that were positive. The qualitative interviews did not provide much information about Ephesians 4:11 Team Leadership, but the low numbers on this scale indicate that something significant may be going on in this area.

The Church needs to apply Biblical Principles to adapt to the Changing World

Some Christians seem to want to adapt to a changing world by mirroring cultural changes like transgender and sexual orientation issues in the culture like the seminary that Pastor Cindy Miller used to attend. This approach is akin to acting as a chameleon by reflecting and adopting whatever activities are fashionable in the culture. Others wish to seek political power to instead try to resist the cultural changes they do not like. Neither of these approaches puts the Lord first as both are ideas which Christians have developed to try and address rapidly changing culture. Proverbs 3:5-6 tells Christians to "Trust in the Lord and lean not on your own understanding." The first approach is accommodation by following what the culture is doing, The second approach is resistance by going against the flow of the culture. Neither approach trusts the Lord like Proverbs 3:6-6 states. These approaches have also not been been very effective at making disciples nor are either of these approaches a godly witness to the unsaved world.

Dr. Jones mentioned that the hardest verse to obey was to "be in the world but not of the world," as the Bible shows a better way for the church to conduct itself in a tumultuous culture. He shared it is easier to gravitate to the extremes such as copying the culture or resisting changes by seeking governmental power than following the Lord's command to be in the world, which is to live in the world as disciples, but to not be of the world. It is challenging to live in this world but not to imitate its behaviors, but Jesus wants his disciples to be up to this challenge. The apostle Paul calls Christians to stop trusting in familiar paths that have not been making many disciples when he states, "And I will show you a still more excellent way," (1 Corinthians 12:31). The church needs to be ready to change, but not by taking the paths of least resistance by blending in with the culture or seeking political power to resist it.

Application of the Research Findings

The Church needs to be Ready for Christ's Return

The church needs to be transformed to be prepared for the Lord's return. Hebrews 13:8 states that "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, and today, and forever." This verse demonstrates that the Lord does not change. Yet change was an overriding theme of the qualitative interviews as different aspects of change permeated the interviews. Whether it was leading change, resisting change, cultural changes, reviving declining churches, or change from anachronistic leadership, Nvivo has so many codes on change that it was almost like a full spectrum on it. How do followers of Christ reconcile the fact that Jesus Christ is eternal and unchanging with such a rapidly changing culture in which they live?

The interviews help answer this and the Bible strengthens their answers. Dr. Thomas, pastor Ortiz, Dr. Jones, pastor Latish, and other interviewees recognized the dangers of the declining cultural trends as being antithetical to what the church should be doing. However, they

also spoke about the dangers of seeking political power as a remedy for pervasive drug abuse, sexual orientation and other cultural trends that contradict what the Bible says. God's Word states "Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect" (Romans 12:2). Disciples need to be willing to have such sacrificial outlooks in their relationship with God that they are "living sacrifices" like Romans 12:1 states. Moreover, the next verse commands Christians "not to be conformed to this world," (Romans 12:2).

Return to New Testament Discipleship

The church needs to change back to New Testament discipleship. The reality of the current situation is that the church does need to change, but not by trying to blend in with the secular culture, nor by trying to resist it through human methods of power. Jesus Christ came as a humble servant. He declined human power though being made king that so many of his followers wanted Him to be. Jesus instead of going along with some disciples' idea of making Him king and restoring a Jewish kingdom to earth, He chose the way of self-denial and the cross. This approach is very different than the relationship that the church has had with the state in the centuries since Constantine, as Dr. Thomas and pastor Ortiz pointed out.

Dr. Joel Jones is advocating that disciples recognize the sins of the culture, but graciously provide people with an alternative. Followers of Christ need to be so sacrificial that they are willing to experience significant change by neither following the culture nor resisting the culture with human power. Instead of these alternatives the church needs to choose a different route of being transformed into the disciple-making body that Jesus commands it to be. This type of transformation will require significant change. The grace that Dr. Jones is discussing does not condone sin or accommodate it by copying dysfunctional behavior. It is a grace that recognizes

that it is only the Lordship of Christ that keeps disciples on the straight and narrow path.

Christians should not look down on anyone since all people are sinners, but recognize that they

are also fundamentally flawed and only by the grace of God they are not participating in the

worst of the transgressions that are going on in the culture.

This researcher finds this middle-ground type of grace very appealing. Especially since

he shared that there is almost no middle left with nearly everybody gravitating towards one

political extreme or the other. The Bible commands followers of Christ "Wherefore come out

from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord" (2 Corinthians 6:17a KJV). Choosing the

middle ground instead of one political party or the other allows for disciples to put Christ ahead

of politics. It also is a much more pronounced witness to the unsaved world that disciples are not

just legislating morality or trying to get them to follow biblical guidelines through political

power but are shining a brighter light to a world that is getting increasingly darker.

The Church needs to Stand as its own Apart from State Power

It may feel very awkward for the church to separate itself from governmental power after

seventeen centuries of relationship with the state since Constantine, but Dr. Craig Thomas, Dr.

Jerry Jones, pastor Pablo Ortiz and other of the interviewees made it clear that the church

provides a clearer gospel witness without relationship with the state. Pastor Ortiz describes the

church being related with the state as the corruption of the church with state power. Dr. Jerry

Jones observed that by being separate from political power, the church is a stronger prophetic

witness to the unsaved world which greatly needs the Lord Jesus Christ. Moreover, Dr. Craig

Thomas shared how he was trying to get church members to recognize that the political trends

which are going against the church can actually strengthen the church. This Christian leader

shared about the importance of Christians learning from history. He wants followers of Christ to

be able to think counter intuitively and recognize that the persecution the Bible describes has not made the church weaker. The church has become stronger as a result of persecution and Dr. Thomas shared that history affirms this.

Leaders Need to Stop Being Afraid of Discussing Persecution

Lamoreau (2015) wrote her unpublished doctoral dissertation on Clergy's views on persecution in the Northeastern United States. She found that a significant percentage of pastors were so afraid of persecution that they might encourage members to have a "flee for your lives" response if persecution were to come to churches in America. Her research indicated that so many pastors were woefully ill-equipped for persecution, which causes them to discuss it as infrequently as possible. This avoidance of the subject of persecution leaves the church ill-equipped to deal with the issue. Her research made church leadership sound about as well prepared for persecution as when the Ottomans captured the Hagia Sophia in Constantinople. Despite this lack of preparation, the New Testament describes persecution as the normal condition for the church, as Dr. Thomas, pastor Latish, pastor Ortiz and others have indicated. Dr. Aiello is going against the flow of the fear and avoidance of persecution by trying to get his congregation more familiar with the Voice of the Martyrs. This researcher has also had a similar experience as Lamoreau describes during and after his trips to visit the persecuted church. After returning from travels church leaders have mostly tried to downplay and avoid the subject in manners which did not inspire confidence.

In 2020 and 2021 with the arrival of the Covid-19 pandemic, lockdowns, and the restrictions on churches that have been going on, the subject of persecution is starting to come more to the forefront. Some churches have closed, and a number of leaders have quit, while others describe this as the beginning of persecution. Most of the pastors that were interviewed

did not seem overwhelmed by cultural trends towards persecution. Nvivo described a Christ-centered remnant that is arising even while others are falling away. Pastor Pablo Ortiz described how persecution purifies the church and helps provide a better spiritual environment for disciple-making. There is another application point that needs to be put into practice and probably was the most pronounced in Nvivo.

