

Liberty University John W. Rawlings School of Divinity

The Messiah, The Mandate, and the Mission to Implement Multicultural Evangelism Through
Intentional Racial Reconciliation Among African Americans and Caucasian Christians

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

By

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THE DOCTOR OF MINISTRY THESIS PROJECT ABSTRACT

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African Americans and Caucasian Christians were created as one race and must become revolutionary, re-emerge, and re-engage through a 911 effervescent perspective to share the gospel message to one another, juxtaposing to all people. God's creation of humankind extends to God's beloved church as the established community of believers encapsulating doctrine that notably and unapologetically symbolizes all believers represent the body of Christ whom Christ died for (1 Corinthians 12:27) (2 Corinthians 5:15). This project echoes biblical Scriptures and elaborates upon a bonified message that says, racial reconciliation is crucial for African Americans and Caucasian Christians to engulf the world through the lens of multicultural evangelism. Biblical Scriptures are of significance within this project because reconciliation was birthed through Jesus Christ and this project's foundation is constructed to also reignite the fire of God in the heart of African Americans and Caucasian believers to share the gospel of Jesus Christ reciprocally, multilaterally, and multiculturally encapsulating the Great Commission for the Kingdom of God.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

There is an urgency for African American and Caucasian Christians to recapture and respond to God's mandate to unify as the body of Christ, evangelize, and disciple all people for Jesus Christ as illustrated through the Word of God. The greatest history ever known and foretold is the history of Christendom and the impact upon the world, revealed first through the holy Bible, enunciating God as the Father, Jesus as the Son, and the promised Holy Spirit. Within the biblical story of creation, one human race reminiscing the "image of God" (Genesis 1:26-27)¹ became expansive and exploded into multiple ethnicities (Exodus 12:38). Through creation, sin erupted, and humans entered a fallen state as the unrighteousness of God until Jesus Christ entered the world as the Savior and Redeemer paying a cost for charges that would only be expunged through the Cross at Calvary.

Because of the ultimate sacrifice at Calvary, all Christians must bear witness that Jesus Christ is Lord so the world will also believe Jesus is their Savior. Christ's crucifixion is a substitutionary and propitiatory sacrifice to God for the sins of humans and His death reveals God's love for humanity and renders an invitation of salvation for all who will repent, believe, and confess. Christ made the ultimate sacrifice so that Christians would make the utmost choice to choose eternal life over death, righteous over unrighteous, love over hate, unification over separation, tranquility over perplexity, forgiveness over unforgiveness, humanitarianism over harshness, and empathetic over unsympathetic. Human beings have a God-given right to choose how they will channel their convictions and individual willingness to overlook or obey God.

¹ "Unless otherwise noted, all biblical passages referenced are in the New International Version."

Ministry Context

The Assemblies of God Fellowship expands to the origin of people who united in the early 1900s, with millions of believers and thousands of churches in existence today, known world-wide through Pentecostalism as foretold in the book of Acts. Historically, with the guidance of the Holy Spirit and the collaboration between Pastor William Seymour (African American) and Charles Parham (Caucasian), Pentecostalism burst into the Americas and spread like wildfire with no regard to segregation. After serving under Evangelist Charles Parham's tutelage, and eventually having to deal with racial tension, Pastor William Seymour followed God's plan and began the Azusa Street Revival in Los Angeles, California. Streaming from the early 1800s, a great divide evolved into two major Pentecostal groups known today as the Church of God in Christ Denomination (African American) and the Assemblies of God Fellowship (Caucasian).

The Azusa Street Revival through the lens of a multiethnic, diverse movement would offer valuable lessons for today's Church. American Pentecostalism traces its foundations back to this revival, one led by William Seymour, an African American son of slaves. Much like Antioch, Azusa provided a paradigm shifting movement in the Church. Racial tensions, however, ultimately splintered the fruit of the revival into a number of racially homogeneous groups, many of which still struggle to recapture what they lost from Azusa. Deeper research and reflection on this past may reveal needed adjustments to the church today.²

The book of Acts is the benchmark for the creation of the church, the supernatural outpouring upon the people, and the Pentecostal movement became the trademark of miracles, signs, and wonders as spoken in Acts chapter 2, "All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them" (Acts 2:4, NIV). The movement of

² Darnell K. Williams, *Wings To Rise: Blacks Leadership, and the Assemblies of God* (Lima: DK Williams Enterprise, 2020), 64.

Jesus Christ is still unbeknown today for people around the world and through the empowerment of the Holy Spirit, believers become equipped to engage and enthrall the attention of people who do not believe. The mission of the Assemblies of God extends far beyond the Pentecostal movement as believers across the world are fulfilling the Jesus movement to go, to disciple, and baptize.

“Though predominately white since the inception of the U.S. Assemblies of God in 1914, churches within the Fellowship now reflect much of the diversity of contemporary America, with over 35 percent of the Fellowship’s churches self-identifying as non-white. The Assemblies of God has experienced growth largely from Black and Latinx churches due to intentional outreach evangelism; also, some of the traditionally white congregations are now experiencing ethnic diversification. The diversity now reaches into the highest offices of leadership within the Fellowship; as of 2019, minority leaders and women now comprise of 40 percent of the Executive Presbytery.”³

Within the Assemblies of God, each state is a district with their own leadership team led by a Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, Secretary and Treasurer, and Presbyters, to include layers of ministries at the district level. Each district is unique in sponsoring an annual meeting, children and youth camps, minister’s retreat, men, and women annual conferences, and more. The district leadership does not reflect the level of diversity throughout the fellowship. “Despite these strides toward increasing diversity within churches, the Executive Leadership Team, and Executive Presbytery, black leaders remain markedly absent at the district level, with the exception of two African American districts leaders.”⁴

³ Darnell K. Williams, *Wings To Rise: Blacks Leadership, and the Assemblies of God* (Lima: DK Williams Enterprise, 2020), 51.

⁴ Ibid., 52.

The History of West Haven Assembly of God Church

West Haven Assembly of God Church is in Huntsville, Alabama. Their origination and history intertwine with the Assemblies of God Fellowship since West Haven's inception in 2017. The pastors and their children are from Africa and West Haven is their first official church plant within the United States. Pastor Stewart McClain and his wife have a lengthy history in Christian ministries with the Assemblies of God. The pastors and the West Haven team desire to become a multiethnic church. The West Haven church family welcomes everyone to worship, study the Word of God, and certainly delight in the many fellowships to break bread together with cultural celebrations.

Biblical Leadership

Biblical leadership begins when the leadership has a thriving personal relationship with Jesus Christ as promulgated through the Word of God. God renounces His character and His commandments to honor Him through holy living. "For it is written: Be holy, because I am holy." (1 Pet 1:16, NIV). Biblical leadership demonstrates love for the Father and delivers this same message to the congregants, who transliterate to the world.

Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates (Deut 6:4-9, NIV).

The leadership at West Haven is comprised of a lead pastor and two staff pastors for discipleship and spiritual formation and women's ministry. The author met with the pastors to gain an update about the progression of the ministry. From conversations and meetings with the pastor and his wife, West Haven has navigated through several transitions with laypersons and

leaders but continues to put forth their best efforts to represent and replicate Christ and his kingdom ministry. Each staff pastor has unique responsibilities, but more importantly to “follow God’s example” (Eph 5:1, NIV) sets the standard and opens the stage where disciples disciple other disciples and this duplication continues.

The Congregation

West Haven meets for Sunday School and worship on Sundays. Wednesday evenings offer a Bible Study often combined with prayer meetings. Due to COVID-19, the church doors closed, and services were provided online for months prior to the doors re-opening. West Haven is comprised of about 99% Africans and African American, 1% Caucasian, no other ethnicities, with about twenty members, including the pastor and his family. West Haven is family oriented and friendly to all who cross the threshold ensuring the first-time worship experience welcomes an authentic encounter with the Holy Spirit. The sounds of intimate worship are also coupled with enriched exhortations, extreme praise, dancing, and more importantly a thought-provoking homiletics to draw conviction, deliver encouragement, and to save and transform lives for Jesus Christ.

Mission and Vision of West Haven

The mission of West Haven is to “penetrate unreached and less reached communities and ethnic nationalities in Huntsville-Madison, environ with saturation harvest evangelism and soul winning, power ministries, and holistic development. The vision is to raise a new generation of Godly people, a covenant Christ group committed to the full Gospel, Christlike living, and empowered to manifest His glory through saturation harvest evangelism, humble service, radical love sacrifice, redemptive community development, rapture readiness, and global missionary

impact.”⁵ No matter where people are within their walk with Christ, West Haven wants to help them engage with Jesus Christ, and grow in their faith.

West Haven and Ministries

West Haven has a thriving evangelism ministry and sponsors several outreaches designed to engage in communities. They travel either door-to-door or throughout communities at least two to three weekends within a month to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ, pray with and invite people to worship. All events encompass sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ and some events have included a day of games, food, and more.

West Haven paints a portrait of a church, redefining itself through necessary adjustments and progression, while recognizing that there is room to continue improving an inward/outward focus for kingdom ministry. West Haven has financial challenges as churches today report, especially due to the pandemic. The leadership at West Haven believes and welcomes thoughts, ideas, suggestions, and more to improve, while remaining attentive to the Holy Spirit and fully committed to serving the Lord as the Holy Spirit directs them.

Victory and West Haven’s Kingdom Connection

In 2017, the author and their family decided to connect and partner with West Haven for kingdom ministry. The love and dedication expressed for Christ was the numerator and prayer became the denominator, which destined a vibrant partnership for kingdom ministry with disciples whose hearts are for the Lord and for people. In addition, this partnership revealed the same carbon-copy of the pastor and his wife’s vision and mission for the body of Christ to become engaged with multicultural evangelism for the kingdom of God.

⁵ Stewart McClain, phone conversation with the author, August 3, 2021.

When the author met the McClain family, the author and spouse planted an inner-city Assembly of God church in Huntsville, Alabama in 2015. This inner-city church was in the heart of communities stricken with poverty, crime, homelessness, and more. Pastor Stewart McClain and the author met at an Assemblies of God District meeting and immediately connected in conversations about evangelism. From one conversation, the momentum fast forwarded to the author and family preparing to relocate and merge the inner-city church with West Haven in 2017. West Haven worship services were held at their pastor's home. The author invited West Haven to share the suite since the worship times were different.

The Lord blessed this collaboration and crossover for two churches to become one church. The author prepared the inner-city church for the crossover to include ensuring all congregants from the inner-city church were settled with West Haven or in the church of their desire. To date, the author continues communication, providing insight, and meetings for Pastor McClain to strive in accomplishing the kingdom plan the Lord has given for West Haven.

Victory is a ministry overseen by the author and spouse that encompasses Spirit-filled and Spirit-led Christians with a vital message that Jesus Christ is Lord and a vigorous mission to worship God, proclaim Jesus Christ to the world, and equip disciples. The vision is to evangelize and educate people to love, serve, and honor Jesus Christ, along with fulfilling their God-given purpose. The plan for this ministry is to engage and equip people via online, via local television, and in-person (modified due to COVID-19) through Biblical studies, worship services, seminars, conferences, workshops, community events, and more. The Word of God as spoken in 2 Timothy 3:16-17 is the foundation and the fundamental message reminds people that salvation is only through Jesus Christ and through salvation, there is victory in every aspect of life. "For everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our

faith” (1 John 5:4, NIV). Victory also partners with churches, ministries, and organizations in other cities and states. All plans and efforts are strategic and purposeful to worship with and unite all ethnicities.

In August 2020, Victory connected with other churches in North Carolina, prayed, planned, and hosted a service called Night of Worship (Ps 22:27-30). The Word became active and alive through Revelation 7:9, “After this I looked, and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people, and language standing before the throne and before the lamb.”

The author connected with a pastor in Hampton Roads, Virginia and participated with their March for Jesus celebration in May 2021. The March for Jesus is an event held in May on the weekend of Pentecost to march, worship, and praise Jesus Christ as “Lord of Lords and King of Kings” (1 Tim 6:15, NIV). The purpose of this march is to also galvanize Christian believers of all ethnicities to celebrate the birth of the Christian church and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. The above highlight a few testaments to illuminate the heart and passion of the author for all Christians of all ethnicities to unite as the body of Christ. The author is prayerful, persistent, and prepared to follow the intended path the Holy Spirit unveils for West Haven Assembly of God and the city of Huntsville.

History of Huntsville Alabama

Huntsville, like southern cities in America has its own defined history of slavery and segregation. As a former resident a few years ago, history was evident based upon casual conversations, continued activism, and active organizations striving for change. “Huntsville’s population truly reflects international cultures. Of the 190,000 city residents, more than 10 percent are natives of other countries. More than one hundred languages and dialects are spoken

here. In addition to the German rocket scientists who arrived in 1950, for example, Huntsville is home to the first U.S. plant built by Korea's largest corporation. Several Japanese-owned companies operate manufacturing plants here. Scores of foreign national flags ring the roof of the headquarters of an international computer manufacturing firm headquartered in Huntsville.”⁶

Huntsville continues to witness a significant burst of growth streaming from an influx of diverse people through the Red Stone Arsenal Army Base, The US Space and Rocket Center, and new relocators to Huntsville. People growth also generates financial growth that leads to new developments and new communities. This phenomenon is the caveat for the pendulum to shift in either direction directly impacting the economy, communities, and people.

Cultural and Ethnicities of Huntsville

Huntsville's diversity is comprised of multiple ethnicities. “Data derived in 2019 from the U.S. Census Bureau identifies the population as 200,574. Whites represent 57.7%, Blacks or African Americans represent 30.7%, American Indian/Alaskan Native represents 0.4%, Asian alone represent 2.6%, Native Hawaiian and Other, Pacific Islander represent 0.1%, Hispanic or Latina represents 6.2%, and two or more races is 2.8%.”⁷

Communities Surrounding West Haven

West Haven is within a five to ten-mile radius from other churches, homes, apartments, schools, recreational center, community parks, credit unions, shopping mall, restaurants, fast foods, museum, the historic downtown, Public Housing communities, and an array of businesses. The housing communities are wide-spread and warrant the necessity of having a vehicle for or

⁶ “History of Huntsville,” Accessed August 7, 2021, <https://www.huntsvilleal.gov/business/city-of-huntsville/the-history-of-huntsville/>.

⁷ “United States Census Bureau,” Accessed August 7, 2021, <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/huntsvillecityalabama,US/PST045219>.

reliance upon a mode of transportation. There is no shortage of leisure or family friendly activities in Huntsville.

Economics and Education

The census facts highlight a productive economy. The medium income averaged at \$55,305 rendering a poverty rate of 16.8 %. The medium housing cost is \$182,900 and average rent cost of \$827. The booming economy across America over the years has clearly changed the dynamics in housing cost. The percentage of high school graduates ranked at 91.0% and college educations ranked at 44.1% for those with a bachelor's degree or higher.⁸

Problem Presented

The problem is that West Haven Assembly of God Church appear to be deficient as a multicultural church, despite active evangelism in Huntsville Alabama. The potential problem exists because there appears to be an insufficiency of racial reconciliation among African Americans and Caucasian Christians, which equates to a scarcity of diverse membership at West Haven and among interviewed participants of other churches. There is an urgency for Christians to recognize and realize that the Kingdom of God and the Church of Jesus Christ will not sustain as God's intended purpose for the world without multicultural evangelism. Christians can no longer ignore, isolate, or interrogate the factors that encircle the importance and the impact of multicultural evangelism.