Communication Needs to be a Two-Way Street

The research revealed such an abundance of sources who observed the problem of the shortage of discipleship formation in Evangelical churches and pivoted to making a solution for the problem that it could seem to some people as almost limitless. There were so many pastors like Smith (2014) who were trying to create a pastor driven solution to end this problem. Yet despite all of the effort that has been made to produce such a cornucopia of well-intended solutions, the problem shows no evidence of being mitigated. Resolving this issue requires more than just leaders transmitting lessons as Hull (2007) tries to achieve by having pastors share lessons on discipleship. It requires the entire body of Christ working together. For example, Vines (2012) emailed this researcher about his discipleship-oriented materials to both his Liberty inbox and his personal email inbox during this research. He sent a great deal of emails in trying to pass on his legacy of biblical knowledge and gave the reason that he sent so many email solicitations about Sunday School discipleship is because too many Christians rarely or ever read the Bible. Vines (2012) overwhelming amount of emails are indicative of how pervasive that solution-making approaches are.

Pastors and teachers like this are often so preoccupied with transmitting information are rarely available to listen to lay people or other type of Christian leaders. However, the irony is that church members or different types of Christian leaders often have messages that those

transmitting sermons and Sunday School information may greatly need to hear. Perhaps the COVID-19 pandemic can create a situation in which Christian leaders from an apostolic, prophetic, missional, discipleship or persecuted church background have a chance to speak to Christian leaders who are so focused on transmitting lessons. The existing shepherd-teacher church paradigm has made it very difficult for servants of the persecuted church like King (2020) to communicate to church leaders in a way that they really listen. This is because people transmitting lessons have been so focused upon what they were communicating to others that a large majority have effectively insulated themselves from listening to leaders like King (2020). King (2020) implies that the current lockdown may help foster a situation in which Christian leaders start to consider the status of their persecuted brothers and sisters and begin to listen to what the Lord is trying to communicate to them through this process (King, p. 1).

The transmitting process is so all-encompassing that it often closely resembles a one-way street of top-down communication, and this can impede too many American church leaders from listening to other Christians. This phenomenon of being insulated from outside voices often renders the church unable to consider people like Nigerian Pastor Ogundiran who views persecution as biblical. Vines' (2012) approach is another attempt by a Christian leader to try and resolve the lack of discipleship problem, but it takes humility to listen. American Evangelical church leaders have a tradition of going to places like Nigeria to transmit lessons to them. Perhaps people like Pastor Ogundiran or King (2020) can teach Evangelical leaders some lessons if they would humble themselves enough to listen and allow two-way communication to flow.

Really Restore the Priesthood of All Believers

The Nvivo data made it very apparent that the priesthood of all believers was very important, as the RQ 2 answers in Chapters 4 and 5 indicate. There was so much discussion of

themes on this subject and related subject that queries, with the codes providing an overwhelming amount of information on this topic. Martin Luther wanted to restore the priesthood of all believers more than five hundred years ago. One of the major limitations of the Reformation was that this never took place, as the Roman Catholic practice of one priest up on a stage and laypeople below still casts a long shadow over Evangelical churches in Pennsylvania as well as elsewhere in America and in many parts of the western world. The church never fully left the Roman cultural practice of the separation of priests and laity. The reason for this writer saying *really* restore the priesthood of all believers, is that there has been an abundance of talk on this subject, but the actions have not matched the rhetoric.

Successfully restoring the priesthood of all believers means that there needs to be a significant paradigm shift. Church Members need to have the whole-hearted commitment to Jesus Christ to share the workload of disciple-making and other aspects of running the church with their overworked leaders. They should not view church as if they were watching a sporting event or concert in which they do little or nothing. Dr. Aiello and others were frustrated about the lack of courage that members had to overcome their traditional religious background and be what the Bible says the church should be. On the other hand pastors and other leaders need to have the humility to allow church members to play their part in being the priesthood of all believers. The tendency to gravitate towards power also affects Christians as pastors and other leaders on stage often have a great deal of pride in the recognition that their position receives, as Cherry (2016) describes. Pastor Bill Drake said that he no longer speaks from a stage and enjoys serving three churches, as both of these concepts help to foster the priesthood of all believers. Pastor Jerry Latish emphatically described that their ministry that fosters disciples making

disciples received tremendous opposition from pastors and others in position of spiritual authority.

Actually restoring the priesthood of all believers is going to take an enormous transformation on the part of both pastors and lay people. Kotter (2012) shares how it takes a tremendous sense of urgency to successfully make a change. The historical habits of the separation of priests and lay people are so deeply entrenched after seventeen centuries of this problem that the Holy Spirit's power is necessary to make such a major change. Anything less than what Pastor Gail Hall described as figuratively "pushing them off of a cliff" may not be enough of a catalyst to change. As with the area of persecution, Evangelical leaders need to have the humility to be willing to listen to church members.

The separation of priests and laypeople has been a terrible malpractice that has long weakened the church. Whether those that prefer the status quo like it or not, a primary impetus for change may have finally come to the Evangelical church in America as many leaders assert that persecution has begun here. The Lord is allowing persecution to cleanse the church and purify it from the church's refusal to make disciples for so long. It is this researcher's hope that Martin Luther's hope to restore the priesthood of all believers would finally be realized in the Evangelical church in Pennsylvania, as well as throughout the United States and other areas that have been influenced by Roman culture with respect to the priesthood.

Research Limitations

This study was conducted by using a sampling of adult Evangelical church members in Pennsylvania. These are Christians who have received Jesus Christ as savior, who believe that the Bible is the inspired word of God and that salvation is by faith in Jesus Christ. Some of these believers are hopefully following the Lordship of Christ which inspires disciples to be

transformed into the image of Jesus Christ. This research did not include unbelievers and Catholics or people from other religious backgrounds. However, in acquiring mailing lists it turns out that Methodists, Presbyterians, Episcopalians, and Lutherans were included, and that some churches from these four types of denominations would not consider themselves to be Evangelical Christians.

Further Research

This study researched why the Evangelical church is not making many disciples. Acquiring some primary reasons for why there is a shortage of disciple-making can be a catalyst for other researchers to further investigate other aspects of this issue. It is essential that a clear definition of disciple-making be provided at the beginning of any study on the topic as many sources requested a definition. It would also be beneficial for future studies to update the lists of prospective churches to get any denominations who did not consider themselves to be Evangelical off of the list before any mailings are sent. The impact of five-fold team leadership on disciple-making merits additional research as it is an area which was somewhat answered during the quantitative surveys, but was generally unanswered during the qualitative interviews, and it could use further research.

Quantitative Studies

It would have been a significant boost to the online discipleship survey if a clear definition of disciple-making were provided at the beginning of the survey. It also would be constructive to not include denominations that do not consider themselves Evangelical. This is because many of these respondents were sent to the end of the survey and increased the number of non-responders in the survey. It would also be helpful if there was a mechanism to get greater

participation from members and lay leaders involved in the survey, in order to not have to rely on so many pastors to be participants.

Qualitative Studies

The IPA interviews were a useful format for obtaining information and could be very effective to further investigate Ephesians 4:11 Team Leadership helping disciple-making. Especially if there were some way that a researcher could interview other types of Christians in addition to pastors. The responses from Elders, key lay members, Sunday School Instructors, Teachers, Deacons, and others could be beneficial by providing their perspectives on Evangelical churches. It would be especially helpful if future surveys and interviews included other members of the body of Christ who consider their primary gifts to be apostles, prophets, and evangelists. Obtaining their opinions on the subject could provide a wider lens of the church experience.