⁸“United States Census Bureau,” Accessed August 7, 2021, <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/huntsvillecityalabama,US/PST045219>

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this Doctor of Ministry action research thesis is to gather qualitative data from African Americans and Caucasian Christians, identify perceived problems with racial reconciliation, and recommend potential solutions that will produce pragmatic paths for multicultural evangelism. Christians are God's primary vehicle for maneuvering God's plan for humankind and manifesting God's purposes illuminating the Gospel story to the world. The Gospel story is a love story of how Christ lived, loved, died, and was resurrected paves the way for salvation where all are received unconditionally, forgiven instantaneously, loved by Christ completely, receives the Holy Spirit miraculously, given every opportunity to become transformed willingly, serve the Lord wholeheartedly, and granted life eternally. Through aggressive research, interviewing and administering a survey, the author is determined to compile data and complete a plan for Christians to canvass the message of Christ.

Basic Assumptions

Why has it taken so long for reconciliation among African American and Caucasian Christians? What are the reasons for the continued infighting among people who have been directed and redirected through the Word of God to forgive and love as Christ epitomized? While there are a plethora of assumptions and reasons why African Americans and Caucasian Christians are deficient in reconciliation, sin moves to the top of the charts. A lack of the "Fruit of God's Spirit," (Galatian 5:22-23, NIV) lack of communication, a lack of repentance and forgiveness, remain as top tenders.

From the beginning of God's creation, sin attached itself and became cemented in the heart of humankind. "The traditional doctrine of the fall in Western Christian History can be traced in its developed form to Augustine in the fifth century. It is rooted in the idea that God

created Adam de nova, from the dust, and Eve from Adam's rib. They were created sinless and in the image of God, and sometimes after the creation they disobeyed God in a garden created for them, the Garden of Eden. Because of this act of disobedience, they "fell" from a state of perfection and brought sin and evil into a good and perfect world."⁹

Once sin enters the heart, sin runs rapidly without remorse to cross the finish line to vanquish the believer from fetching victory that is only found in Christ. Sin is evil, erupts, encroaches, evasive, explosive, erroneous, and more importantly, it separates the believer from their relationship with Jesus Christ. When a believer is separated from Christ, that believer becomes prone for solicitations that silences them as a voice of the righteousness of Jesus Christ.

The biblical story of Abraham layers the power of choice and free will to sin against or be obedient to God. The Bible also elaborates on consequences of disobedience and blessings of obedience. "Thus, Abraham's righteousness does not result from a different makeup than that of sinners. On the contrary, it has been achieved despite Abraham's own all-too-human inclination. Abraham chose to ignore his own will, which would naturally lead him to sin, and instead followed God's commandments."¹⁰

When a believer allows sin to occupy, Satan advances and masquerades as benevolence while plotting to steal, kill, and destroy the body of Christ, the Church. Sin and its many faces must be unmasked, so, unmasking means having a willingness to self-examine. "Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own

⁹ J. B. Stump and Chad Meister, *Original Sin and the Fall: Five Views* (Westmont: InterVarsity Press, 2021), 2. ProQuest Ebook Central.

¹⁰ Miryam T. Brand, *Evil Within and Without: The Source of Sin and Its Nature as Portrayed in Second Temple Literature* (Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2021), 79. ProQuest Ebook Central.

eye? How can you say to your brother, “Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother’s eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye” (Matt 7:3-4, NIV)?

In as much as the Bible teaches the believer about sin, the Bible also transliterate the grace of God because of the love of God.

Sin language appears frequently in the Wisdom of Solomon. As one might expect, the author portrays wisdom as the agent that can rescue from sin (10:13; 12:2). Sin is considered to be something mortals choose (1:4), but I can also become an obsession and overwhelm the sinner (Wis 11:15-16). The perspective overall on sin demonstrated in Wisdom of Solomon is well represented by this verse: “For even if we sin, we are yours, knowing your might, but knowing we are considered yours, we will not sin” (15:2 NETS). For the writer to say “we are yours” reinforces the grace of God; but the verse ends with the firm statement that human will can choose to refrain from sin.¹¹

Each person must be willing to assess, admit, and allow authentic dialogue.

Communication is the key that unlocks the Pandora’s box insulated with a groundswell of unknowns about the dereliction of racial reconciliation. Without unambiguous dialogue, the future hope for racial reconciliation is fragmented. African Americans and Caucasian Christians must harbor a willingness to be authentic, while pursuing truth and tangling with accusations, untrustworthiness, emotions, feelings, hurts, pains, and so much more.

Truth is powerful and the truth is produced through many viewpoints such as, spiritual, historical, sociological, and psychological. Jesus said, “If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free” (John 8:31-32, NIV). Truth is a receipt for the unknowns to have answers, but people are timid about asking questions for fear of the responses. “Racial reconciliation won’t come without awareness of the truth. But awareness alone won’t necessarily lead to reconciliation. We can come to know the true facts, come to recognize our brokenness, yet not do anything about it. Awareness of the truth is useless

¹¹ Nijay K. Gupta and John K. Goodrich, *Sin and Its Remedy in Paul*. (Eugene: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2021), 9, ProQuest Ebook Central.

without acknowledgement of our complicity or its effects on us. In order to move from awareness to acknowledgement, we must first be brave enough to accept the historical truths and modern realities.”¹²

While in pursuit of the truth, fear of responses can often travel down the road of misunderstandings creating roadblocks. Misunderstandings and misconceptions can also play a vital role in false perceptions that lead to failed plans for racial reconciliation and multicultural evangelism. Misunderstandings and misconceptions are barriers that divide not unite. Scripture states, “My people are destroyed from a lack of knowledge” (Hos 4:6, NIV).

Definitions

Although we will only truly understand the Holy Spirit when we come before the throne of grace, we can be certain of its existence from the information contained in the Holy Scriptures. Some verses are absolutely clear about it and leave no room for doubt about the existence of the Holy Trinity. The clearest and most evident manifestations of the Holy Spirit was during the baptism of the Lord Jesus, carried out by John the Baptist. “Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to be baptized by John. But John tried to deter him, saying, “I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?” Jesus replied, “Let it be so now; it is proper for us to do this to fulfill all righteousness.” Then John consented. As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him. And a voice from heaven said, “This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.”¹³

The Holy Spirit is the third person of the Trinity, whom God speaks through and empowers believers to become willing vessels and imitators of Christ. Without the willingness of a believer to allow the power of the Holy Spirit to examine their heart and remove all toxicities, reconciliation through biblical lens becomes non-existent and impossible. “This emphasis on both personal and corporate/ecclesial experience of the Spirit is to encourage the growth of

¹² Latasha Morrison, *Be The Bridge: Pursuing God’s Heart for Racial Reconciliation* (Colorado Springs: WaterBrook, 2019), 39.

¹³ Edir Macedo, *The Holy Spirit*. (São Paulo: Unipro Editora e Gráfica, 2018), 8, ProQuest Ebook Central.

believers and their churches in being filled with, walking by, and keeping in step with the Spirit” (Eph 5:18; Gal 5:16, 25).¹⁴ A believer’s choice in allowing the Holy Spirit to take the lead throughout their life is pivotal to understanding the purpose, plan, and promises of the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit provides everything we need for every situation. Not only does the Holy Spirit have an amazing and unshakeable disposition, He also has precise and powerful solutions for every problem we could ever face. “Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. To one there is given through the Spirit a message of wisdom, to another a message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit, to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues. All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he distributes them to each one, just as he determines (1 Corinthians 12:7-11).¹⁵

Only the Holy Spirit as the Advocate can awaken African Americans and Caucasian believers to assume a posture of humility and a position of repentance, which represents true allegiance to God. The Promise Keeper, Jesus pronounced the Holy Spirit as the Counselor and the Teacher who evades the lives of believers and equip believers to live an empowered life as they grow closer in their love relationship with Jesus Christ.

Jesus said, “But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit-the Father will send Him in My name-will teach you all things (John 14:26). God’s Holy Spirit is your personal teacher. He will draw you into a closer walk with God as He reveals God’s purposes and ways to you. The Holy Spirit, who resides within you, will always confirm in your heart the truth of Scripture. The Bible is God’s Word to you. The Holy Spirit honors and uses God’s Word as He speaks to you. The Scriptures will be your source of authority for how you live your Christian life and how you relate to God. You can’t depend on human traditions, your experience, or the opinions of others to be accurate authorities on God’s will and ways. I urge you to allow the Holy Spirit to take your life to a new, higher, dynamic level in your walk with God.¹⁶

¹⁴ Gregg Allison and Andreas J. Kostenberger, *The Holy Spirit* (Nashville: B&H, 2020), 176, ProQuest Ebook Central.

¹⁵ Jeff Leake, *Power For Life: Why Every Believer Needs to Be Baptized in the Holy Spirit* (Ashland: Gospel Publishing House, 2017), 114-116, ProBook Ebook Central.

The gospel is the key that unlocks the door of salvation for all those who will insert the key and turn the lock. “The gospel is the instrument of God’s power for the salvation of sinners (Rom 1:16). The key to biblical evangelism is not strategy or technique. It is not primarily about style, methodology, or programs and pragmatics. The first and preeminent concern in all our evangelistic efforts must be the gospel.”¹⁷ The best news is the news that tells the greatest love story wrapped with redemption and written as the greatest manuscript called the Bible. “The gospel is not the fact that Jesus is the Messiah, or Jesus would have sent His disciples much earlier than He did. Rather, the gospel is the good news that Jesus is the Messiah who was crucified in the place of sinners, and then raised from the dead on the third day.”¹⁸ God’s zealous plan to reconcile humanity to himself is without pause because God’s love is persistent as the Bible fashions God’s promises that His children will unite. “The gospel is about how God brings this Kingdom to us by reconciling us to Himself through Christ.”¹⁹

Evangelism in its simplest form is presenting, preaching, sharing, and spreading the life, burial, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ. “Evangelism is not merely one incidental activity in the life of the church; it is the most urgent duty we as Christians have been given to do. A Christian does not need to be individually called or specially gifted to be a herald of the good news; we are commanded to be witnesses of Christ, commissioned to train others to be his

¹⁶ Henry Blackaby, Richard Blackaby, and Claude King, *Experiencing God: Knowing the Will of God* (Nashville: B&H Publishing Group, 2008), 6, 7.

¹⁷ John, MacArthur, *Evangelism: How to Share The Gospel Faithfully* (Nashville: HarperCollins Christian Publishing, Inc, 2011), viii.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 27.

¹⁹ Russell D. Moore and Andrew T. Walker, *The Gospel and Racial Reconciliation* (Nashville: B&H Publishing Group, 2016), ix, ProQuest Ebook Central.

disciples. This is an individual obligation, not merely the collective responsibility of the church. No duty is more significant, and none bears more eternally rewarding fruit,” according to MacArthur.²⁰ Christ left an incandescent imprint for evangelism however, evangelism is sometimes the elephant in the room meaning the importance of it is not debated, the existence of it is not debunked, but the reality of it is diminished and certainly decreasing among believers.

“The message of salvation is an essential part of the Christian message to a world without Christ. Salvation speaks to three of our most significant needs. Salvation speaks to our need for forgiveness of sins and the gift of the Spirit. And finally, salvation speaks to our longing for wholeness and fulfillment amid our fragmentation caused by sin.”²¹ Without salvation, human beings are subjected to perishing, but through salvation, the Bible promises eternal life.

“Repentance is an essential part of salvation. Jesus repeatedly commanded His hearers to “repent” (Matt 4:17 NIV; Luke 13:3, NIV). God commands all people without preservation to repent (turn) from their sin. “Repentance is the forsaking of sin and self, and the devotion of one’s all to serving and seeking after Christ.”²²

In as much as Acts 17:30 is direct in demanding that all must repent, there still lies the story of free will in the book of Genesis. Through behaviors of the first created, evil evaporated and expanded to the heart of all creation. Repentance was not instituted to insight redundancy, but to ignite redirection that constitutes renewal from and rededication to the Lord.

Gospel repentances is the Spirit-wrought, heartfelt response to God’s pardoning mercy offered in Christ, a response made by a sinner convinced of his sin. Christ said, “I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentances” (Luke 5:32). When the sinner hears

²⁰ John MacArthur, *Evangelism: How to Share The Gospel Faithfully* (Nashville: HarperCollins Christian Publishing, Inc, 2011), viiii.

²¹ Will McRaney Jr., *The Art of Personal Evangelism: Sharing Jesus In A Changing Culture* (Nashville: B&H Publishing Group, 2003), 80.

²² *Ibid.*, 141.

that call effectually, he is convinced by the Holy Spirit of sin, of righteousness, and of judgement (John 16:8-11). So convicted and discerning that God in Christ is ready to bestow forgiveness upon those who repent and believe, he turns from his sin to God. In so turning, he desires to be forever free of that which offends the Holy One and to be marked increasingly by the righteousness that is pleasing to Him.²³

The message of repentance that leads to salvation is critical for this project because the purpose of evangelism is to present this message to all people everywhere, which culminates the importance of African Americans and Caucasian Christians reconciling with each other and evangelizing all people. “The awareness that no person is without sin is common to the Hebrew Scriptures (Eccl 7:20): “Surely there is no one on earth so righteous as to do good without ever sinning”) and to the teachings of Jesus, where it is at the foundation of a long series of *logia*, from “First take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your neighbor’s eye” (Luke 6:42) to “Let anyone among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone” (John 8:7). The Gospel of Mark goes so far as to apply the same rule to Jesus himself: “Jesus said to him, “Why do you call me good? No one is good but God alone” (Mark 10:18).”²⁴

Prayer provides the primary means of a believer communicating with God via private or public interactions. A prayer prayed in faith is one that touches the heart of God and transforms the believer to totally trust God. “Prayer is mankind exercising dominion on the earth by giving God the freedom to intervene in earth’s affairs. Prayer is not an option for the believer. It is a necessity for our relationship with God and for fulfilling His purposes in the world and in our

²³ Jeremy Walker, *What Is Repentance?* (Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books. 2015), 6, ProQuest Ebook Central.

²⁴ Gabriele Boccaccini, *Paul's Three Paths to Salvation*. (Chicago: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2020), 91, ProQuest Ebook Central.

individual lives. Time spent in prayer is not time wasted but time invested.”²⁵ Prayer is a mandate from God that is exemplified from Genesis to Revelation. Moses prayed when he was confused and frustrated, Abraham prayed when his faith was tested, John the Baptist prayed for repentance, Peter prayed and miracles manifested, Jesus prayed when overwhelmed, yet submitting to the will of the Father. “Therefore, it is not presumptuous for us to live according to our new nature and authority in Christ. Remind yourself daily that your redemption means that Satan and sin no longer have authority over you, that you have authority and access to the Father through Jesus’ name, and that you have authority through the Word of God.”²⁶

Through declaring the Word of God and prayer, hearts and minds become open to receive restoration, redemption, and redirection that paves the way for racial reconciliation. Rustenbach created a set of principles for inner healing through prayer. Rustenbach titled Principle 5: “Life-Changing Truth Can Be Known and Experienced When God Communicates It to Us in a Supernatural Way” and Rustenbach outlines Principle 5 as, “We need God to illuminate His-truth in order for healing to take place. The Greek word for knowledge is *gnosis*. Paul used a variation of the word, *epignosis*, when he prayed that God would give the Ephesians “a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of Him” (Eph 1:17). In Greek, adding *epi to gnosis* signifies an enhanced or more complete kind of knowledge.”²⁷

“Racism is the belief that one race is better than another. Racism entails prejudice, or negative opinions, judgements, and attitudes about people based on their race. David Wellman,

²⁵ Myles Munroe, *Understanding The Purpose And Power Of Prayer: Earthly License For Heavenly Interference*. (Nassau: Bahamas Faith Ministries International, 2003), 20.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 36.

²⁷ Rusty, Rustenbach, *A Guide for Listening and Inner-Healing Prayer: Meeting God in the Broken Places*. (Colorado Springs: NavPress Publishing Group, 2011), ProQuest Ebook Central.

author of *Portraits of White Racism*, explains that racism is more than just bias against a group of people based on skin color. Rather, Wellman defines racism as a “system of advantage based on race. In other words, racism involves not only discriminating against one race but also upholding the advantage the other race enjoys, including better opportunities for education, housing, and employment.”²⁸ The meaning of racism is considered while attempting to gain clarity in understanding the fragile relationships between African Americans and Caucasian Christians. “The preacher William Sloane Coffin once said in this pulpit, “If you love the good but do not hate evil, you are doomed to sentimentality.”²⁹ Recognizing and renouncing racism in all dimensions and all forms commensurate a multifaceted process for racial healing and corresponds to the biblical candor for multicultural evangelism. The word racism can become a victim within itself to the misuse and misunderstanding of a similar but dissimilar word called prejudice.

Prejudice is sometimes the precursor to racism and often masked with doubts and disillusionments that discourages reconciliation due to the disheartening of people. There are times when prejudice is obscured and the hierarchical is affixed upon the word racism, which reaches a greater momentum with maximized attention. Both prejudice and racism are fixated and infatuated with distasteful judgmental words and devastating results. The Bible clearly disfigures judging of one to cause the judging of another by God. “Do not judge, or you too will be judged. For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you. “Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother’s eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? How can you say to your brother, ‘Let me

²⁸ David Robson, *Racism* (New York: Greenhaven Publishing LLC, 2010), 12, ProQuest Ebook Central.

²⁹ Richard Lischer, *Just Tell the Truth: A Call to Faith, Hope, and Courage* (Chicago: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2021), 42, ProQuest Ebook Central.

take the speck out of your eye,' when all the time there is a plank in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye" (Matt 7:1-5, NIV).

Reconciliation is equivalent to acknowledging what is broken and pursuing restoration while prepackaging change. Through achieving reconciliation, Christians will have the opportunity to change their perspectives, personas, and personalities toward one another based upon a spiritual awakening. Malley completed an in-depth study defining reconciliation in correlation to peace and expounded on a practical path for both. Many researchers anchor reconciliation to peace. Joseph Maila from the University for Peace defined reconciliation as the crowning achievement of peace. "It aims not to resolve the conflict but to go beyond it. It implies that rights are recognized but all the same, goes further, for its ultimate objective is to achieve an appeased society which recognizes free and equal individuals able to confront a history marred by violence, and above all, overcome that history...Reconciliation goes hand in hand with forgiveness"³⁰ God is faithful, and forgiveness should be fruitful. "Reconciliation is in some sense the message of Christian scripture and cannot be abandoned without mutilating Christianity—the good news of salvation—itself. I contend that it is precisely this abandonment that is behind the impotence of "Christian" efforts for racial healing and unity."³¹ When the heartbeat (love, forgiveness, unity, peace) of Christ is witnessed in African Americans and Caucasian Christians, this may become a building block to begin racial reconciliation. "Racial

³⁰ Kathleen Malley-Morrison, Andrea Mercurio and Gabriel Twose, *International Handbook of Peace and Reconciliation* (Springer: New York, 2013), 14, https://link-springer-com.ezproxy.liberty.edu/content/pdf/10.1007%2F978-1-4614-5933-0_2.pdf.

³¹ Douglas A. Foster, "Reclaiming Reconciliation: The Corruption of "Racial Reconciliation" and How It Might Be Reclaimed for Racial Justice and Unity," Vol 55, ISS 1, (2020): 63-81. <http://ezproxy.liberty.edu/login?qurl=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.proquest.com%2Fscholarly-journals%2Freclaiming-reconciliation-corruption-racial-how%2Fdocview%2F2447578923%2Fse-2%3Faccountid%3D12085>.

reconciliation is the process of responding to the harm of racism experienced by the injured party. It is an approach that can address racial violations while simultaneously initiating the process of healing individuals, mending relationships, building community, and transforming institutions.”³²

Limitations

Due to the location and COVID-19 pandemic, there has been limited in-person participation with West Haven. Communication via phone and online communication is maintained and proven to be the most viable and forceable options. Other unique options were chosen to include gathering data from other ministries and churches within the city of Huntsville.

Delimitations

The plan moving forward is to interview the pastor of West Haven, other pastors and ministry leaders of different churches and ministries via the phone and/or Zoom. The plan also includes providing a survey for personal Facebook friends who represent African American and Caucasians of different ages, backgrounds, professional affiliations to gain their perspective on racial reconciliation and multicultural evangelism. This study is strategic and purposeful to include only African Americans and Caucasian Christians because of their horrific history and continuous decline in reconciliation between the two.

³² Alexas Jemal, Sarah Bussey, and Briana Young. "Steps to Racial Reconciliation: A Movement to Bridge the Racial Divide and Restore Humanity." *Social Work and Christianity* 47, no. 1 (2020): 31-60, <http://ezproxy.liberty.edu/login?qurl=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.proquest.com%2Fscholarly-journals%2Fsteps-racial-reconciliation-movement-bridge%2Fdocview%2F2437193281%2Fse-2%3Faccountid%3D12085>.

Thesis Statement

When African Americans and Caucasian Christians at West Haven, Christians within Huntsville, Alabama, and those interviewed intentionally engage in efforts and endeavors for reconciliation, this may become the catalyst for multicultural evangelism. The Great Commission is at work when African Americans and Caucasian Christians become heralds of the good news. African American and Caucasian Christians must at all cost witness Christ crucified and resurrected to all people. While the Great Commission is in progress, the progression of reconciliation is also alive in the heart of Christians who make a personal commitment to Jesus to love one another.

MacArthur is explicit without hesitation to show the symbolism between the believer and God as Christ is glorified via the presentation of the gospel. “The Holy Spirit glorifies the Son by directing people’s gaze toward Jesus; God the Father glorifies the Son by affirming Him to be the only Redeemer who experience death, resurrection, ascension, and coronation. And when we proclaim the glories of Jesus, we are joining God the Father and the Holy Spirit in their preoccupation. They are unwavering in their devotion to glorify Jesus and we are privileged and mandated to do the same.”³³

The mandate of glorifying Jesus Christ is essentially glowing from Genesis to Revelation foretold and prophesized by the ancient prophets and apostles systematically written to share the heart of God for His people to release their sins, receive His Son as their Savior, revere His Son as their Lord, relish His wisdom, respect His warnings, and recognize the return and reign of

³³John MacArthur, *Evangelism: How to Share The Gospel Faithfully* (Nashville: HarperCollins Christian Publishing, Inc, 2011), 64.

Christ. “The witness of a pure, powerful, persecuted, and persistent church will produce conviction of sin in the hearts of unbelieving hearers.”³⁴

³⁴ John MacArthur, *Evangelism: How to Share The Gospel Faithfully* (Nashville: HarperCollins Christian Publishing, Inc, 2011), 101.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

While it is pivotal to display the impact of evangelizing from a multicultural perspective, it is also crucial to dissect and deliver different author's conversations on racial reconciliation and multicultural evangelism. These themes, God's Master Kingdom Plan for The World, Love to Forgive and Forgive to Heal, The Body of Christ United, and Sharing the Gospel and Cultural Relevance present a variety of twists and turns telling the stories via discussions, dissensions, differentiations, and discoveries through exploring evangelism. This review is weighted with literature transliterating great emphasis on evangelism, interchanging about racial reconciliation, however, literature on African American and Caucasian believers specifically evangelizing one another harbors a gap in literature.

God's Master Kingdom Plan for The World

God's Master Kingdom Plan for the world from the very beginning was perfect, and all together amazing because it encompassed the creation of men and women in the image of God where God stamped His approval and sealed His command "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it" (Gen 1, NIV). MacArthur relishes "In the Beginning" as revealed in the Old Testament Scriptures and recognizes Israel as pivotal for global ministry. "Thus, evangelism was the foundation of the nation of Israel. God's goal and heart's desire in these promises-to Adam, Eve, Abram-was for the entire world to be the recipients of His blessings. This global theme is so pervasive throughout Genesis that the universal blessing is reiterated five times throughout the book" (Genesis 12:3; 18:18; 22:18; 26:4; 28:14).³⁵ Without the Word of God and the Holy Spirit, evangelism will not survive as a stand-alone. With the Word of God

³⁵ John MacArthur, *Evangelism: How to Share The Gospel Faithfully* (Nashville: HarperCollins Christian Publishing, Inc, 2011), 23.

and the Holy Spirit, evangelism strides with the message and mandate that Jesus left every believer, “Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely, I am with you always, to the very end of the age” (Matt 28:19-20, NIV).

God’s Master Kingdom Plan is galloping globally in a multicultural and multiethnic world that generated over 2,000 years ago, from generation to generation. The global footprint of evangelism has made headway in global communities and Mischke prepares the church for embracing God’s plan of multicultural evangelism. “The American church needs to face the inevitable and prepare for the next stage of her history-we are looking at a nonwhite majority, multi-ethnic American Christianity in the immediate future. Unfortunately, despite these drastic demographic changes, American evangelicalism remains enamored with an ecclesiology and a value system that reflect a dated and increasingly irrelevant cultural captivity and are disconnected from both a global and local reality.³⁶

From God’s Words, the Blackaby’s and King highlight what is no surprise, saturated with power and sending a resounding message to believers.

God wants us to align our lives with Him so He will accomplish His divine purposes in and through us. God is not our servant to bless our plans and desires. He is our Lord, and we must adjust our lives to what He is doing and to the ways He chooses to accomplish His work. If we will not submit to God and His ways, He will allow us to follow our own devices. But be sure of this: we will miss God’s activity, and we will not experience what God wants to do through us to bless others. As Christians, it is not only important what we do but how we do it.³⁷

³⁶ Mischke Werner, *The Global Gospel: Achieving Missional Impact in Our Multicultural World* (Scottsdale: Mission ONE, 2015), 31.

³⁷ Henry Blackaby, Richard Blackaby and Claude King, *Experiencing God: Knowing the Will of God* (Nashville: B&H Publishing Group, 2008), 109.

God's will for every believer to enunciate Jesus Christ as Lord among all humanity depicts the significance of multicultural evangelism, which spans to thousands of years prior. Despite numerous versions and translations of the Bible, it is noticeably clear that evangelism is God's plan to open the sea for the flood gates of salvation to save those drowning in sin.

Throughout history, God has shaped events to bring about his plans of renewal. While God is the force, mind, and will behind the mission, God has chosen humans to work alongside him. The stories in the book of Acts show us how God is moving his mission forward. The book of Acts shows God's actions in fulfilling his plan. This is picked up from the ending of the Gospel of Luke, where the apostles are commissioned to be part of that fulfillment: "You are witnesses of these things" (Luke 24:48).³⁸

The Gospel of Luke paints a portrait of the humanity of Christ and the compassion Christ exemplified for those desiring restoration and transformation. The Book of Acts portrays real life stories of the effects of transformation through Christ. Brock's narrative of Saul's transformation to Paul in Acts 9 resembles God's plan of salvation for all people as stated in John 1:12, "Then something happened on the road to Damascus. Paul saw a vision of Christ and immediately converted. From that day forward, he redirected his zeal from fighting the church to becoming the church and building the Kingdom of God."³⁹ God's plan of conversion spotlights the gospel story for humans to become transformed not in consonance with their culturist or traditional identities but transformed to the identity and characteristics of Jesus Christ.

"I in them and you in me so that they may be brought to complete unity. Then the world will know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me" (John 17:23, NIV). It was imperative then and it is vital now for the world to know what Christians are privy to and

³⁸ Rose Publishing Staff, *The Book of Acts* (Peabody: Rose Publishing, 2013), 3, ProQuest Ebook Central.

³⁹ David Brog, *Standing With Israel: Why Christians Support The Jewish State* (Lake Mary: Charisma Media/Charisma House Book Group, 2006), 19.

believe what God says. “Therefore, God exalted Him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (Phil 2:9-11, NIV).

Scriptures provides revelation that reminds the readers that it is impossible for authentic transformation without salvation. Believers in Christ must become willing to allow the word of God penetrate their hearts and position them for spiritual transformation. Often, believers ignore or isolate themselves from receiving what the Holy Spirit is revealing. Spiritual discernment is relevant to advancing God’s Kingdom Will in the earth. Barton tackles the deeply woven issues of individualism and traditionalism that walks within the minds and live within the hearts of leadership and lay persons, so, without discernment, the church individually and collectively becomes spiritually bankrupt. “Discernment literally means to separate, to discriminate, to determine, to decide or to distinguish between two things. Spiritual discernment is the ability to distinguish or discriminate between good (that which is of God and draws us closer to God) and evil (that which is not of God and draws us away from God).⁴⁰

Listening and learning biblical truths is a major milestone to understanding the will of God and utilizing truth to bring forth liberating truths among people layered with repentance, forgiveness, hope, healing, and so much more. “As we study and compare significant claims of Christianity with other views, it is humbling to realize that God has both revealed and entrusted the truth of his Word to us. A Christian’s exposure to God’s truth involves high stakes because responsibility always accompanies knowledge. Truth does not merely beckon each one of us to

⁴⁰ Ruth H. Barton, *Pursuing God’s Will Together: A Discernment Practice for Leadership Groups* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2012), 12, ProQuest Ebook Central.

receive knowledge; it also invites us to pledge personally to live out God’s truth with honest gratitude, humility, and commitment.”⁴¹

The Bible is concise in reminding believers the power of truth, “Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth” (John 17:17, NIV). Without the acknowledgment of biblical truths and the process of sanctification correlated to the working and empowerment of the Holy Spirit, Christians face an uphill battle for reconciliation of any sort. “Trusting the Bible has to do with trusting scholars and committees and processes. Is a Bible that has gone through so many hands reliable? Confidence that is reliable will include confidence that the Spirit of truth continues to work through scholarly conversation and committee votes.”⁴²

Packer clearly draws a correlation to prayer and sovereignty for the will of a sovereign God to encroach upon the will of every believer who is in pursuit of righteousness through a truth that is not only known but witnessed to others through evangelism. Some scholars, theologians, and people in general may agree that the Bible is conflicting but nonetheless, it is infallible (without error). “All theological topics contain pitfalls for the unwary, for God’s truth is never quite what man would have expected; and our present subject is more treacherous than most. This is because in thinking it through we have to deal with an antinomy in the biblical revelation, and in such circumstances our finite, fallen minds are more than ordinarily apt to go astray.”⁴³

⁴¹ Tawa J. Anderson, Michael W., and David K. Naugle, *An Introduction to Christian Worldview: Pursuing God's Perspective in a Pluralistic World* (Westmont: InterVarsity Press, 2021), 329, ProQuest Ebook Central.

⁴² Donald H. Juel, *Shaping the Scriptural Imagination: Truth, Meaning, and the Theological Interpretation of the Bible* (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2011), 16, ProQuest Ebook Central.

⁴³ J. I. Packer, *Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God*. (Westmont: InterVarsity Press, 2012), 24, ProQuest Ebook Central.

While Teasdale presents a subtle summary of evangelism for those who do not consider themselves as evangelists, there are factors that warrant the same response for all to believe that evangelism is a Rode to the saving of one's soul.