Geographically

The ecological environment of the Evangelical church has some similarities throughout the United States. Many, if not a large majority of the findings of this study probably have significant application throughout other states and regions of the United States of America. Beyond that, the Evangelical church's context in other parts of the western world still contains some pretty strong similarities with the Evangelical church in Pennsylvania. It would be beneficial if future research on this subject could consider different parts of the United States and other countries to see how closely it resembles the information that this research found out. Or if there was some way to compare the response of members of Evangelical churches in the western world with participants who live in large parts of the world who are frequently subject to different types of persecution.

Summary

This study investigated if the church leadership paradigm has contributed to the shortfall of disciple-making in Pennsylvania Evangelical these churches. The research was conducted to fill in some of the gap between parts of the church that either ignore this problem, talk about the lack of disciple making or try providing solutions to resolve the problem. Overall, many Christian leaders have identified the problem of not enough discipleship formation in Evangelical churches, but very few, if any are examining the underlying reasons for why this is taking place. This researcher did research to determine if contemporary church leadership contributes to the root causes of the problem.

The research questions showed that the number of reasons contribute to the shortage of discipleship formation in Pennsylvania Evangelical churches. Not having the priesthood of all believers, members not participating, and pastors intimidating them from becoming more active, being overwhelmed with cultural values, and following familiar paths are all part of the problem. Although it is virtually impossible to attribute a percentage to each of the reasons, Nvivo showed the priesthood of all believers easily had the highest number of codes, and probably is the largest impediment to discipleship formation on this list. In addition to these direct reasons from the RQs, the church seeking political power, the strong aversion to persecution, cleaving to the status quo, and resisting change are other reasons that contribute to the shortage of disciple-making in Evangelical churches in Pennsylvania.

There may be other reasons that contribute to the shortage of discipleship formation. Although this study only applies to Evangelical churches in Pennsylvania, many of these sample principles probably at least partially apply throughout the United States and in large parts of the western world that have been so influenced by Roman cultural practices. It is this writer's hope

that, as the impact of Evangelical church leadership on the lack of disciple-making has been

more clearly determined, this research will provide encouragement for further research on the

subject. This can in turn help the church to become ready for the second coming of the Lord

Jesus Christ.

REFERENCES

Alarid, M. N. (2016). *The degree of discipleship of Christian school faculty*. (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (Order no. 10099982).

Andrew, B. & Jansen, A. (2014), *The Exodus mandate: Moses reveals how you can accomplish the impossible*. Santa Ana, CA: Open Doors International.

Anfara, V. A. and Mertz, N. T. (2014). *Theoretical frameworks in qualitative research*, 2nd Ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc.

Archer, J. (2017). *Developing an effective biblical method for the rediscovery of accountability in Christian discipleship*. (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from Scholars Crossing, institutional repository of Liberty University. (Order No. 2439).

Baker, K. R. (2015). *Culturequake: A strategy for transforming an established church culture by re-visioning key systems*. (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (Order No. 3689496).

Baldwin, L. (2016). *Five challenges to disciple making and strategies to address them*. (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (Order no. 10619210).

Balentine, R. Z. (2017). *Doxology and discipleship: Principles for how the worship leader functions pastorally*. (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (Order no. 10619210).

Barna, G. (2001). *Growing true disciples: New strategies for producing genuine followers of Christ*. Colorado Springs, CO: Waterbrook Press.

Bartel, J. (2014). *Toward understanding and shaping the passion of the heart: A conceptual model for heart discipleship*. (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (Order No. 3579043).

Baudler, K. T. (2016). Martin Luther's priesthood of all believers in an age of modern myth. New York, NY: Oxen Press.

Beck, R. (2017). God the judge and human justice. *The Journal of Law and Religion*, 32(1), 33-39.

Blomberg, C. L. (1992). *Matthew: An exegetical and theological exposition of the Holy Scripture (the new American commentary*, Nashville, TN: Broadman.

Bonhoeffer, D. (1995). *The cost of discipleship*. New York, NY: Touchstone.

Bowler, K. (2013) *Blessed: The History of the American Prosperity Gospel*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Brooks, K. H. (2014). *Addressing apathy in the church: Moving people towards a biblical healthy discipleship model*. (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (Order no. 3636361).

Brosius, K.M. (2017) Culture and the church's discipleship strategy. *Journal of Ministry and Theology*, 2*1*(1), 123-157.

Brown, M. R. (2012). *By this will they know: Discipleship principles to transform the church*. (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (Order no. 3540376).

Burdick, B. H. (2018). The status of the church in North America. *Review & Expositor*. *115*(2), 200-213.

Burgraff, A. (2015). Developing discipleship curriculum: Applying the systems approach model for designing instruction by Dick, Dick, and Carey to the construction of church discipleship courses. *Christian Education Journal, (12)*2, 397-414.

Carr, C. J. (2014). *Waylon Moore's theology and methodology of disciple-making in light of New Testament principles*. (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (Order no. 3620778).

Cartwright, J. Etzel, G., Jackson, C. and Jones, T. P. (2017). *Teaching the world: Foundations for online theological education*. Nashville, TN: B & H Academic.

Chan, F. (2012). *Multiply: Disciples making disciples*. Colorado Springs, CO: David C Cook.

Cherry, S. (2016). Discipleship and Christian character. *Theology, 119*(3), 193-199.

Coleman, R. E. (1998). *The master plan of discipleship*. Grand Rapids, MI: Fleming H. Revele, a division of Baker Publishing Group.

Coleman, R. E. (2010). *The master plan of evangelism*. Grand Rapids, MI: Rwell Books, a
 division of Baker Publishing Group.

Copeland, J. E. (2012). *Historical analysis of the division between clergy and laity with
 particular reference to discipleship*. (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest
 Dissertations & Theses Global. (Order No. 3535541).

Costner, M. J. (2017). *Defining characteristics of laity among turnaround churches in the
 Carolinas. (Doctoral* dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses
 Global. (Order No. 10271423).

Cox, W. F. Jr. and Peck, R. A. (2018). Christian education as discipleship formation.
 Christian Education Journal, 15(2), 243-261.

Creswell, J. W. (2015). A concise introduction to mixed methods research. Los Angeles, CA:
 SAGE.

Creswell, J. W., and Creswell, J. D. (2018). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and
 mixed methods approaches,* 5th Ed. Los Angeles, CA: SAGE.

Dearman, J. A. (2005). Moses, God and the dynamics of intercessory prayer: a study of Exodus
 32-34 and Numbers 13-14. *Horizons in Biblical Theology*, Vol. 27, June 2005.

Dennery, C. A. B. (2013). *A correlational study of biblical literacy and the level of leadership,
 discipleship, and demographics in an African American church in Delaware*. (Doctoral
 dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (Order No.
 3551279).

Dunmire, S. L. (2012). Growing disciples in the pattern of the twelve: The ecclesiola in ecclesia
 as a model for spiritual transformation and local discipleship. (Doctoral dissertation).
 Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (Order no. 3552165).

Formicola, J. R. (2016). The politics of clerical sexual abuse. *Religions, 7*(1). Jan 2016, 9-13.

Foster, R. N. (2007). *The great invitation: A call to discipleship*. (Doctoral dissertation).
 Retrieved from Scholars Crossing, institutional repository of Liberty University. (Order
 No. 1045).

Galvan, J. L. and Galvan, M. C. (2017). *Writing literature reviews*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Geiger, E., Kelley, M., & Nation, P. (2012). *Transformational discipleship: How people really
 grow*. Nashville, TN: B & H Publishing Group.