Evangelism has long been connected to the Christian idea of salvation. To engage in it is more than to work for the salvation of individuals souls. Evangelism is an act by which we seek to save the world. To work toward this grand conclusion of evangelism, we must commit ourselves to navigating through our beliefs and practices. As we do this, we will find several benefits in addition to the salvific outcomes of evangelism.⁴⁴

MacArthur is explicit without hesitation to show the symbolism between the believer and God as Christ is glorified via the presentation of the gospel. "The Holy Spirit glorifies the Son by directing people's gaze toward Jesus; God the Father glorifies the Son by affirming Him to be the only Redeemer who experiences death, resurrection, ascension, and coronation. And when we proclaim the glories of Jesus, we are joining God the Father and the Holy Spirit in their preoccupation. They are unwavering in their devotion to glorify Jesus and we are privileged and mandated to do the same."⁴⁵ Presenting the Gospel is synonymous with waiving a banner before the world bolstering the attributes of Christ and Christians should wave this banner without hesitation or trepidation. Waving and witnessing the Gospel of Jesus Christ before the world symbolizes MacArthur's stance on ensuring the gospel is profoundly shared genuinely and wholeheartedly as Christians and as the church of Jesus Christ.

Guder paints the picture with different brushes where the missional church must simulate the apostolic. With respect to the apostolic, the mindset and mission of the church requires a shift

⁴⁴ Mark R. Teasdale, *Evangelism for Non-Evangelists: Sharing the Gospel Authentically* (Westmont: InterVarsity Press, 2016), 113, ProQuest Ebook Central.

⁴⁵John MacArthur, *Evangelism: How to Share The Gospel Faithfully* (Nashville: HarperCollins Christian Publishing, Inc, 2011), 64.

and a reminder that the church was instituted in the world for the kingdom mission and certainly not within this world to further its corroded views. “When the church in North America discards the Christendom mind-set, it can become truly apostolic. To be apostolic is, literally, to be sent out. This implies a distinction between the church and that to which it is sent. The church exists as community, servant, and messenger of the reign of God in the midst of other kingdoms, communities, and powers that attempt to shape our understanding of reality.”⁴⁶

In as much as the authors collaborate similar narratives of the essentialness of sharing the Gospel, the book of Acts is essential as an inroad to how the Gospel travels and the impact the Holy Spirit imprints upon the deliverers and the hearers. The book of Acts is widely known as the book that highlights the historical history of the Christian church and followers who proclaimed and carried the Gospel to generations of people after receiving the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:8). The Book of Acts bears God’s will as a witness to the revolutionary monumental establishment of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit that empowered disciples in evangelizing.

Moore and Walker bolster with great emphasis on the dynamic results and description of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Guder distinctly extrapolates the presence and power of the Holy Spirit as crucial for the church, but also a dynamic power within the life of a believer that empowers and equips both the believer and church as missional.

“In Acts chapter 2, we read about the day of Pentecost, the day when the resurrected Lord Jesus sent the Holy Spirit. The day of Pentecost was a spectacular day-there were manifestations of fire, languages being spoken by people who didn’t know them, and thousands of unbelievers coming to faith in this recently resurrected Messiah.”⁴⁷ The book of Acts is foundational for the

⁴⁶ Darrell L. Guder, *Missional Church* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1998), 110.

⁴⁷ Russell D. Moore and Andrew T. Walker, *The Gospel and Racial Reconciliation* (Nashville: B&H Publishing Group, 2016), vii., ProQuest Ebook Central.

creation of the church, whereas it does not facilitate a line-by-line outline, but it is by far the greatest instruction manual available to all.

Hunter's passion as spoken through *Radical Outreach* bears a heavy emphasis on reaching those who are not saved and unchurched, whereas MacArthur spends an enormous amount of time teaching the reader in *Evangelism* to attempt to become all things to all people. Hunter emphasizes on the apostolic as Guder, however Hunter clarifies a more radical approach of evangelism differing from MacArthur bolstering an intentional approach that levies evangelism and missions. "Radical Outreach pulses with a passion for the recovery of apostolic priorities in mission. Its insights are illuminating."⁴⁸

MacArthur's intentional approach ensures the believer understands evangelism from a personal perspective rather than a proposed plan. While grasping the biblical focus of evangelism, MacArthur is very candid with sharing that evangelism is absolutely about the person of Jesus Christ. A believer's personal testimony should always gravitate toward the Savior leaving no room for assumptions or speculations that the message is always about Jesus Christ. As MacArthur expounds on the person of Jesus, he also compels believers to tell their own personal stories of liberation so that the listening audience crave for salvation through the Savior. MacArthur speaks to cultural and its significance, however, the author makes a stance to ensure the topic of cultural does not topple the tall order of caution in compromising the Gospel for the sake of cultural relevance.

Hunter deems the shortfalls and shortcomings in evangelism, the church, and its missions. The benchmark for reaching across cultural lines must carry a form of radicalism that

⁴⁸ George G. Hunter, *Radical Outreach: The Recovery of Apostolic Ministry & Evangelism* (Nashville, Abingdon Press, 2003), 11.

speaks in a “nonverbal” manner to master the intended message about Christ.⁴⁹ “Jesus Christ calls his church, his people, meaning those who have accepted him as their Savior to not only love and serve him, but to believe for the populations of people who are tangibly different.”⁵⁰

MacArthur relishes the meaning of culture through the lens of different societies.

Communicating is the key to understanding culture between societies. Culture is not isolated to what a person sees, feels, or thinks, but culture also encompasses intellectual abilities to assume, personal behaviors, and beliefs. To Kim, Jesus is the hope of a new culture. “Therefore, we can say that Christian culture is a culture of hope.”⁵¹ To Hunter, the gospel and culture is serious and deserves for believers to translate the gospel with respect to culture. After all, God’s plan for creation is cemented with culture dating back to Genesis 11:9. “The Lord scattered them.”

McRaney summarized God’s ultimate plan to create people who would undoubtedly engage in sharing the concise message God authored through evangelism. The message was the vehicle for communities of people to “freely choose and freely accept” the creator as their God and Jesus as their Savior with an overwhelmingly outpouring of love for both as both extended agape love from the beginning of creation.⁵² Kirk summarizes McRaney’s view of God’s plan through different voices echoing God’s plan is not restrictive for a reserved group of people, but God’s purpose and plan is relative and respective for all people regardless of their reception or response. God’s divine power is an essential element to God’s divine purpose for creation to

⁴⁹ George G. Hunter, *Radical Outreach: The Recovery of Apostolic Ministry & Evangelism* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2003), 10.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 37.

⁵¹ Van Name Kim, *Multicultural Theology and New Evangelization* (Lanham, University Press of America, 2014), 43.

⁵² Will McRaney Jr., *The Art of Personal Evangelism: Sharing Jesus In A Changing Culture*. (Nashville: B&H Publishing Group, 2003), 17.

escape destruction, death, and embrace living with purpose by the power of the Holy Spirit and the promise of eternal life.

Love to Forgive and Forgive to Heal

Creation was crafted through love and because of love creation was granted access to love through the finished work of Jesus Christ, “See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know Him” (1 John 3:1, NIV). Believers are adopted as God’s beloved to love God, resemble, and replicate the love of Christ to the world. The love of Christ paves the way for Christians to love and forgive others while encompassing love and forgiveness for oneself as ambassadors to the world and an armor bearer of God.

The Bible is a believer’s greatest role to model the concept of allowing God to teach them how to let go. The Bible teaches the believer to trust God and change their stance while totally seeking and relying on the Holy Spirit for a spiritual impact concerning all matters at hand. Because the word is God and God is His Word, God becomes the greatest listener, teacher, and evaluator throughout the process. Haley frames chapter two with specifics to facture while preparing to facilitate forgiveness.

To forgive well, you must start by lifting your eyes to Christ in the heavens, where your help comes from. “Set your mind on things that are above, not on the things that are on earth.” As human beings, it is so easy for us to be focused on ourselves-our lives, our troubles, our hurts, our needs. We set our minds on the things that are on earth because they are tangible and easy to see, easy to feel. But if you’ve been raised with Christ, then your world is a whole lot bigger than this earth-and this earth is not your home. You belong to the Kingdom of God now, and you’ve got to seek first that kingdom if you want to get your priorities straight for the task of forgiveness.⁵³

⁵³ Hayley Satrom, *Forgiveness: Reflecting God's Mercy* (New Jersey: P&R Publishing, 2021), 45, ProQuest Ebook Central.

Leaning on God, listening to God, and learning from God is a byproduct of a healthy relationship with Christ encircled with continuous prayers. “Hear the supplications of your servant and of your people Israel when they pray toward this place. Hear from heaven, your dwelling place; and when you hear, forgive” (2 Chr 6:21, NIV).

Christians are the clay within the potter’s hand, molded to replicate and resemble Jesus Christ, far from perfect, but expected to render their best in handling and helming the Word of Truth. Without the Word of Truth erroneous messages are transmitted garbled at best and girdled with human terminology and vices of religiosity verses voices of sound theology. The Word of Truth tackles the vices of falsehoods by vehemently reminding believers to “Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth” (2 Tim 2:15, NIV). The Word of Truth is the Bible that cascades God’s commandments as absolute truths. Docusen’s words below accedes to the words spoken from the Old to the New Testament.

When Jesus said, “Love your neighbor,” He wasn’t talking about the people who lived right next to Him in Galilee. Acts 1:8 paints a vivid picture of the diverse family of God. As He is preparing to physically leave the earth, Jesus promises the presence of the Holy Spirit to remain and empower everyone who believes in Him. He said, “You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be my witnesses, telling people about me everywhere—in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” His ministry, His reach, and His friendship expanded far past Galilee Drive. So, too, should ours.⁵⁴

When Christians become lovers and followers of Jesus Christ, the impact for the Kingdom of God is evident through salvation and discipleship for unbelievers. “Dear children, let’s not merely say that we love each other; let us show the truth by our actions” (1 John 3:18).

⁵⁴ David Docusen, *Neighborliness: Finding The Beauty Of God Across Dividing Lines* (Austin: Feed Books, 2020), 27.

God's kingdom agenda articulates inclusiveness of all people across all nations with no regard for hypocrisy, but with headways toward reconciliation and multicultural evangelism.

The love of Christ within African American and Caucasian Christians for one another is distorted because of a lengthy history of a painful past that correlate sin, hate, evil, destruction, division, and so much more leading into the current century and leaning toward the future century. Within Douglas's entire article, he is concise through his interpretation of how the history of white ideology and white supremacy started the fire, kept it burning, and 21st century rhetoric strokes the flames between African Americans and Caucasians. "The very definition of reconciliation held by most makes it irrelevant to the problem of American racial conflict—the harmonious reuniting of two or more alienated groups, each of which is guilty of creating and perpetuating the rift. The assumption in this understanding is that each party must admit its part in the alienation, forgive the others, and move forward together as if whatever had alienated them were now behind and gone."⁵⁵

African American and Caucasian Christians cannot afford to continuously contribute to their battered history, creating bruises upon the Kingdom of God that lead to open wounds (lack of hope) and translate into infected scars (lack of healing). Hundreds of years have transpired, hundreds of thousands of lives have expired, tens of thousands of conversations continue to inquire and to date, it appears that love and forgiveness is still challenging, complex, and sometimes crumbling among the Christian community and the church of Jesus Christ.

The voice of Karl Barth is heard through several authors, alluding to the fortitude of forgiveness as a fantasy without a heart of Christ to flourish within the heart of the believer

⁵⁵ Douglas A. Foster, "Reclaiming Reconciliation: The Corruption of "Racial Reconciliation" and How It Might Be Reclaimed for Racial Justice and Unity", *Journal of Ecumenical Studies*, Vol 55.1 (2020): 63-81, <https://www-proquest-com.ezproxy.liberty.edu/docview/2447578923/fulltextPDF/7A5983FFAB114BACPQ/1?accountid=12085>

flaming as the light of Christ and formulated as the future bride of Christ. “Forgiveness is more solidly motivated and guided in Christ than it relies on a forgiver’s own understanding, resources, and goals. To understand forgiveness as such, however, it must be embedded in the whole ministry of reconciliation that has taken place in Christ and is taking place as he is present in the world by his Spirit. From Jesus we learn that God is a forgiving God who asks and enables us to forgive one another.”⁵⁶

Love and forgiveness are the vital organs that keep the heart functioning and filtering out the toxins of life that swell and swallow a healthy heart rate (full of the love of Christ) and healthy pulse rate (flourishing through the power of the Holy Spirit). King reassures the reader understands the concept of two working within one. Love and forgiveness are synonymous and savored selectively to shine glory upon the Lord.

Understanding that we have sinned and been forgiven by the Father allows us to extend grace to others. God gives forgiveness. We take forgiveness. Only then are we able to forgive. This is the way out. This is how we overcome. We open up the dusty old box full of radioactive material. We expose its shameful contents to the light. We break the cycle of shame, insecurity, and fear. We find forgiveness, not only for the things we’ve done but for the harm done to us and by others. We can forgive. But we have to give something before we can get something. This give-and -take only happens when we stop running from our shame, when we cease all attempts at justifying or dismissing our deeds, and when we fall on our knees in humility before God.⁵⁷

The wrongful actions that transposed and still transcending will never attain the spirit of Shalom until both people groups humble themselves before God and one another. Morrison in *Be The Bridge* spends in depth time focusing on the importance of listening, lamenting, learning, and leading while remembering, “God is inviting all of us to be active participants in racial

⁵⁶ Jon Coutts and John Webster, *A Shared Mercy: Karl Barth on Forgiveness and the Church* (InterVarsity Press, 2016), 96, ProQuest Ebook Central.

⁵⁷ Clayton King, *Overcome: Replacing the Lies That Hold Us down with the Truths That Set Us Free*. (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2021), 94. ProQuest Ebook Central.

reconciliation, to show the world that racial unity is possible through Christ.”⁵⁸ The invitation sent by God remains open and it is the responsibility of all to accept the invitation and pay attention to how the Holy Spirit will lead. Munroe and Morrison emphasize the inabilities of the believer without consistent and persistent prayer. Glen and Morrison synchronize with confession exposing shame and embracing forgiveness.

Morrison’s chapters are fashioned with prayers and expresses how confession paves the way for resolve and reconciliation. The power of confession exposes shame, guilt, and more importantly it reconstructs the believer’s broken relationship and fellowship with Jesus Christ. “Heavenly Father, we confess that in our humanity, we have sinned against you by our actions and thoughts, and we have sinned by failing to do the things you have required of us.”⁵⁹

The Body of Christ United

The church is significant to Christ and shares responsibilities to drive the helm of reconciliation as the world changes. The Word and Worship are increasingly becoming an important talking point to understanding cultural differences and reasons for the divide among African American and Caucasian Christians. “Embracing the mission of God requires the Church to embrace His inclusive nature. The Church must rebuke racism, prejudice, bias, colorism, and overall disregard for the diversity found within His creation.”⁶⁰ One author shares the value of intermixing cultural for an authentic worship experience. “The experience of worship within the Black church is truly a gift that the multi-ethnic and missional church can use in many ways,

⁵⁸ Latasha Morrison, *Be The Bridge: Pursuing God’s Heart for Racial Reconciliation* (Colorado Springs: WaterBrook, 2019), 9.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 80.

⁶⁰ Darnell K. Williams, *Wings to Rise: Blacks Leadership, and the Assemblies of God* (Lima: DK Williams Enterprise, 2020), 65.

starting with Black preaching.”⁶¹ Smith’s disharmonious view as an African American pastor leading a European-American and evangelical denomination, articulates growing pains not only for himself as a pastor of a multi-ethnic church, but also the growing pains that accompany building God’s Kingdom. “The journey of the White church to a post-White church will not be an easy one. Many influential White megachurch pastors are not willing to lead into a new multi-ethnic and missional future regardless of the demographic realities. Neither are many White pastors of medium and small-size churches post-White. But it is the White megachurch pastors who have a significant influence on the broader church in the United States.”⁶²

Smith’s focus was on God’s created plan of missional ministry as a birther of a beloved community. Despite Smith’s ingrained connection to the Black church, Smith is also intentional about building God’s Kingdom as multi-ethnic. “My answer is that the multi-ethnic and missional church is a healthy church when its members bring their unique ethnic and cultural gifts and experiences and share them with others to the glory of God. To this extent, their unique gifts become a gift to the broader body of Christ followers. When I served as senior pastor of the Sanctuary Covenant Church, I learned over time that I would do the congregation a disservice if I didn’t bring my unique cultural gifts and experiences into the church. I went from trying to be all things to all people (particularly the predominately European-Americans in the congregation) to understanding my unique gifts and bringing them to bear in this setting.”⁶³ Smith learned the importance of being true to God and true to his identify as a Christian venerated with ethnicity.

⁶¹ Efrem Smith, *The Post-Black & Post-White Church: Becoming the Beloved Community in a Multi-Ethnic World* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass A Wiley Print, 2012), 104.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 119,120

⁶³ Efrem Smith, *The Post-Black & Post-White Church: Becoming the Beloved Community in a Multi-Ethnic World* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass A Wiley Print, 2012), 94.

Shin accounts recognizing and utilizing strategic skills to build trust with people are not only pivotal, but also fruitful in building relationships. “We must offer the hospitality of God to a racially and ethnically broken world by adopting and embodying cross-cultural skills. Jesus did such when he stopped by the well and asked the Samaritan woman for a drink.”⁶⁴

As the bride of Christ, the church can no longer occupy the space with elephants in the room that contradict Christ’s mission for the church, but instead, become the loudest voice advocating for hope and healing through Christ. “The church displays the first fruits of the forgiven and forgiving people of God who are brought together across the rubble of diving walls that have crumbled under the weight of the cross. It is the harbinger of the new humanity that lives in genuine community, a form of companionship and wholeness that humanity craves.”⁶⁵

Moore and Walker reminds the church of its responsibility of bridging the gap internally as the body of Christ. “The church must be on the frontier of racial reconciliation in America. In recent American past, it was the church that was one of the greatest impediments to racial justice in America; but it was also the church that helped inspire America and Americans, to quote Martin Luther King Jr., “cash this check, a check that will give us upon demand the riches of freedom and the security of justice.”⁶⁶

To care about racial justice and racial reconciliation is to tap into the very best of the Christian story. Ours is a story that tells of a God who makes every one of His children precious in His sight. It is a story about a God who stamps His image on every person—regardless of color or ethnicity. Apart from Christ, humanity separates itself from one another. The wide lens of reconciliation between God and man also grants reconciliation between the broken chains of humanity. In Christ, we no longer define ourselves by the

⁶⁴ Sarah Shin, *Beyond Colorblind: Redeeming Our Ethnic Journey* (Westmont: InterVarsity Press, 2017), 104.

⁶⁵ Darrell L. Guder, *Missional Church* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1998), 103.

⁶⁶ Russell D. Moore and Andrew T. Walker, *The Gospel and Racial Reconciliation* (Nashville: B&H Publishing Group, 2016), 1. ProQuest Ebook Central.

color of our skin, but by shade of red blood that our Savior spilled to reconcile us.⁶⁷

Jemal, Bussey, and Young do not withdraw from their directiveness in declaring that Christians and early Christianity's role in race is flavored with the good, the bad, and the ugly. While providing a practical glidepath for racial conciliation, the Jemal, Bussey, and Young intersect with Moore and Walker to attribute the responsibility of racial reconciliation upon the church. Jemal, Bussey, and Young take a front seat to practicality in problem solving, sifting through history, shining a spotlight on social constructs, and signifying the before and aftereffects of racism.

Understanding the interconnectedness of racism, religion, and economy in the U.S. is crucial for systemic change as part of the racial reconciliation process for these institutions. Currently, particular sects of Christianity engender harmful ideas of individualism and color-blindness (expounded upon below) that form implicit racism within Christianity (Bae, 2016). For example, Bae (2016) highlighted a study examining views held by U.S. conservative, White, Protestant Christians regarding socioeconomic gaps and inequalities. The identified beliefs included that: "social structures do not contribute to inequality; US citizens are afforded equal opportunity; individuals and their personal traits (e.g. lack of motivation; familial problems; avoidance of responsibility) are the drivers of inequity; and government efforts to achieve racial equality are naïve, wasteful, misguided, sinful, and counteract real solutions (Bae, 2016, p. 1009).⁶⁸

Christ's life was at the core of conflict and today Christians continue combating similar evils that compete for the same corroded controversies. Christ is the judge, jury, and justice who corrects, convicts, and concluded His journey with ensuring the truth is spoken and all glory is shunned toward God. Stott shines the spotlight on the legacy Christ and how he channeled and controlled being at the center of attention for all to gleam from. "We have seen that Jesus Christ was constantly gaged in controversy with the religious leaders of his day. They were critical of

⁶⁷ Russell D. Moore and Andrew T. Walker, *The Gospel and Racial Reconciliation* (Nashville: B&H Publishing Group, 2016), 2. ProQuest Ebook Central.

⁶⁸ Alexas Jemal, Sarah Bussey, and Briana Young. "Steps to Racial Reconciliation: A Movement to Bridge the Racial Divide and Restore Humanity." *Social Work and Christianity* 47, no. 1 (2020): 36, <http://ezproxy.liberty.edu/login?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.proquest.com%2Fscholarly-journals%2Fsteps-racial-reconciliation-movement-bridge%2Fdocview%2F2437193281%2Fse-2%3Faccountid%3D12085>.

him, and he was even more outspokenly critical of them. He did not hesitate when necessary to disagree with their views in public or to warn the people of their false teaching. “Be on your guard against the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees” (Matt 16:6), he said to his disciples.”⁶⁹

Jemal, Bussey, and Young tackle systemic racism and the social toxicity which is counter-intuitive in comparison to Emerson’s dialogue that shifts African Americans as the villains in a sinful state because they rely upon aid and assistance verses Jemal’s interpretation of victims sifting through the rubble of a toxic system. Jemal is poignant “What becomes clear within this discussion is how the institutions and practitioners of social work and Christianity have—inadvertently and purposefully—perpetuated and justified racism.”⁷⁰

How can the body of Christ unite when the provocation of love your neighbor seems antiquated within the restraints of an anti-movement locally and globally? The time is now to eradicate racism and allow the entrance of racial reconciliation. Racism is an “ism” that presents a roadblock for racial reconciliation and resistance is existent as restoration dangles on the page of extinction if no one is willing to view the problems from the inside out, spiritually first, then rationalize the effects in the natural causes afterwards.

Once again Moore and Walker unapologetically raises awareness about reoccurring real life heartaches in America. “Racial reconciliation represents one of the most volatile issues in contemporary America. Recent events-whether in Ferguson, Missouri, or Charleston, South Carolina-remind us that America’s wounds on race are still deep. But we cannot allow our

⁶⁹ John Stott, *Christ In Conflict: Lessons from Jesus and His Controversies* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2013), 61, ProQuest Ebook Central.

⁷⁰ Alexas Jemal, Sarah Bussey, and Briana Young. "Steps to Racial Reconciliation: A Movement to Bridge the Racial Divide and Restore Humanity." *Social Work and Christianity* 47, no. 1 (2020): 36, <http://ezproxy.liberty.edu/login?qurl=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.proquest.com%2Fscholarly-journals%2Fsteps-racial-reconciliation-movement-bridge%2Fdocview%2F2437193281%2Fse-2%3Faccountid%3D12085>.

failures as a society to simply simmer. The church must be on the frontier of racial reconciliation.”⁷¹

Jackson speaks from experience in offense and defense as a pastor and prolific speaker about racial reconciliation. Jackson addresses and advocates while adhering to biblical principles as the receipt for racial reconciliation, which is contrary to Jemal’s account to resuscitate equitable life through correcting systems rather than creating space for a change of heart, change of character, and a conversation change from African Americans being casted as victim’s verses victors. “Minorities must no longer see ourselves as victims but victors who will raise the level of biblical righteousness and justice in America.”⁷² This statement deems a standing ovation as this pastor treaded upon risky territory as a pastor of a multi-ethnic congregation. Jackson’s risky behavior provides a refresher and reminds everyone that the journey of racial reconciliation really is a heart thing. “A good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart, and an evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in his heart. For the mouth speaks what the heart is full of” (Luke 6:45, NIV).

Jackson recognizes and recollects genuine issues at hand for African Americans, however, as an African American, Jackson does not evade from Christian truths. Jackson encourages and evokes collective change recognizing that Christians can confront the same demons, cross the same paths, share a new vision, and reach a new destination. “The nation’s Christian faith and common sense are still our greatest unifiers. In the first Great Awakening that swept across our thirteen colonies between the 1730s and 1740s, there was an emphasis on

⁷¹ Russell D. Moore and Andrew T. Walker, *The Gospel and Racial Reconciliation* (Nashville: B&H Publishing Group, 2016), 1, ProQuest Ebook Central.

⁷² Harry R. Jackson Jr, *A Manifesto: Christian America’s Contract With Minorities* (New Kingston: Whitaker House, 2020), 20.

personal spiritual renewal that produced societal change at grassroots level. This movement almost single handedly promoted the ideas for human dignity, equality, and the abolition of slavery. This revival movement permanently transformed Protestantism and the emerging U.S. culture.”⁷³

Sharing the Gospel and Culture Relevance

The meaning of Christianity is pertinent to this study and materializes the life and legacy of Jesus Christ. Westerholm presents the study of the Christian mind personifying his meaning of Christianity. “Christianity, then, is the monotheistic, completely spiritual, and ethical religion, which, based on the life of its Author as Redeemer and as Founder of the Kingdom of God, consists in the freedom of the children of God, involves the impulse to conduct from the motive of love, aims at the moral organization of mankind, and grounds blessedness on the relation of sonship to God, as well as on the Kingdom of God.”⁷⁴

As a Christian, most have heard at least one homily that stirs the crowd with striking words and salient emotions to encourage everyone to consummate the greatest commandment through a singular word called “love” as spoken in Matthew 22:37-40. To broaden the efforts of convincing Christians of the importance of love, agape love or unconditional love of God is usually asserted to ensure the message was received and success was achieved to remind the hearer that God loves all people, and all people must love all people.

Docusen dissected one word called neighbor and interjected meaning and purpose to teach the beauty of embracing and loving each other as neighbors without living door to door.

“Neighborliness is the behavior of Christians who seek to embody the love, understanding, curiosity, kindness, and care of Jesus. His life showed us how to love others with open

⁷³ Harry R. Jackson Jr, *A Manifesto: Christian America's Contract With Minorities* (New Kingston: Whitaker House, 2020), 20.

⁷⁴ Martin Westerholm, *The Ordering of the Christian Mind: Karl Barth and Theological Rationality* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), 54.

arms. Jesus was constantly crossing the street and beginning conversations with people that were different from Him. He calls us to do the same. When we look at Jesus' life-style, we can immediately see that He didn't just hang out with people who looked like Him."⁷⁵

Docusen's eye opening experience allowed him to witness the beauty of diversity while leading the way for his family and the church to engage in neighborhoods that adds to heaven on earth as delivered in Revelations 7:9. Pathak views fall in sync and succession with Docusen's, "Imagine what happens when people love each other well. Now imagine what happens when we don't love those who live next door."⁷⁶

Perry's stance sends open-ended questions to the reader to render critical thinking for and rational responses while pondering adverbs that translate thought provoking comments. "But how does one engage the world? Where does one start? Hunter explains that evangelical Christians tend to believe genuine societal change is accomplished, not in the transformation of structures like the economy or legal system, but in transforming "culture." For evangelicals, he explains, "the essence of culture is found in the hearts and minds of individuals-in what are typically called "values."⁷⁷

The Catholic World expands a broad-based view of a biblically based truth illuminating "The church in the U. S. has been enriched by the diversity of her members, who make up the one body of Christ. All are united in one apostolic faith; all live through the action of one Spirit. Thus united, the church can be active in evangelizing."⁷⁸ The Catholic World's view is a

⁷⁵ David Docusen, *Neighborliness: Finding The Beauty Of God Across Dividing Lines* (Austin: Fedd Books, 2020), 26.

⁷⁶ Jay Pathak and Dave Runyon, *The Art of Neighboring: Building Genuine Relationships Right Outside Your Door* (Grand Rapids: BakerBooks, 2012), 29.

⁷⁷ Perry, Samuel L. *Growing God's Family: The Global Orphan Care Movement and the Limits of Evangelical Activism* (New York: University Press, 2017), 67, ProQuest Ebook Central.

⁷⁸ The Catholic World, "Evangelizing American Culture," *Mahwah* Vol 235, ISS, 1408, (1992): 161.

testament to the life-changing and heartfelt experience for Docusen and the church. All people matter to God and to God all people matter is not a recent epitome, but a reality since the creation of humankind. God was intentional in His craftiness of a miraculous design for each human being. The very human nature of Jesus Christ layered bloodlines that traced to various ethnicities and cultural. The divine character of Jesus provides no recollection of biases toward people because of the pigmentation of their skin. God only measures the content of a person's heart in relation to their sins and His holiness.

Biblically speaking there is one race called the human race with many ethnicities equally created in the image of God. By God's divine plan the human race populated and metastasized into communities of people that bequests different values and cultures from one generation to another. If African American and Caucasians Christians would associate their identities first through Christ, then culture should never be the hierarchy, and neither should culture be a hinderance in evangelizing one another. When the meaning of culture remains in its rightful place, this grants everyone an opportunity to become educated without erasing history, but more importantly it allows culture to remain a subsidiary rather than the subservient of the Christian faith.

Spoken from Colvin's perspective based upon Mormon thoughts, "Culture is a complete way of life. Culture arises over time and includes a whole raft of human behaviors-what we consider important to know, what we choose to believe, how we respond through artistic expression, what we consider to be right and wrong, our community agreements, our daily habits, how we socialize our young, the customs we preserve, the languages we speak, and the

practices that grow out of being in relationship with our physical environment.”⁷⁹ As stated, Colvin’s point of view on culture does not wrestle with racial reconciliation, however, it grapples with the potential dereliction in ensuring the plan of salvation is solid due to many interpretations streaming from different cultures.

Bradley goes beyond the conversation on culture and defines the cruciality of moving from understanding, to forgiving which can warrant unity. “Thus, racial reconciliation comes with a personal commitment to Jesus and loving interpersonal relationships. The phrase “you can’t legislate love” undergirds their approach of transforming society ‘one heart at a time.’⁸⁰

Viewpoints from Dougherty and Emerson are considered and questioned when attempting to understand the relational breakdown of African Americans and Caucasians. Dougherty presented facts from their assessments concluding that multiracial congregations despite existing in the 21st century have their challenges as racial tensions continue.⁸¹ Emerson lays the groundwork for serious controversial conversations of how Caucasian Christians depict African American Christians. “African Americans, despite their Christian association violate key tenants of white conservatives Christianity. African Americans, in their eyes, are not true accountable freewill individualists, are relationally dysfunctional, and sin both by relying on

⁷⁹ Gina Colvin, "There’s No Such Thing As A Gospel Culture" *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 50, no. 4 (2017): 57,69,188, <http://ezproxy.liberty.edu/login?qurl=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.proquest.com%2Fscholarly-journals%2Ftheres-no-such-thing-as-gospel-culture%2Fdocview%2F1992863209%2Fse-2%3Faccountid%3D12085>.