Green, M. D. (2005). Understanding the fivefold ministry. Lake Mary, FL: Charisma House Book Group.

Han, S. S. (2015). *Developing an intentional leadership development process through mentoring in the local church*. (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (Order no. 3701051).

Hardison, W. M. (2019). *Effective discipleship of young adults*. (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (Order No. 13882695).

Harris, M. J. (2000). Slave of Christ. Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press.

Hertig, P. (2001). The Great Commission revisited: The role of God's reign in disciple making. Missiology: An International Review, Vol. XXIX, No. 3, Jul 2001, p. 343-355.

Hirsch, A. (2009). *The forgotten ways: Reactivating the missional church*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Publishing.

Hirsch, A. and Hirsch, D. (2010). *Untamed: Reactivating a missional form of discipleship*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.

Hirsch, A. and Catchim, T. (2012). *The permanent revolution: Apostolic imagination and practice for the 21st century church*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, A Wiley Imprint.

Holsinger, J. W. Jr. (2009). *Christian leadership in the local church: Mentoring new Christian disciples.* (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (Order no. 3385086).

Hull, B. (2004), 20th Anniversary Edition. *Jesus Christ disciplemaker*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Publishing Group.

Hull, B. (2006*). The complete book of discipleship: On being and making followers of Christ*. Colorado Springs, CO: Navpress.

Hull, B. (2007). The disciple making pastor: Leading others on the journey of faith. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Publishing Group.

Jackson, W. (2020). What is the meaning of Ekklessia (church)? *Christian courier*, Jackson, TN: Fortify Your Faith.

Johnson, M. D. (2015). *Key behaviors and milestones in adult discipleship—fashioning intentionality, personalization, oversight, and assessment*. (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (Order No. 3723170).

Johnston, G. (2009). *Discipleship: Stepping stones to developing your church's strategy*. (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from Scholars Crossing, institutional repository of Liberty University. (Order No. 918).

Joseph, D. C., Jr. (2015). *Running the race…finishing well! Seven key exercises for a mobile body of Christ*. (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (Order No. 3688760).

Keener, C. S. (2009). Matthew's missiology: Making disciples of the nations (Matthew 28:19-20). *Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies*, 12(1), 3-20.

Kilner, J. F. (2015). *Dignity and destiny: humanity in the image of God*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company.

King, J. (2020). *COVID-19 + Starvation : A disaster facing the persecuted*. Washington, DC: International Christian Concern.

Kinnaman, D. (2020). The state of the church 2020. *Barna Research*. barna.com/research/state-of-the-church 2020/.

Lamoreau, J. (2015). *A pilot study on clergy's view on contemporary persecution: Preparing the Christian church in the Northeastern United States*. (Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation). Dayton, OH: United Theological Seminary.

Leedy, P. D., and Ormrod, J. E. (2013). Prac*tical research,* 11th Ed. Boston, MA: Pearson.

Lee, H. (2014). *Becoming a disciple-making church: A strategic transition for dongshin apostle community*. (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from Scholars Crossing, institutional repository of Liberty University. (Order No. 1893).

Lee, H. (2016). Transforming discipleship: Seeking a Korean way of Imitatio Missionis Christi *International Review of Mission. 105(2)*, 321-335.

LifeWay Research (2008). *Transformational Discipleship Assessment*. Nashville, TN: B & H.

Luther, M. (2008). *The freedom of a Christian*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press.

Lynn, J. H. (2014). *Making disciples of Jesus Christ: Investigating, identifying, and implementing an effective discipleship system*. (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (Order No. 3620133).

Machi, L. A. and McEvoy, B. T. (2016). *The literature review: Six steps to success*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin, A SAGE Company.

Maddix, M. (2009). A Biblical model of the people of God: Overcoming the clergy/laity dichotomy. *Christian Education Journal 2009. 6* (2), 214-228.

Mars, S. D. (2017). *The dying of the American church: Five biblical principles for revival*. (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (Order no. 10257911).

Marshall, C. and Rossman, G. B. (2016). *Designing qualitative research*, 6th ed. Los Angeles, CA: SAGE Publications.

Matthews, S. H. (2005). *A spiritual disciplines-based discipleship curriculum for the local church*. (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from Scholars Crossing, institutional repository of Liberty University. (Order No 1284).

McGavran, D. (1988). *Effective Evangelism: A theological mandate*. Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed.

McKinney, O. X. (2017). *Moving from performance to missional worship: Five biblical principles and practices to infuse discipleship into worship*. (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from Scholars Crossing, institutional repository of Liberty University.

Meadows, P. R. (2012). Mission and discipleship in a digital culture. *Mission Studies: Journal of the International Association for Mission Studies*. 29(2), 163-182.

Meyer, D. A. (2018). Pastors in the fear of God. *Concordia Journal, 44*(1), Winter 2018, 15-20.

Meyers, R. A. (2014). *Missional Worship, Worshipful Mission: Gathering as God's People, Going Out in God's Name*. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans.

Milks, B. A. (2017). Creating and sustaining a missional movement in America. (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (Order No. 10639727).

Moon, J. W. and Moreau, A. (2017). Intercultural discipleship (encountering mission): Learning from global approaches to spiritual formation. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic.

Moore, B. K. (2018) *A biblical and theological vision for the revitalization of churches*. (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (Order no. (10637806).

Moore, J. (2017). *The martyr's oath: Living for the Jesus they're willing to die for*. Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers.

Morales, C. S. (2013). *A systematic discipleship module in evangelism: Training and inspiring Christians to fulfill the Great Commission*. (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (Order No. 3579813).

Moss, B. K. (2014). *Leadership development in the local church: An intentional strategy for developing leaders at every level*. (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (Order no. 3665553).

Murray, A. (2001). *Humility: The journey toward holiness*. Bloomington, MN: Bethany House Publishers.

Nee, W. (1977). *The normal Christian life*. Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers.

Nichols, R. (2017). *Dirty discipleship: The essential nature of recovery ministry in fulfilling the Great Commission*. (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (OrderNo. 10263429).

Niemandt, C. J. P. (2016). Rediscovering joy in costly and radical discipleship in mission. *Hervormde Teolgiese Studies*, 72(4), 1-7.

Ogden, G. (2003). *Transforming discipleship: Making disciples a few at a time.* Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

Ogundiran, V. (2013). *Making disciples of Jesus Christ: Implementing an effective discipleship strategy for churches in America*. (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (Order no. 3564392).

Ott, K. R. (2016). *Initiating a missional mindset: The international leadership instintute's eight core values as impetus for missional living*. (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (Order no. 10139036).

Payne, C. R. (2014). *An investigation of adversity for Christian living and proposal for discipleship response*. (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from Scholars Crossing, institutional repository of Liberty University. (Order No. 980).Ranier, T. (2014). *Autopsy of a deceased church*. Nashville, TN: B & H Books.

Pearcey, N. (2004). *Total truth: Liberating Christianity from its cultural captivity*. Wheaton, IL: Published by Crossway Books, a Division of Good News Publishers.

Pinson, P. W. (2012). *A qualitative collective case-study of discipleship ministry to students of the millennial generation in southern Baptist mega-churches in South Carolina.* (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (Order No.3528126).

Platt, D. (2017). Counter culture: Following Christ in an anti-Christian age. Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale Momentum.

Platt, D. (2010). *Radical: Taking back your faith from the American dream*. Colorado Springs, CO: Multnomah Books.

Ranier, T. (2014). *Autopsy of a deceased church*. Nashville, TN: B & H Books.

Reddy, M. R. (2019). Planting healthy churches through the lens of missional discipleship. (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (Order no. 22589505).