⁸⁰ Bradley R. E. Wright, Michael Wallace, Annie S. Wisnesky, Christopher M. Donnelly, and Zozula Missari, “Religion, Race, and Discrimination: A Field Experiment of How American Churches Welcome Newcomers,” Vol 54 ISS 2, (2015): 91.

⁸¹ Kevin D. Dougherty, Brandon C. Martinez, and Gerardo Marti, “Congregational Diversity and Attendance in a Mainline Protestant,” No.54 (2016): 2.

programs rather than themselves, and by shifting blame to structurally based reasons for inequality."⁸²

Emerson's statements bestow a truth of how far race relations have re-emerged and rescinded. Emerson's views envelope potential answers to questions that gleam from one enclave despising another enclave based on perceptions and realities that should be calibrated on a case-by-case basis. Overall, perceptions without facts can harbor false narratives and hinder positive progress among all people.

Bass and Emerson's views fashion real conversations and thoughts among people, which capitalizes on possibilities of why the progression for racial reconciliation among African Americans and Caucasians believers is diluted at best.

Although like-minded Protestants might appreciate this effort, the evangelical version of a Christian American is unsettling to many people. It portrays the Founders as saints, a pantheon of larger-than-human characters whom God personally inspired and directed. Because of their faith-filled heroism, and because God scripted the action, every event of American history is good, godly, and pure—a sort of post-biblical revelation enacted on American soil. That includes, of course, trying to explain away doctrinal irregularities and moral failings—and ignoring the fact that American Christians committed wholesale evils like slavery, the genocide of native peoples, persecution of non-Protestants, racism, and violence against women and children. And it ignores religious diversity, with sad, tragic, and challenging memoirs of Christianity. Remixing the past by taking out the unpleasant bits is a dangerous thing.⁸³

Bass also lays a perspective that places the spotlight on Jesus and His love connections with multicultural people. "Jesus' earliest followers gathered into culturally diverse congregations where Jews, Gentiles, Samaritans, and Africans worshiped and served God together. Besides

⁸² Michael O. Emerson, Christian Smith, and David Sikkink, "Equal in Christ, But Not In the World: White Conservative Protestant and Explanation of Black-White Inequality," Vol 46, No. 3 (1999): 410.

⁸³ Diana B. Bass, *Christianity For The Rest of Us: How the Neighborhood Church Is Transforming the Faith*. (New York: HarperSanFrancisco, 2006) 30, 31.

being radically and ethnically diverse, early Christians held a variety of theological views and created varied spiritual practices that shaped the new religion."⁸⁴

Moore and Walker are speaking the language that reflects the heart of God for all Christians. "The Gospel & Racial Reconciliation is structured in such a way as to inform every angle of the Christian's life-their place in culture, their engagement as everyday Christians, and their role in the body of Christ, the church."⁸⁵ The clear path to reconciliation is only possible through replicating the passion and purpose of Christ. McRaney solidifies the need for relationship and repentance.

God wants to have a relationship with us, but mankind and God are separated by sin. All our efforts cannot bridge the gap between us. We deserve separation from God which results in eternal death. However, Christ came to bridge the gap by dying for our sins. We must move over to God's side by receiving Christ through faith, repentance, and surrendering our will. This will prevent eternal separation from God and give us eternal life.⁸⁶

African American and Caucasian Christians can no longer exemplify stagnation in accomplishing the will of God through multicultural evangelism because the world is waiting on answers that will not derive from the secular, but from the spiritual. The Word of God is the roadmap for Christians to journey together to reach other ethnicities for Christ. The framework his established to extinguish the old and allow the Holy Spirit to refresh believers with a new outlook.

⁸⁴ Diana B. Bass, *Christianity For The Rest of Us: How the Neighborhood Church Is Transforming the Faith*. (New York: HarperSanFrancisco, 2006), 149.

⁸⁵ Russell D. Moore and Andrew T. Walker, *The Gospel and Racial Reconciliation* (Nashville: B&H Publishing Group, 2016), 3. ProQuest Ebook Central, <https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.ezproxy.liberty.edu/lib/liberty/detail.action?docID=4528293>.

⁸⁶ Will McRaney Jr, *The Art of Personal Evangelism: Sharing Jesus In A Changing Culture* (Nashville: B&H Publishing Group, 2003), 239.

MacArthur summarizes believers promoting Jesus and interacting with people for the sake of the Gospel. "We are not only promoting the gospel of Jesus, but Jesus Himself. We are not merely explaining the Word of Christ, but the person of Christ. We are engaging people with conversations about what God has done for us through His Son. We are calling people to commit to a new relationship with the living God incarnated in Jesus."⁸⁷ Hunter alludes to the mission of the church fulfilling its calling for the kingdom. This is the risk and the great work ahead for African Americans and Caucasian Christians. "The church is "commissioned to communicate the meaning of the gospel to the entire human race, including people who are beyond the constituencies and fringes of our churches and including people who view life and the world differently than Christians do, who live their lives by values that contrast with Christianity's values of faith, hope, love, and justice."⁸⁸

African American and Caucasian Christians have a wonderful opportunity to seize the moment for Christ and began evangelizing one another. "The gospel demands that we carry compassion and the message of Christ across ethnic lines."⁸⁹ Through racial reconciliation, the Pandora's box is wide open, and the possibilities are priceless when all unite on one accord. "You cannot be a Christian renewed in the image of God and be indifferent or opposed to reconciliation in the body of Christ. "Racial reconciliation is not an implication of the cross; it is the work of the cross."⁹⁰ The hope and healing of Christ is unpackaged to the world dominated

⁸⁷ John MacArthur, *Evangelism: How to Share The Gospel Faithfully* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2011), 64.

⁸⁸ George G. Hunter, *Radical Outreach: The Recovery of Apostolic Ministry & Evangelism* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2003), 190.

⁸⁹ Russell D. Moore and Andrew T. Walker, *The Gospel and Racial Reconciliation* (Nashville: B&H Publishing Group, 2016), 22. ProQuest Ebook Central.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 34.

by darkness because of a non-existent relationship with Christ. Through effective multicultural evangelism, the body of Christ reveals Christ to the World as one God, one Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Theological Foundations

Theology is where the Word of God intersects with the love of God. “In the beginning was the Word and the Word was God, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God” (John 1:1). “John begins with the Logos in relationship to God and creation (1:1-5). The Logos (logos) has a complex relationship with God (theos): on the one hand, the Logos is “with God” in the sense of being “turned towards” or even face-to-face with God; on the other hand, the Logos also is God, sharing the divine being, God’s way of being present to the world, the sublime utterance through which the world was made. In this sense, the Logos is portrayed as the agent of creation, the source of all life, a life that begins with the making of light (Genesis 1:3).”⁹¹

The Book of Genesis is the source and foundation for the beginning of life and God’s intended purpose for his created life. Dodds states, “God is also the exemplar formal cause of all things.”⁹² Blenkinsopp highlights God creativity for God’s own purpose. “Only when all this is in place does God create humanity, male and female, and the means to sustain them. On this view, human beings are created and sustained for the worship of God, and the world is created as a cosmic temple in which that worship takes place, a theme for which parallels can be found in Mesopotamian myth.”⁹³

⁹¹ Beverly Roberts Gaventa and David Petersen, *The New Interpreters Bible* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2010), 712.

⁹² Michael J. Dodds, *The One Creator God in Thomas Aquinas and Contemporary Theology* (University of American Press, 2020), 171, ProQuest Ebook Central.

⁹³ Joseph Blenkinsopp, *Creation, un-Creation, Re-creation: A Discursive Commentary on Genesis 1-11* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing Plc., 2021), 22, ProQuest Ebook Central.

In Acts chapter 17, the apostle Paul preached in Athens to the Jews and Gentiles, all while also taking the time in the public square to debate those who doubted Jesus and his miraculous resurrection. Paul was determined to convey the truth regardless of their responses and the spoken sermon laid the foundation for who God is and who believers are to God.

The God who created the world and everything in it-this One, being Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in handmade temples. Nor is this One worshiped by human hands as if needing anything. Instead this One gives everyone life, breath, indeed everything. Indeed, from one he created the whole human race to inhabit the earth's surface, having determined their periods of dominion and the boundaries marking off where they live. Why? To seek God, perhaps to feel their way toward even find, God, who is not far from each of us. For In God we live, move about, and have our being, just as some of your own poets have said, For we are also God's offspring.⁹⁴

The Bible is brimming with Scripture for that reconciliation among believers and bursting Christ as the hope. Second Timothy 3:16-17 validates, "All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work." "The sacred writings," namely Jewish Scriptures, are a source of Timothy's theological instruction, for they make him and others "wise and salvation" (3:15, NIV) and thereby equip them for the training and living that correspond to God's salvation."⁹⁵

The apostle Paul sets a precedence within Ephesians 1:11-14 to provide clarity for the believer, leaving no room for doubt regarding God's Master Kingdom Plan for every believer. "In him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will, in order that we, who were the first to

⁹⁴ Carl R. Holladay, *Acts: A Commentary* (Westminister: John Knox Press, 2016), 341, <https://web-b-eb-scohost-com.ezproxy.liberty.edu/ehost/ebookviewer/ebook/bmxlYmtfXzEzOTgzNTdfX0FO0?sid=24228365-0ed7-4339-b58b-7f9552af2294%40pdc-v-sessmgr03&vid=0&format=EB&rid=1>

⁹⁵ Beverly Roberts Gaventa and David Petersen, *The New Interpreters Bible* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2010), 873.

put our hope in Christ, might be for the praise of his glory. And you were also included in Christ when you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation. When you believed you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit. Who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession to the praise of his glory" (Eph 1:11-14, NIV).

Biblical texts as detailed in Ephesians 2:11-22, unequivocally elaborate how Jews and Gentiles were reconciled as one human race through the blood of Jesus Christ. Roberts states, "In Ephesians 2:14-18 Christ makes peace in that he eradicates the "hostility" between Jews and Gentiles (2:14,7). Yet the peace Christ forges is more than the end of enmity. It involves making Jews and Gentiles "one" (2:14), creating "one new humanity out of two" (2:15), and reconciling "both of them to God" (2:16). Christ's making peace in 2:14-18 expresses and exemplifies God's cosmic purpose as revealed in 1:10; "to bring unity to all things in heaven and on earth under Christ."⁹⁶

Tony Evans titles Ephesians 2:11-22, "Heaven's New Community: One New Man in his Bible Commentary" entails, "The cross of Christ not only deals with our separation from God, but it also deals with our separation from one another. We are saved by grace "for good works" (2:10). And those works are to be lived out in the Christian dynamic called the church-heaven's kingdom community."⁹⁷ There are different views, and different exposes, but all construct defined statements that indicate the value upon all life, which was created by God. "Gaventa and Petersen's commentary reflects Jews and the Roman Empire and the preaching of peace by

⁹⁶ Mark D. Roberts, *Ephesians* (Grand Rapids: HarperCollins Christian Publishing, 2020), 79, ProQuest Ebook Central.

⁹⁷ Tony Evans, *The Tony Evans Bible Commentary: Advancing God's Kingdom Agenda* (Nashville: Holman, 2019), 1222.

Christ, to include emphasizing how the author creates a “new unity” against “prejudice, exclusion, and hostility” in Ephesians 2:11-22.⁹⁸ Brock’s direction on reconciliation is observed and comparable to several Scriptures. “Reconciliation is now between people in Ephesians 2:11-22 as opposed to between God and people in Colossians and the other Pauline letters. Christ’s central role is still in place as He is the basis for peace, one that is assumed with God and whose result between people is now highlighted.”⁹⁹ Tony Evans inscribed his comments to enlighten the reader within Ephesians 2:17 with several explanations concerning race and ethnicity.

The reason we have racial, ethnic, gender, and class divisions in the church is because we have not fully and properly understood the cross. Christians divided along illegitimate lines don’t see themselves as part of the one new man. All barriers based on factors such as race and gender are obliterated by the cross. This doesn’t mean these distinctions don’t exist; instead, these legitimate distinctions are absorbed into something bigger. In terms of spiritual relationship and development, a white man has no advantage over a black man. A man has no spiritual advantage over a woman. We can embrace our differences with a common commitment to Christ because we are at peace with one another through our peace with God. We live in the good news of peace.¹⁰⁰

Tony Evans reemphasizes upon unity to remind believers of the power and authority already granted through being uniquely created for a universal purpose. “Through Christ we have unity, not uniformity. We’re not all the same. Unity is Uniqueness working toward a common goal. This is possible because all Christians have access in one Spirit to the Father. Christian

⁹⁸ Beverly Roberts Gaventa and David Petersen, *The New Interpreters Bible* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2010), 837.

⁹⁹ Darrell L. Brock, *Ephesians: An Introduction and Commentary* (Westmont: InterVarsity Press, 2019), ProQuest Ebook, 15.

¹⁰⁰ Tony Evans, *The Tony Evans Bible Commentary: Advancing God’s Kingdom Agenda* (Nashville: Holman, 2019), 1222.

unity, then, is a spiritual issue. Where the Spirit is working, there is oneness. If there is disharmony and division for illegitimate criteria, the Spirit is not at work,” says, Tony Evans.¹⁰¹

Ephesians 2:21, “In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord,” references human creation, not the architectural design, but refers to God’s masterpiece designed with an array of biblical attributes and addressed as the church. Because of desirable and transferrable characteristics called sin that are contrary and counterproductive to God’s Master Kingdom Plan, Jesus Christ became the sacrifice and the savior.

The church, brothers and sisters of the Christian faith were earmarked before birth to mirror the Great Commission to all nations, while displaying the Fruit of the Spirit demonstrated through the Gifts of the Spirit. Jesus Christ mission is to save souls and the believers mission is to witness to souls for Christ, regardless of a person’s errors in life, inscribed race, ethnicity, exquisite lives, education or geographical location, the love of Jesus extends to all. “Jesus Christ is “the same yesterday and today and forever more” (Heb 13:8, NIV) for all who will admit, repent, believe, and call Him Lord.

In the book of Romans, the apostle Paul made a sincere appeal to the brothers and sisters of the faith concerning his desire for the salvation for the people of Israel. Paul addressed the urgency for the children of Israel to understand that there was nothing they could humanly do to save themselves except for accept Jesus Christ as Lord through faith in God. Romans chapter 10, verse 12 acknowledges that in the sight of God, through the heart of God, and from the mouth of God there is no difference with respect to salvation. “For there is no difference between Jew and Gentile-the same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on Him” (Rom 10:12, NIV).

¹⁰¹ Tony Evans, *The Tony Evans Bible Commentary: Advancing God’s Kingdom Agenda* (Nashville: Holman, 2019), 1222,1223.

When believers become not only listeners, but doers of God's Word, then true dominion is at work in the life of the believer due to a healthy love relationship with Christ. The Holy Bible is God's Master Kingdom Plan, recollected and released to teach the believer how to navigate through a vibrant life in Christ where the Holy Spirit is the navigator. Ryken undeniably admits that Christians have a seasonal love relationship with God.

If we are not content with living Jesus less, but actually want to love him more, then we must learn how and where to get that love. What is the channel for receiving the love that will enable us to grow in our love for Jesus? At first the answer may seem obvious. And it is obvious. We know that "God is love" (1 John 4:8). Love is one of his defining attributes. We also know that "we love because he first loved us" (1 John 4:19). So, of course, God is the source of all our love, including our love for God himself.¹⁰²

Through the spoken Word of God, the word love is explicit and exclusive as the Word reminds the believer and the reader that love is from the beginning and love will transcend above all as the Jesus says, "Love the Lord our God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it. Love your neighbor as yourself. All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments" (Matt 22:37-40, NIV). The world and its habitants were created through love, salvation came in the image of Jesus Christ through love, and reconciliation replicating Christ will only exist through love. MacArthur states, "The Jewish flavor of Matthew's gospel is remarkable. This is evident even in the opening genealogy, which Matthew traces back only as far as Abraham. In contrast, Luke, aiming to show Christ as the Redeemer of humanity, goes all the way back to Adam. Matthew's purpose is somewhat narrower: to demonstrate that Christ is the King and Messiah of Israel."¹⁰³

¹⁰² Phil Ryken, *Loving Jesus More* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2014), 19.

¹⁰³ John MacArthur, *Matthew: The Coming of the King* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2007), 1.

The book of Revelation covers revelations from Jesus Christ and key to comprehending canonical Scriptures that cast light upon His power and holiness, eternal life, and prophecies for a victorious life now and forever. “This is a revelation from Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show his servants the events that must soon take place. He made it known by sending his angel to his servant John, who testifies to everything he saw—that is, the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ. Blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear it and take to heart what is written in it because the time is near.” (Rev 1:1-3, NIV) The book of Revelation encumbers with judgement upon the earth, final destruction, and yes, the beginning of a new heaven and a new earth as described by the apostle John.

The book of Revelation also describes how people from different nations and culture backgrounds, under one God, one church, one body of believers uniting as one. Paul’s commentary’s point of view states, “The nature of this text is reflected in the impact that it has had on human history, belief and culture.”¹⁰⁴ In Revelation 7, the angelic angels were in position and the tribes of Israel assembled in awe of a holy, almighty, and amazing God as “Lord of Lords and Kings of Kings (Rev 17:14, NIV). Revelations 7:9-11 is sound doctrine that sounds the alarm and is earth shattering in outlining God’s kingdom plan. In the beginning revealed God creating one race and in the end that one race would unite as one and worship Him as heaven on earth.

After this I saw a vast crowd, too great to count, from every nation and tribe and people and language, standing in front of the throne and before the lamb. They were clothed in white robes and held palm branches in their hands. And they were shouting with a great roar, “Salvation comes from our God who sits on the throne and from the Lamb!” And all the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living beings. And they fell before the throne with their faces to the ground and worshiped God.

¹⁰⁴ Ian Paul, *Revelation: An Introduction and Commentary* (Westmont: InterVarsity Press, 2021), ProQuest Ebook Central, 2.

Before the curtain closed, the mandate generated action as Jesus completed leadership training with the disciples prior to His departure. “Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age” (Matt 28:19-20, NIV). This same mandate remains in place for every born-again believer and the marching orders were established.

We Will Obey the Command of Christ” “After telling us of His authority over heaven and earth, the next words out of Jesus’ mouth are, “Go, therefore” (v.19). It is as if He’s saying, “In light of My authority, go!” “This is not a comfortable call inviting most Christians to come, be baptized, and sit in one location. Yet, that is exactly what we are tempted to turn our mission into, and if we are not careful, this is what our Christianity will consist of. We may come to a worship service, participate in the life of the church, serve in the church, and give regularly, all while neglecting to make disciples.¹⁰⁵

Theoretical Framework

While models and systems vary, the preplanned approach for this project is to create innovative resources with a biblical foundation that directs and redirect the believer to Christ and God’s Word. Whereas racial reconciliation is a part of the process, the goal is for African Americans and Caucasian Christians to increase in multicultural evangelism in a two-way dimensional approach. Multi-cultural is inclusive of and streams beyond the four walls of the church. One author explores the prospective of globalization. “To summarize an evangelical response to globalization, we live in an era of more cultural sharing than ever, and this has a potential for fostering a synergy that leads to stronger economies, better labor pools, better

¹⁰⁵ David Platt, *Matthew: Christ Centered Exposition, Exalting Jesus in Commentary* (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2013), 374.

products. Rather than withdraw and lose out, we must engage in world's cultures, which will help everyone thrive. And this cultural engagement is easier than ever in a "flattening" world."¹⁰⁶

West Haven engages extensively in community evangelism within different communities. West Haven desires to engage in more communities and partner with more churches and ministries to build community. West Haven lacks in sponsoring seminars, events, and workshops with an emphasis on multicultural evangelism and reconciliation in conjunction in addition to lacking in aggressive partnership building with businesses, organizations, and businesses within their community. Several examples of models used are presented to allow the author to gain knowledge and present recommendations to West Haven.

Andrea Smith unveils a painful history below in America, while orphaned truths, opposing views, and oppositions are persistent in a world that fetches continuous conversations and controversies coiled as racism, which brands a well tasted receipt as evil, egotistic, envy, entitlement, and more which estranges the believer's relationship with Jesus and others. Smith shares a plethora of racial reconciliation attempts by well-known Christian believers that envelopes a variety of outcomes. Within the models shared, the negative outcomes seemed to outweigh the positive efforts.

At a meeting of the National Black Evangelical Association, for example, one participant asked Bill McCartney, "What is the Promise Keepers going to say about anti-affirmative action atmosphere in this country? What are the men in the stadiums this summer going to hear about that?" (Mortimer, n.d.). When asked how African Americans feel about Promise Keepers, Bennie Simmons replied that Blacks would join when Promise Keepers demonstrated willingness to invest money in inner-city businesses (Mortimer, n.d.). Andy Crouch criticized racial reconciliation ministries for continuing to maintain leadership in white hands (Crouch, 2002; Wadsworth, 2014, loc. 3138). "Discussion of racial reconciliation is now in vogue," states Ronald Potter of the Center for Urban Studies, "but most discussions tend to be superficial and trite, reduced to 'can't we get along?'" (H. Lee, 1995). "The Myth of Racial Progress," many African

¹⁰⁶ Kenneth Nehrbass, *God's Image and Global Cultures: Integrating Faith and Culture in the Twenty-First Century* (Eugene: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2016), 24, ProQuest Ebook Central.

Americans expressed the belief that white evangelicals were concerned with racial reconciliation only in order to mobilize forces for their conservative agenda and were attempting to substitute personal transformation for a social response to racism (Tapia, 1993, 17). Indeed, after the initial fervor behind the racial reconciliation movement, the difficulty in effecting true reconciliation became apparent. Michael Emerson and Christian Smith's study on evangelical race relations in *Divided by Faith* concluded that racial reconciliation was largely unsuccessful, a conclusion that proved to be very disturbing to those involved in these programs. According to Emerson and Smith (2000), these failures have three causes: (1) White evangelicals see racism on an individual rather than structural level. (2) White evangelicals have sporadic contact with people of color. (3) Evangelical theology holds that simple conversion to Christianity is sufficient to address all problems related to race relations.¹⁰⁷

Smith modeled more efforts to racial reconciliation that mimicked reconciling and were noted as a success story surrounded with embittered remarks.

For instance, in 1994 a Pentecostal convocation known as the "Memphis Miracle" was designed to stir the spirit of repentance and reconciliation between Black and white churches. It was led by the Pentecostal Fellowship of North America, a historically all-white organization. At the climax of the event, Black and white pastors tearfully washed one another's feet. Since then the Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches of North America (PCCNA) has been co-chaired by various Black and white leaders. On September 11, 2003, the organization adopted a position statement condemning racism in all its forms.¹⁰⁸

As African American and Caucasian organizations continued their journey to reconcile and reunite, accusations against both, were prevalent. "In addition, leaders from ten denominations in Memphis formed a national organization called Churches Uniting in Christ (CUIC) to commit to worship together. This new organization, however, was accused of fostering worshiping together as a "token gesture" toward addressing racism. Despite these

¹⁰⁷ Andrea Smith, *Unreconciled from Racial Reconciliation to Racial Justice in Christian Evangelicalism* (London: Duke University Press, 2019), 19-20, ProQuest Ebook Central.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 21.

accusations, CUIC things worshiping together is not just a “token gesture,” but pastors in Memphis concede that their efforts to integrate their churches have largely failed.”¹⁰⁹

Smith’s analysis of the above testaments to countless methods and means to manifest racial healing is summarized prophetically without scaling or stripping Scripture of its truth. “In many respects, we can understand much evangelical discourse around race following a similar logic. That is, the notion that we don’t have a “skin problem, we have a sin problem.”¹¹⁰ Jackson argues that racism is caused not so much by structures or institutions, but rather by immorality and sinfulness. Its remedy lay in the changing of individual attitudes and behaviors rather than in fundamental reweaving of the social fabric. “Addressing racial issues provides the Church a prophetic witness to the world.”¹¹¹

Kimberly shared about efforts at the Crisis Pregnancy Centers assisting predominately African American women. There are centers open in other cities. Through the efforts of the centers, outreach work shined a spotlight on the ratio of abortion rates and persuaded the clients not to abort. “To this end, this article examines how the evangelical CPC movement understands Black women’s higher abortion rates, the solutions they seek to offer Black women to persuade them not to abort, the expansion of the movement into minority areas, how the CPC movement justified this encroachment, and the role of Black leaders and symbolic inclusion through Blackwashing in this expansion.”¹¹² The Crisis Pregnancy Center model seemed genuine with a

¹⁰⁹ Andrea Smith, *Unreconciled from Racial Reconciliation to Racial Justice in Christian Evangelicalism* (London: Duke University Press, 2019), 22, ProQuest Ebook Central.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 54.

¹¹¹ Darnell K. Williams, *Wings to Rise: Blacks Leadership, and the Assemblies of God* (Lima: DK Williams Enterprise, 2020), 68.

¹¹² Kelly, K., Gochanour, A. “Racial Reconciliation or Spiritual Smokescreens?: Blackwashing the Crisis Pregnancy Center Movement.” *Qual Sociol* 41, (2018): 424, <http://dx.doi.org.ezproxy.liberty.edu/10.1007/s11133-018-9392-0>

mission geared toward becoming relational with the clients all while galvanizing upon opportunities to evangelize other ethnicities.

“Diversity, Donations, and Disadvantage: The Implications of Personal Fundraising for For Racial Diversity in Evangelical Outreach Ministries, reflects white evangelical positive efforts to build racial diversity through outreach efforts and fundraising. “Within the past two decades, there has emerged a growing body of literature focusing on the challenges confronting interracial initiatives with evangelical churches.”¹¹³ With any model or approach there are advantages and disadvantages. The efforts of the evangelicals modeled a plan to research before responding. Through this strategic plan, variables presented the best mode and means to tackle the problem with Christ like methods. Analyzed data highlighted bring lessons learned fort future endeavors.

The Gospel is packaged and presented differently in a world that is dominated by culture differences and constant changes in an already chaotic world that consistently censors biblical theology, which equates to a movement of anti-Christ, anti-Christianity, and anti-Church. Christians are adapting to the increasing urgency for ministry beyond the four walls, beyond the traditional crusades, and beyond the mission fields abroad. The multiculturalism in the world has sounded the alarm to package and present differently, but the Bible is sound doctrine that must never render a comprise.

Copan’s focus on presenting the Gospel is centered on the “Marketplace,” coupled with his own ideas and methods. The “Marketplace” within itself is undoubtedly different from country to country, along with a variation of beliefs. “We live in a multicultural world with many

¹¹³ Samuel L. Perry. "Diversity, Donations, and Disadvantage: The Implications of Personal Fundraising for Racial Diversity in Evangelical Outreach Ministries." *Review of Religious Research*, 53, no. 4 (2012): 397-418, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41940750>.

racess and ethnic groups. To add to this already interesting mix, there are a huge number of religious and philosophical beliefs, from the monotheism of Judaism, to the do-it-yourself New Age spirituality or the strident New Atheism, to the “I don’t care” attitude of apatheism. How can we communicate to them the truth of the gospel in ways they can understand? This is a difficult question, and there are many different possible answers.”¹¹⁴ While Copan’s observations and ideas reflected on the apostle Paul in a Greek philosophical world, striving and struggling to share the gospel, one observation of the apostle’s motivation still rings true today about how people are malnourished about God and having authentic conversations is a grand start for any method that will steer to racial reconciliation and multicultural evangelism.

¹¹⁴ Paul Copan, and Kenneth D. Litwak, *The Gospel in the Marketplace of Ideas: Paul’s Mars Hill Experience for Our Pluralistic World* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2014), ProQuest Ebook Central.

Chapter 3

Methodology

A miracle, a message, and a mandate simultaneously collided over 2000 years ago. Through a miracle from God, Jesus Christ was born, personal salvation was received, and an ardent desire to equip and encourage African American and Caucasian believers to authentically love Jesus through loving one another and others was the mandate that became apparent and manifested into this project and ministry for the kingdom of God. There is an urgency for African American and Caucasian Christian believers to recapture and respond to God's mandate to unify as the body of Christ, evangelize, and disciple all people for Jesus Christ as instituted, illustrated, and illuminated through the Word of God.

This research recognizes evangelism as the means to reach people where they are and encourage them that Jesus Christ sacrificed his life, suffered for them, and Jesus Christ is a life changer who desires to change the world upside down and inside out. This research is indeed important to impact the Kingdom of God through uniting believers to love and forgive one another, worship God together, and serve in multicultural evangelism for Christ. "Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain" (1 Cor 15:58, NIV). The Christian journey must focus on illuminating God through Jesus Christ as the living Word (John 1:1-14, NIV). After Jesus came, died, rose from death, and ascended to heaven, God the Holy Spirit inspired the New Testament writers to record His life, and recite His teachings. Jesus promised that the Holy Spirit would guide believers "into all truth" (John 16:13, NIV). The Holy Spirit helps us understand the truth beyond our natural ability. The apostle John said, "But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and all of you know the truth" (1 John 2:20, NIV).

This research encases the truth according to Scripture and entangles expressed truths from participants.

This research is not defined through the lens of an expert but is based upon inquiry and investigative motives with every intention to intercalate data that creates capacity for solutions, sound advice, and a system that incorporates action, resolves problems, and produces results through administering interviews, surveys, and the observations. The research process is expected to identify problematic areas and through prayer, patience, planning, and perseverance, a pathway for robust change will be recommended. The impetus of navigating through the research process is to advise, motivate, aid, support, and present recommendations. While in pursuit of resolutions, the intent is to remain faithful, focused, and fervent from the research to implementation and conclusions.

This project serves as a recall to Christians of the constant spiritual battle for the eternal destiny of generations after generation to become followers of Jesus Christ. “After that whole generation had been gathered to their ancestors, another generation grew up who knew neither the Lord nor what he had done for Israel” (Judg 2:10, NIV). Initially, the participants responded with immense expressions of exhilaration and anticipation for the interviews. Some participants also expressed gratitude for exploring sensitive subject matters and some expressed how the timing could not be more perfect for this project. There is a commonality among interview participants who engulf in kingdom ministry endeavors that gear toward uniting all ethnicities. Potential participants for the surveys via Facebook did not display as much excitement and this is evident through the lack of participation.

The measurement of progress necessitated active participation of willing participants to allow themselves to become vulnerable and susceptible to interchanging about challenging

topics. Considering the magnitude of time spent serving in ministry with the interview some interview participants, taking the time to conversate about racial reconciliation was different.