Ripken, N. & Andrew, B. (2014). *The insanity of obedience: Walking with Jesus in tough places.* Nashville, TN: B & H Publishing Group.

Roberts, C. M. (2010). *The dissertation journey: A practical and comprehensive guide to planning, writing, and defending your dissertation*, 2nd Ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin, A SAGE Company.

Roberts, R. O. (1987). *Revival literature: An annotated bibliography with biographical and historical notices*. Wheaton, IL: International Awakening Press.

Roy, S. L. (2017). *An examination of the theme of discipleship in the seven churches of Revelation.* (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (Order no. 10680636).

Sanders, O. J. (2017). *Spiritual leadership: Principles of excellence for every believer*. Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers.

Sauer, C. (2013). Theology of persecution and martyrdom: An example in globalizing theology. *Evangelical Review of Theology.* *37*(3), 267-274.

Setran, D. P. (2016). 'Conquering the "tyrannical commander": Richard Baxter on the perils of pride in Christian Ministry. *Christian Education Journal*, *13*(1), 59–80.

Shields, J. B. (2008). *An assessment of dropout rates of former youth ministry participants in conservative Southern Baptist megachurches*. (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations &Theses Global. (Order no. 3356773).

Shirley, C. (2008) It takes a church to make a disciple: An integrative model of discipleship for the local church. *Southwestern Journal of Theology*, *50*(2), 207-224.

Shiraki, M. K. (2014). *The need for discipleship Triads/Quads that intentionally nurture Christians in their love for the Lord*. (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (Order no. 3615971).

Sjogren, B. (2013). *God's bottom line*. Mechanicsville, VA: Mission Minded Publishers.

Smith, D. A. (2014). *A pastor's approach to discipleship and its effect on the local church: A three-step approach to biblical discipleship*. (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations &Theses Global. (Order no. 3619103).

Smith, J. A., Flowers, P., and Larkin, M. (2009). Interpretative phenomenological analysis. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.

Smith, J. E. (2018). *Cultural based discipling according to the strategies of Jesus*. (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from Scholars Crossing, institutional repository of Liberty University. (Order No. 2854).

Snelling, P. A. (2015). *Developing an effective spiritual maturity process within a congregation*. (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (Order no. 3722676).

Stetzer, E. and Dodson, M. (2007). *Comeback Churches: How 300 Churches Turned Around and Yours Can Too* (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group.

Strobel, L. (2000). *The case for faith: A journalist investigates the toughest objections to Christianity.* Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

Styron, H. (2004). *Developing a measuring instrument to determine the level of discipleship commitment attained by individual Christians*. (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from Scholars Crossing, institutional repository of Liberty University. (Order No. 385).

Taylor, D. E. (2013). *The essence of discipleship: An Evangelical perspective*. (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from Scholars Crossing, institutional repository of Liberty University. (Order No. 2854).

Tomlinson, S. (2017). *Breaking free from personality-driven ministry.* (Doctoral Dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (Order No. 10810411).

Vines, J. (2012). *Vines by the Book*. Woodstock, GA: Jerry Vines Ministries.

https://www.biblegateway.com

Webber, R. E. (2006). (2006) *The Divine Embrace: Recovering the Passionate Spiritual Life*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.

Weems, S. (2013). *Staffing for healthy small groups: A model for enlisting, training, and motivating lay leaders*. (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (Order No. 3559028).

Welton, J. (2017). *Equipping the equippers: The handbook for raising up apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers*. Rochester, NY: Welton Academy.

Wheeler, A. (2015). The Commissioning of All Believers: Toward a More Holistic Model of Global Discipleship. *Missiology: An International Review 43*(2), 148-162.

Wheeler, D. and Vernon, M. W. (2011). *The Great Commission to Worship: Biblical Principles for Worship-Based Evangelism*. Nashville: B & H Academic

Wilder, M. S. and Parker, S. W. (2010). *Transformission: Making disciples through short-term missions*. Nashville, TN: B & H Publishing Group.

Wilhoit, J. (1986). Christian education & the search for meaning, second edition. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic.

Willard, D. (2016). *Renewing the Christian Mind: Essays, Interviews, and Talks*, ed. Gary Black Jr. New York, NY: Harper One.

Winchester, B. J. (2018). *7 Essential keys to success: Developing the spiritual discipline in the leader.* (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (Order no. 10748782).

Winter, R. D. and Hawthorne, S. C. (2009). *Perspectives on the world Christian movement*, 4th Ed. Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library.

Womack, I. R. (2015). *Fivefold ministry Basic Training: Understanding the distinct roles of apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers*. Royersford, PA: Alpha Book Publishing.

Wright, C. J. H. (2018) *The mission of God: Unlocking the Bible's grand narrative*. Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press.

APPENDIX A
IRB APPROVAL

September 24, 2020

James Marshall

Gary Bredfeldt

Re: IRB Exemption - IRB-FY19-20-483 The relationship between contemporary Evangelical church leadership and church discipleship formation

Dear James Marshall, Gary Bredfeldt:

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

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

Category 2.(iii). Research that only includes interactions involving educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures, or observation of public behavior (including visual or auditory recording) if at least one of the following criteria is met:
The information obtained is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that the identity of the human subjects can readily be ascertained, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects, and an IRB conducts a limited IRB review to make the determination required by §46.111(a)(7).

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

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

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

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

APPENDIX B
CHURCH PERMISSION FORMS

January 8, 2021

Pastor
Anonymous Evangelical Church
1 Anonymous Street
Anonymous, PA 11111

Dear Jim Marshall:
After careful review of your research proposal entitled the Relationship between Contemporary
Evangelical Church Leadership and Church Discipleship Formation, I have approved our church
to participate in your study by sending out your emails with the survey link and posting to our
social media. We will invite our membership and staff to use the link to participate in your
study. Check the following boxes, as applicable:

☐ I/We are requesting a copy of the results upon study completion and/or publication.

Sincerely,

Pastor
Anonymous Evangelical Church

APPENDIX C
INFORMED CONSENT FORMS

The IRB incorporated the Informed Consent Forms into the beginning of the Online

Discipleship Survey, which is as follows.

Consent

Title of the Project: The Relationship between Contemporary Evangelical Church Leadership and Church Discipleship Formation
Principal Investigator: James Marshall, Doctoral Candidate, Liberty University

Invitation to be Part of a Research Study
You are invited to participate in a research study. In order to participate, you must be at least 18 years old and a member in an Evangelical church in Pennsylvania. 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.

What is the study about and why is it being done?
The purpose of this mixed methods study was to determine if the church leadership paradigm contributes to the problem of a lack of disciple-making in Pennsylvania Evangelical churches.

What will happen if you take part in this study?
If you agree to be in this study, I would ask you to do the following things:
1. Complete an online survey. The survey will take approximately 30 minutes to complete.

How could you or others benefit from this study?
Participants should not expect to receive a direct benefit from taking part in this study.

Benefits to society include increasing the base of knowledge regarding this issue and improving the process of disciple making.

What risks might you experience from being in this study?
The risks involved in this study are minimal, which means they are the equal to the risks you would encounter in everyday life.

How will personal information be protected?
The records of this study will be kept private. Research records will be stored securely, and only the researcher and his research committee will have access to the records. Participant responses will be anonymous. Electronic data will be stored on a password-locked computer and physical copies will be stored in a locked filing cabinet. After three years, all electronic records will be deleted and any paper copies will be shredded.

Is study participation voluntary?

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether to participate will not affect your relations with your church or 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 is Jim Marshall. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact him at ████████████████ .You may also contact the researcher's faculty sponsor, Dr. Gary Bredfeldt, ████████████████ .

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, 1971University 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 can print a copy of this document for your records. If you have any questions about the study later, you can contact the researcher using the information provided above.

APPENDIX D

POSSIBLE CHURCH LEADERSHIP CAUSES THAT THE LITERATURE REVEALED

A. Busy society
B. Sharing the workload
C. Leadership Paradigm
D. Leadership Style

APPENDIX E
INITIAL 28 SURVEY QUESTIONS BEFORE CHANGE INTO A LIKERT SCALE

A. **Busy society**
1. About how much time do most church members devote to growing as disciples weekly?
2. Does leadership have enough time for disciple-making?
3. Do laypeople regularly devote a time interval to being formed into disciples?
4. Do leaders prioritize spending time on discipleship?
5. Is the amount of time that both leaders and members spend on disciple-making sufficient?
6. Do pastors have enough time to take care of the church's disciple-making needs?
7. Are there enough trained disciple makers that have time to make disciples in your church?

B. **Sharing the workload**
1. About what percentage of the lay people participate in ministries like disciple-making?
2. How much of the disciple-making is your pastor able to do?
3. How much of the disciple-making is your leadership team able to do?
4. How much do you think it helps your pastor if laypeople share the church's workload?
5. How many people does your congregation have involved with disciple-making?
6. How much does it help your church leadership team if laypeople help with disciple-making?
7. To what degree would your church make disciples better if members shared the workload?

C. **Leadership paradigm**
1. What types of leaders does your church have? (Multiple options, including "other")
2. Which leaders conduct disciple making and most of the ministry?
3. What other type of leaders besides pastors help make disciples?
4. How much involvement does your church have evangelists?
5. How much involvement does your church have prophets?
6. How much involvement does your church have apostles?
7. How much involvement does your church have with missionaries?

D. **Leadership style**
1. How is your church's leadership style affecting its ability to make disciples?
2. In what ways has leadership helped make disciples in your church?
3. In what ways has leadership impeded disciple-making in your church?
4. How well do you think your leaders obey the Lord's command to make disciples?
5. How well do you think the leader's communicates Jesus' command to make disciples?
6. To what degree does the church have a vision for making disciples?
7. To what degree does the congregation share in leadership's vision of making disciples?

APPENDIX F
FINAL 36 LIKERT STATEMENTS USED IN QUALTRICS (AFTER EXPERT PANEL)

1. Our church has a clear vision for making disciples.
2. Our church prioritizes disciple making every week for people to continue growing in the faith.
3. Our members devote at least one hour weekly to grow as disciples besides the worship service.
4. Church leaders disciple others on a weekly basis
5. Church leaders are discipled by others as part of their weekly schedules.
6. Leadership prioritizes disciple-making activities.
7. The senior pastor consistently prioritizes disciple-making in a way that members relate to.
8. Church members spend enough time discipling others and being discipled weekly.
9. The time and energy that members devote to fostering discipleship is sufficient for them to mature as disciples.
10. The pastor has enough time and energy to take care of the church's discipleship needs.
11. The leadership team has plenty of time to take care of disciple-making needs.
12. Leadership has an effective plan for making disciples that produces measurable results.
13. A large percentage of our church's time and energy is focused on making disciples.
14. There are plenty of trained disciple-makers in our church.
15. All church members share the workload with the pastor and leadership team.
16. Many members and laypeople participate in the work of disciple-making.
17. Sharing the ministry workload blesses the leadership while strengthening the members.
18. Our church has the opportunity for all members to use their unique gifts to join in the work.
19. The pastor and a few helpers do almost all the work.
20. Besides pastors, other type of leaders help our church grow in discipleship formation.
21. Our church has evangelists on the leadership team who regularly join in the ministry.
22. Evangelists teach and show us how to share our faith as part of our growing as disciples.
23. Our congregation regularly hears prophetic messages on God's truth and holiness.
24. Prophets help us balance God's truth and justice with pastoral tendencies towards love and mercy.
25. Our church has been learning about the entrepreneurial and visionary role of apostles.
26. Apostles are essential to our church leadership and they stimulate our discipleship.
27. Apostles, prophets, and evangelists are on the ministry team to help members mature into disciples.
28. Leaders clearly communicate the Great Commission so that all members make disciples.
29. Making disciples is top priority, and most members have friends or relatives serving cross-culturally.
30. Our church rarely hears about cross-cultural missions or from missionaries making disciples.
31. How our church is led impacts our congregation's ability to foster discipleship formation.
32. When members receive Jesus as savior, they are told to grow as disciples as He is their Lord.
33. There is a gap between what is said about discipleship and what takes place in our church.
34. Our pastor and ministry team's leadership style enhances discipleship formation.
35. Our leadership's approach has minimized disciple-making.
36. Members have fully embraced leadership's vision to join in discipleship formation.

APPENDIX G

QUANTITATIVE SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSES FROM QUALTRICS

4. Our church has a clear vision for making disciples.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Frequency	106	111	33	27	4
Percentage	37.7	39.5	11.7	9.6	1.4

5. Our church prioritizes disciple making every week for people to continue growing in the faith.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Frequency	92	113	47	23	6
Percentage	32.7	40.2	16.7	8.2	2.1

6. Our members devote at least one hour weekly to grow as disciples besides the worship service.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Frequency	55	111	65	40	10
Percentage	19.6	39.5	23.1	14.2	3.6

7. Church leaders disciple others on a weekly basis.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Frequency	82	102	52	35	10
Percentage	29.2	36.3	18.5	12.5	3.6

8. Church leaders are discipled by others as part of their weekly schedules.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Frequency	43	99	89	41	9
Percentage	15.3	35.2	31.7	14.6	3.2

9. Leadership prioritizes disciple-making activities.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Frequency	87	109	44	34	7
Percentage	31.0	38.8	15.7	12.1	2.5

10. The senior pastor consistently prioritizes disciple-making in a way that members relate to.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Frequency	114	94	40	25	8
Percentage	40.6	33.5	14.2	8.9	2.8

11.Church members spend enough time discipling others and being discipled weekly.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Frequency	21	67	81	86	26
Percentage	7.5	23.8	28.8	30.6	9.3

12. The time and energy that members devote to fostering discipleship is sufficient for them to mature as disciples.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Frequency	22	80	80	79	10
Percentage	7.8	28.5	28.5	28.1	7.1

13. The pastor has enough time and energy to take care of the church's discipleship needs.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Frequency	63	82	50	64	22
Percentage	22.4	29.2	17.8	22.8	7.8

14. The leadership team has plenty of time to take care of disciple-making needs.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Frequency	36	101	71	57	16
Percentage	12.8	35.9	25.3	20.3	5.7

15. Leadership has an effective plan for making disciples that produces measurable results.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Frequency	44	66	71	70	30
Percentage	15.7	23.5	25.3	24.9	10.7

16. A large percentage of our church's time and energy is focused on making disciples.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Frequency	43	92	49	71	26
Percentage	15.3	32.7	17.4	25.3	9.3

17. There are plenty of trained disciple-makers in our church.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Frequency	29	75	58	88	31
Percentage	10.3	26.7	20.6	31.3	11.0

18. All church members share the workload with the pastor and leadership team.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Frequency	25	72	56	79	49
Percentage	8.9	25.6	19.9	28.1	17.4

19. Many members and laypeople participate in the work of disciple-making.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Frequency	39	88	60	72	22
Percentage	13.9	31.3	21.4	25.6	7.8

20. Sharing the ministry workload blesses the leadership while strengthening the members.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Frequency	189	66	22	2	2
Percentage	67.3	23.5	7.8	.7	.7

21. Our church has the opportunity for all members to use their unique gifts to join in the work.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Frequency	132	107	25	9	8
Percentage	47.0	38.1	8.9	3.2	2.8

22. The pastor and a few helpers do almost all the work.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Frequency	61	94	33	62	31
Percentage	21.7	33.5	11.7	22.1	11.0

23. Besides pastors, other type of leaders help our church grow in discipleship formation.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Frequency	84	137	36	19	5
Percentage	29.9	48.8	12.8	6.8	1.8

24. Our church has evangelists on the leadership team who regularly join in the ministry.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Frequency	36	71	70	58	46
Percentage	12.8	25.3	24.9	20.6	16.4

25. Evangelists teach and show us how to share our faith as part of our growing as disciples.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Frequency	61	90	66	41	23
Percentage	21.7	32.0	23.5	14.6	8.2

26. Our congregation regularly hears prophetic messages on God's truth and holiness.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Frequency	120	70	45	24	22
Percentage	42.7	24.9	16.0	8.5	7.8

27. Prophets help us balance God's truth and justice with pastoral tendencies towards love and mercy.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Frequency	81	90	79	15	16
Percentage	28.8	32.0	28.1	5.3	5.7

28. Our church has been learning about the entrepreneurial and visionary role of apostles.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Frequency	24	59	82	62	54
Percentage	8.5	21.0	29.2	22.1	19.2

29. Apostles are essential to our church leadership and they stimulate our discipleship.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Frequency	49	82	84	30	36
Percentage	17.4	29.2	29.9	10.7	12.8

30. Apostles, prophets, and evangelists are on the ministry team to help members mature into disciples.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Frequency	34	61	82	52	52
Percentage	12.1	21.7	29.2	18.5	18.5

31. Leaders clearly communicate the Great Commission so that all members make disciples.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Frequency	100	102	44	26	9
Percentage	35.6	36.3	15.7	9.3	3.2

32. Making disciples is top priority, and most members have friends or relatives serving cross-culturally.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Frequency	29	61	93	69	29
Percentage	10.3	21.7	33.1	24.6	10.3

33. Our church rarely hears about cross-cultural missions or from missionaries making disciples.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Frequency	20	56	41	87	77
Percentage	7.1	19.9	14.6	31.0	27.4

34. How our church is led impacts our congregation's ability to foster discipleship formation.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Frequency	124	112	39	4	2
Percentage	44.1	39.9	13.9	1.4	.7

35. When members receive Jesus as savior, they are told to grow as disciples as He is their Lord.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Frequency	194	55	24	7	1
Percentage	69.0	19.6	8.5	2.5	.4

36. There is a gap between what is said about discipleship and what takes place in our church.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Frequency	38	113	48	44	38
Percentage	13.5	40.2	17.1	15.7	13.5

37. Our pastor and ministry team's leadership style enhances discipleship formation.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Frequency	70	114	64	25	8
Percentage	24.9	40.6	22.8	8.9	2.8

38. Our leadership's approach has minimized disciple-making.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Frequency	7	33	52	78	111
Percentage	2.5	11.7	18.5	27.8	39.5

39. Members have fully embraced leadership's vision to join in discipleship formation.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Frequency	22	88	94	70	7
Percentage	7.8	31.3	33.5	24.9	2.5

APPENDIX H
SAMPLE OF DATA FORMATS THAT WERE EXPORTED FROM QUALTRICS

The following 17 responses to question 1 "Our church has a clear vision for making

disciples" is a sample of how the data appears in .csv format:

Strongly disagree
Strongly agree
Somewhat agree
Strongly agree
Strongly agree
Strongly agree
Strongly agree
Somewhat agree
Neither agree nor disagree
Strongly agree
Somewhat agree
Strongly agree
Strongly agree
Strongly agree
Strongly agree
Somewhat disagree
Somewhat disagree

A sampling of the data in .pdf format is seen from the following responses to question 6

"Our members devote at least one hour weekly to grow as disciples besides the worship service."
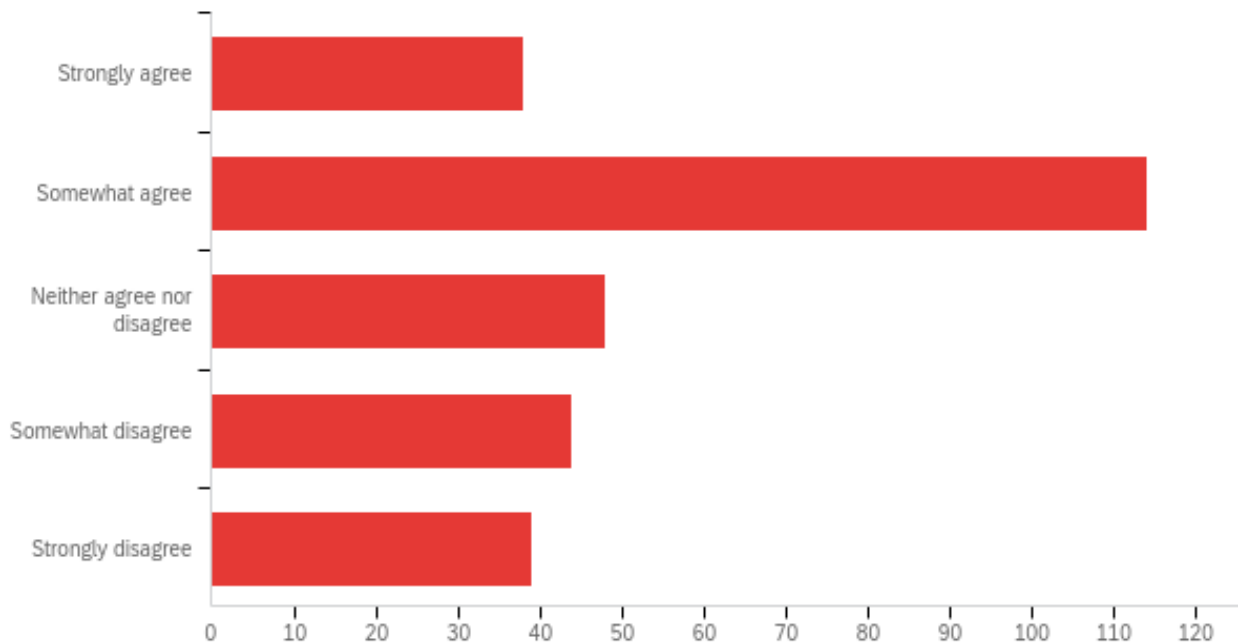
Minimum 1.0

Maximum 5.0

Mean 2.42

Std Deviation 1.09

Variance 1.18

1) Strongly agree 21.15% 66, 2) Somewhat agree 37.50% 117, 3) Neither agree nor disagree

23.40% 73, 4) Somewhat disagree 14.10% 44, 5) Strongly disagree 3.85% 12, Count 312.

The data in word is as follows.

Q36. There is a gap between what is said about discipleship and what takes place in our church.
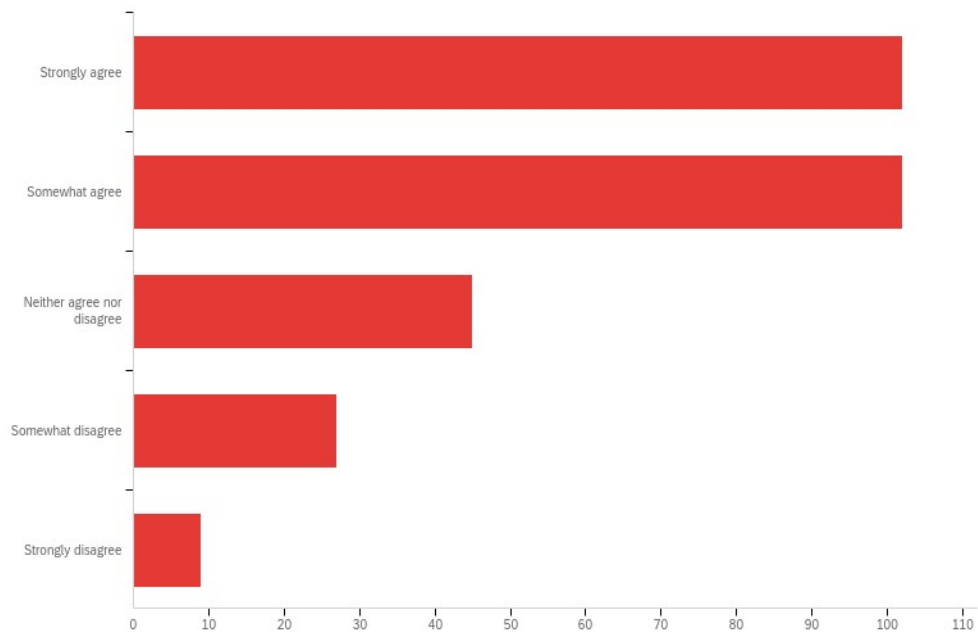

#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	There is a gap between what is said about discipleship and what takes place in our church.	1.00	5.00	2.76	1.26	1.59	283

#	Answer	%	Count
1	Strongly agree	13.43%	38
2	Somewhat agree	40.28%	114
3	Neither agree nor disagree	16.96%	48
4	Somewhat disagree	15.55%	44
5	Strongly disagree	13.78%	39
	Total	100%	283

Finally, the following is a illustration of how PowerPoint depicts the data.

Q31 - Leaders clearly communicate the Great Commission so that all members make disciples.

Q31 - Leaders clearly communicate the Great Commission so that all members make disciples.

#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Leaders clearly communicate the Great Commission so that all members make disciples.	1.00	5.00	2.08	1.08	1.17	285

Q31 - Leaders clearly communicate the Great Commission so that all members make disciples.

#	Answer	%	Count
1	Strongly agree	35.79%	102
2	Somewhat agree	35.79%	102
3	Neither agree nor disagree	15.79%	45
4	Somewhat disagree	9.47%	27
5	Strongly disagree	3.16%	9
	Total	100%	285

APPENDIX I
SAMPLE SPEARMAN'S RHO FROM SPSS

1.00	0.64	0.67	0.71	0.44	0.72	-0.63	0.63
0.64	1.00	0.67	0.74	0.47	0.80	-0.59	0.59
0.67	0.67	1.00	0.77	0.49	0.73	-0.63	0.63
0.71	0.74	0.77	1.00	0.51	0.83	-0.63	0.63
0.44	0.47	0.49	0.51	1.00	0.57	-0.35	0.35
0.72	0.80	0.73	0.83	0.57	1.00	-0.74	0.74
-0.63	-0.59	-0.63	-0.63	-0.35	-0.74	1.00	####
0.63	0.59	0.63	0.63	0.35	0.74	-1.00	1.00

APPENDIX J
IPA INTERVIEW QUESTIONS TO ANSWER THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Smith, Flowers, and Larkin (2012) note the IPA researchers should not ask direct

questions to answer research questions, and need flexibility in modifying their questions:

> The plan for IPA interviews is an attempt to come at the research question sideways. Often, research questions are pitched at the abstract level and so it is not usually helpful or effective to ask them directly of the participant. Instead…the interview (is) an event which facilitates the discussion of relevant topics, and allow the research question to be answered subsequently, via analysis. The researcher typically sets out the questions as she would like to ask them (in an ideal world)…These (questions) things can and do change once an interview is underway. (p. 58)

With the need for indirect open-ended questions and flexibility in adapting questions to

the interview in mind, the preliminary IPA questions to answer the RQs are as follows:

Answering RQ2. Can restoring the priesthood of all believers help disciple making?

1. About what percent of the church's work including disciple-making does the pastor do?
2. About what percent of the church's work including disciple-making does the church staff do?
3. About what percent of the church's work including disciple-making does the laypeople do?
4. How often would you say your pastor and church staff are overworked and tired?
5. How involved would you say most laypeople are with helping the church's ministry?
6. Are you familiar with what the Bible says about the priesthood of all believers?
7. Has your church considered what the Bible says about the priesthood of believers?
8. Does your church consider pastors to be above other people the church?
9. Do your laypeople feel inferior to pastors and priests in your church?
10. Are your church's leaders willing to have laypeople make disciples with them?

Answering RQ3. To what degree has not following the five-fold team leadership that the Bible prescribes in Ephesians 4:11 and 1 Corinthians 12:28-29 exacerbated this problem?

1. Does the pastor make most of the church's decisions on discipleship and other matters?
2. What other leaders are involved with making major decisions at your church?
3. Why does Ephesians 4:11-16 include apostles, prophets, and evangelists for building up the body of Christ?
4. Does your church have apostles as part of your leadership?
5. Does your church have prophets as part of your leadership?

6. Does your church have evangelists as part of your leadership?

7. What do you think about the biblical example of team leadership?

8. How does your church view the Bible's advocating team leadership?

9. What do you think about the five-fold leadership team for making disciples?

10. What does your church think about the five-fold team leadership for disciple-making?

Answering RQ4. How have cultural values such as materialism and pride contributed to the lack of focus on making disciples?

1. What criteria does leadership use to measure how well your church's ministry is doing?

2. Is one of the criteria how many people are attending the worship service?

3. Is another criterion the amount of money being donated through tithes and offerings?

4. Is the number of disciples being made one of the measures of your church's effectiveness?

5. How frequently is your congregation involved with building campaigns and other physical projects which require money to materially improve your facilities?

6. Do members view themselves as being inferior to the pastor and leadership team?

7. Does the pastor struggle with pride of their position?

8. Is there a disconnect between how pastors see themselves and laypeople see them?

9. Is the church's primary focus on activities, buildings, etc., or on making disciples?

10. Has anyone measured how much time and money is spent on making disciples as compared to the church's schedule, activities, buildings, and other accomplishments?

Answering RQ5. Why does the Evangelical church continue pursuing familiar paths that have not been making many disciples?

1. As America has been the global leader for decades, is it possible we have become complacent?

2. If the culture is complacent, to what degree has this influenced the church?

3. Is it proud for western church leaders to assume that the western church model is correct?

4. If your pastor goes overseas, are they listening to what Christians from persecuted areas can teach them or are they so busy transmitting lessons that they do not have time to listen?

5. Does your church get so busy with people's activities that it loses track of the Lord's mandate to make disciples?

6. What does your church think about the New Testament's myriad of examples of followers of Christ experiencing persecution and hardship?

7. Normalcy bias leads people to clinging to the status quo and resist changes. To what degree do you think your church is influenced by normalcy bias causing it to adhere to the status quo.

8. To what extent is your church obeying the Great Commission command to make disciples?

9. Is your church's vision more focused on protecting the status quo or making disciples?

10. To what degree does the church leadership as well as the church's members have a vision for making disciples?