The receipt for change is solely based upon an individual's willingness to embrace and envelope the results and recommendations established to enlighten and equip. The means and mode of this project explicates how the Bible promotes evangelism. "Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will send you out to fish for people" (Mark 1:17, NIV). The revelation of the kingdom of God reveals God is not satisfied with a handful of believers, small groups, or churches in a people group. His vision is a multitude of people worshipping Him from every people group."¹¹⁵ As true disciples of Jesus Christ, comprehending the biblical meaning of evangelism are means for positive outcomes and overwhelming ramifications for new developments in anticipation of favorable results among African Americans and Caucasian Christians.

Recently and over the years there have been an increase of polarizations and personality clashes between African Americans and Caucasian Christians within this world, to include the recent aftereffect of politics in America, prolonged pandemic, protests, and more in American and in Huntsville, Alabama, which constitutes the possibilities of rejections or objections for this project. The works of Satan are strategic to disrupt, disturb, and dismantle discipleship, incorporated in God's plan of salvation, knowing that lives will transform, and the trajectory of other lives will be impacted. As the church recognize the evil at hand and relish the power at work in one another and collectively through the Holy Spirit, then and only then, will the bride of Christ, rise as the righteousness of Jesus Christ and the "radiant church without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless" (Eph 5:27, NIV).

¹¹⁵ Steve Smith. *T4T: A Discipleship Re-Revolution* (Monument, CO: WIGTAke Resources LLC, 2011), 64.

Observations

Through conversations and meetings with the pastor of West Haven, the pastor team continued seeking the Holy Spirit through prayer for direction in expanding evangelism with hopes of a multi-ethnic congregation. The Word of God is West Haven's foundation and the faith of the leaders in Jesus Christ have afforded them opportunities to illuminate Christ for others to follow, fellowship, and flourish in their relationship with Christ. West Haven is blossoming in love for one another, love for others, which is the fabric interwoven in disciples making disciples and without it the church is malnourished. West Haven is strong in their beliefs of the deity of Christ, and they believe in the literal resurrection of Christ. To date, West Haven continues fulfilling an aggressive plan to witness the Jesus Christ to surrounding communities as substantiated, "But you, keep your head in all situations, endure hardship, and do the work of an evangelist, discharge all the duties of your ministry" (2 Tim 4:5, NIV).

An Evangelistic Seminar called iServe (prior to this project) provided an objective to reflect on the purpose and reignite the passion of Christians to fulfill God's Kingdom plan for evangelism and discipleship through His Word and equipped with His supernatural power. The seminar began with posing a question and making a statement to alarm Christians that if Christians are not convinced and concrete about who God is and who they are, then how can they clarify and verify to the world that God sent His only Son, Jesus to die a calculated catastrophic death, that was strategically set in motion to save all humankind from their sins. It was proven in biblical times, and it is factual now that without a concise understanding of God's commandments and one's purpose in God, the journey becomes cloudy and confusing.

The lack of multi-ethnic congregations in Huntsville, Alabama was also validated through visits to multiple worship services with people who were active in multi-cultural events, yet the

churches of the individuals were unilateral of their ethnicity, either predominately African American or Caucasian.

This research also emphasizes a Christian's purpose to have intimate worship, intentional fellowship, study God's Word, exercise power and authority, be fruitful and multiply, lead the world to Christ with a heart that is true to God and a life that displays honor to God and refuels their love for Jesus Christ. There was enthusiasm and expectations in accomplishing God's Will for the Kingdom of God and propose the best intervention for implementation. Despite the lack of participation, building upon relationships with participants and engaging in efforts to obtain the data from different perspectives was focal. When the body of Christ (Rom 12:4-5, NIV) as reflected through African Americans and Caucasian Christians navigate toward reconciliation, these efforts can send a shock wave to the world that sends a message enveloped with the "Fruit of God's Spirit" equated as "love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control" (Gal 5:22-23, NIV) and shines a bright spotlight on Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior of the World.

Intervention Design

The researcher successfully completed the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI Training). The IRB application was submitted. While waiting for the approval of the IRB Application, enhancing the chapters and diligent communication with the IRB was productive and consistent in responding to questions and incorporating required corrections while in route to securing an approval "(See Appendix C for IRB approval)." Liberty University students, and/or faculty were not probed as participants. There were no subjects or members of a distinct cultural group or community in which signing forms is not the norm. Information about the research will be provided for participants. This study is worth researching because any and all efforts for

African Americans and Caucasian Christians to reconcile as one and the light of Christ to the world is not only beneficial, but it bolsters a bonified mandate by God for Christian to loves Jesus Christ, strive to imitate Christ through accomplishing the Will of God by exemplifying, educating, and engaging people in fulfilling the Great Commission as acquiescence to Christ. “If you love me, keep my commands” (John 14:15, NIV).

Through assisting the pastors with West Haven as a church plant and continuing with elements of church development, the identified problem is that West Haven Assembly of God Church appear to be deficient as a multicultural church, despite active evangelism. The potential problem exists because there appears to be an insufficiency of racial reconciliation among African Americans and Caucasian Christians, which equates to a scarcity of diverse congregants at West Haven and among interviewed participants of other ministries. The insufficiency of racial reconciliation is also perceived to influence the degeneration of multicultural evangelism among Caucasian and African American Christians.

The purpose of this research is to gather qualitative data from African Americans and Caucasian Christians, identify perceived problems with reconciliation, and recommend potential solutions that will produce pragmatic paths for multicultural evangelism. Archival data or secondary data will not be included in this project. The investigative method incorporates the study of people and systems. The intentionality for the selected group of participants is based upon the urgency for African Americans and Caucasian Christians to engage in endeavors relative to biblical reconciliation and multicultural evangelism according to God’s Word (Holy Bible).

Gathering qualitative data captured a realistic view of the problems to synthesize translucent recommendations. Communication and collaborations were pivotal in strategically

developing and implementing plans to address concerns. Establishing a process to gather, interact with the data, learn from data, present data, and receive responses from interview and survey requests were essential. Data was gathered and processed without personal biases of personal beliefs asserted by participants. The location of the researcher provided sacred and secure space while interviewing.

Pseudonyms were used, and reports will not include any information that will identify a participant. Participants names or identifies will not be extracted from the raw data; however, the participant will not be identified based on information collected as raw data. Data collected may be shared for use in future research studies, presentations, or with other researchers. If data collected is shared, any information that could identify participant will be removed before the data is shared. The information gained and collected will be handled as precious cargo and will harbor thoughtful consideration and a verbal or written appreciation for the stakeholders as well as participants.

The interview data will be kept in a safety deposit box and only the researcher will have access. Participants will not receive a direct benefit from taking part in this study. While unlikely, the primary risk is a potential breach of confidentiality, but the risks involved in this study are minimal, which means they are equal to the risks encountered in everyday life. There are no anticipated ethical issues. Data will be stored on a password-locked computer. After three years, all electronic records will be deleted.

This project progressed positively, however, due to different complexities surrounding the Covid-19 pandemic, the progression has hampered a lack of expected participation and the location for the survey and interviewing was online, except for one participant who interviewed

in person. The topic of discussion may have also obstructed participation of African American and Caucasian Christians who were invited to participate.

Participants chosen for the interviews are acquaintances and spoken of as brothers and sisters in Christ. The researcher has served in ministerial endeavors with the participants. The researcher was conscientious about inviting potential participants according to their ethnicity to create a balance for the collected data.

Despite efforts to balance participants for the interview according to their ethnicity, there is an imbalance among interviewees. Personal interviews were provided for 24 eligible participants via online Zoom, telephone, or in person. The interview was comprised of 12 thought provoking questions and averaged for 45 minutes to one hour. The anticipated timeline to administer the interviews was averaged at two months.

The Messiah, the Mandate, and the Mission to Implement Multicultural Evangelism Through Intentional Racial Reconciliation Among African Americans and Caucasian Christians is the title attributed as the foundation for the project. African Americans and Caucasian Christians are one human race and must become revolutionary, re-emerge, and re-engage through a 911 effervescent perspective to share the gospel message to one another, juxtaposing to all people. God's creativeness of humankind extends to God's beloved church as the established community of believers encapsulating, "Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it" (1 Cor 12:27, NIV).

An anonymous survey was provided for potential participants. The Survey was administered from the researchers personal Facebook posted in Messenger for participants. The online survey is estimated at 30 minutes through Survey Monkey comprised of 10 multiple choice questions. Eligible participants for the surveys and interviews are age 18 or older,

consisting of African Americans and Caucasian Christians of different backgrounds, professional affiliations to gain knowledge about individual personal insights, experiences, and Biblical perspectives about racism, racial reconciliation, and multicultural evangelism.

The Survey Questions are a symbolism of an attempt to reach the heart of the person taking the survey without having a direct knowledge of the person. There was much optimism anticipated in procuring a limpid mental and spiritual perspective of people considering the current climate among African American and Caucasian Christians.

The Survey Questions for The Messiah, the Mandate, and the Mission to Implement Multicultural Evangelism Through Intentional Racial Reconciliation Among African Americans and Caucasian Christians project has a projectile to also gather qualitative data from African Americans and Caucasian Christians, identify perceived problems with racial reconciliation, and recommend potential solutions that will produce pragmatic paths for multicultural evangelism. All participants were advised that the input and feedback was greatly appreciated.

The Implementation of the Intervention Design

As expected, “data triangulation” spotlighted significant awareness for African American and Caucasian Christians to enhance their efforts for reconciliation and multicultural evangelism. The intended purpose provided “data triangulation” via practical engagement with African American and Caucasian Christians. The specified “data triangulation” was selected to gain insight from not only people who were acquaintances, but also from other acquaintances and people who communicated with via Facebook to broaden the spectrum of qualitative data.

A conscientious effort was made to invite participants according to ethnicity while creating an equitable balance for collected data. Because of the imbalance among twenty-four interviewees, data from twenty participants balanced the voices among African Americans,

Caucasians, men, and women. The reason is unclear, but confirmations from three Caucasian men were not received. This was not anticipated given the people chosen to interview. All three men have significant leadership roles and responsibilities in a predominately Caucasian organization. One African American woman (pastors a predominately Caucasian congregation within an organization) verbally confirmed her desire to participate, but never responded to the email. She also oversees a ministry for racial reconciliation.

The execution plan began with coordinating individual meetings via Zoom or a meeting via the phone for the interviews, with the pastor of West Haven Assembly of God Church, African Americans, and Caucasian Christians within the same city of West Haven, African American Christians within the Assembly of God Fellowship, and other African American and Caucasian Christians who serve with organizations with a mission of racial reconciliation. The researcher emailed a Recruitment Email to each potential participant, a consent form, and Recruitment Flyer requesting participation in a twelve-question interview. The consent form is required, and participants were provided with the option to email, mail, or the researcher arranged to pick up the signed consent form. Once the participant confirmed participating, the consent form was signed and returned, and the Interview Questions were emailed. The purpose in emailing the questions in advance was to respect participant's timeline and assist with conducive interactions. Each interviewee appreciated the opportunity to read the questions and prepare in advance.

Following receiving the signed consent form, an invitation via Zoom was emailed to the participant followed by another email confirming the time and date of the interview. During the interview, a prayer and brief introduction was rendered. Each participant was advised that notes

will be taken, but there will be no recording. Each interviewed person was asked to render a Closing Prayer.

After the interviews were completed, the notes were re-read, themes were annotated, and key words or phrases were noted. The data gleamed upon many consistencies and a few disparities. Interviews were analyzed based on responses to each question and distinguishing similar themes with an in-depth glance at different voices and signs of harmonization. Graphs were drafted to reflect the analyzed data.

The researcher made a post on Facebook advising of an upcoming post in Facebook Messenger for potential participants to partake in a ten-question multiple choice survey via Survey Monkey. A signed consent form is required for participation. A consent form and Recruitment Flyer for participants to complete an anonymous survey through Survey Monkey was posted in Facebook Messenger. A Flyer was also posted providing detailed information about the research.

The estimated time to administer the survey is two months. Thirty surveys were completed and analyzed. The anticipated resources are technology driven, including Survey Monkey software which also analyzes online data. The data from Survey Monkey is analyzed using a Progress Bar for real time results. The survey is shared by copying the link and pasting it to the designated location.

Despite the lower numbers for interviews and surveys, sufficient data provide the researcher an opportunity to provide the stakeholders with realistic data to pave the way for regenerative evangelism that will refocus and reframe the same mission, but different methods to accomplish kingdom goals. New data revealed other feasible reasons for the lack of growth as a

multi-ethnic congregation. Through sifting the possibilities, the researcher is prepared to share explored data in conjunction with previous observations as a bridge to cross into new territories.

Chapter 4

Results

The Biblical mandate derived from Mark 16:15, “And he said to them, Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation,” encapsulates the problem, purpose, thesis, and research question interwoven together strategically to create the most productive and prudent passageway to promote improvement and propel new implementations. While the intent of this study was to dissect, discern, and denote why African Americans and Caucasian Christians continue to seclude themselves from addressing racial reconciliation and apprehensive about multicultural evangelism, the results coincide with feedback that indicates layers and years of toxicity among African Americans and Caucasian Christians.

The results within this project are consistent with the Christian life being a journey that encompasses changes, challenges, and complexities, spiritually, emotionally, physically, and mentally for God’s creation. The results pinpoint Biblical themes from participants to state a profound message that the Word of God destroys the sin that blocks the way and determines the destiny for every believer. The results symbolize the scope of voices and data collected to provide the best informative analysis sketched via charts and thought-provoking words.

The expected results accompany revelations from voices via the interviews and a survey. The unexpected results and revelations were not due to designated interventions, but simply an oversight or missed opportunities through relationship building among the different voices of interviewees. Most importantly, this project is about what matters to God because His creation, their state of being, and God’s Kingdom agenda is what really matter to God.

God created humanity to be in the image of God. God’s special connection with people is the source of their dignity and helps explain their destiny. God’s intention that people reflect numerous divine attributes is the source of their destiny and helps explain their dignity. Sin has badly damaged people by rendering them incapable of living out God’s

intention for them. God's intention (for what the reflection should look like) has not changed due to sin, nor has the fact that people are specially connected with God. In other words, sin has not damaged what being in God's image constitutes. Sin has damaged people, but not God's image. So it is people, not God's image, that need changing. In fact, they so thoroughly need changing that their renewal amounts to a new creation. God's provision for that is Jesus Christ, who is the image of God.¹¹⁶

At the onset of the research, the researcher reported a gap in literature. As the research continued enveloping into interviews, the forecasted problem cascaded into considering other possible reasons relative to the lack of multi-ethnic membership at West Haven in conjunction with the stated conjunctural reason as an insufficiency of racial reconciliation among African Americans and Caucasian Christians. The continued research validated the initial consensus with reference to a lack of literature confirming or affirming the stated problem. Sufficient data was collected to collaborate and carefully construct recommendations. The parameters for sustainable success are an important part of this phase (results) and the path to progress is predicated upon presenting data to stakeholders and a sound analysis of the data so that stakeholders can angle perspectives and potential resolve.

The surveys and interviews share reflections where African American and Caucasian agree only to disagree within the collected data that resemble. All participants identified as Christians and related to another ethnicity as a relative, friend, or acquaintance for the interviews and survey. Interviewees were encouraged to clinch transparency and cradle authenticity where luminescence will disclose darkness and usher awareness for a path to wholeness and oneness.

Interview discussions erupted into expounding upon the importance for believers to embrace and believe who God is and through faith in Christ, the plans and purpose that Satan poses for the life of all believers and the Kingdom of God. Bulldozing Satan's plans includes

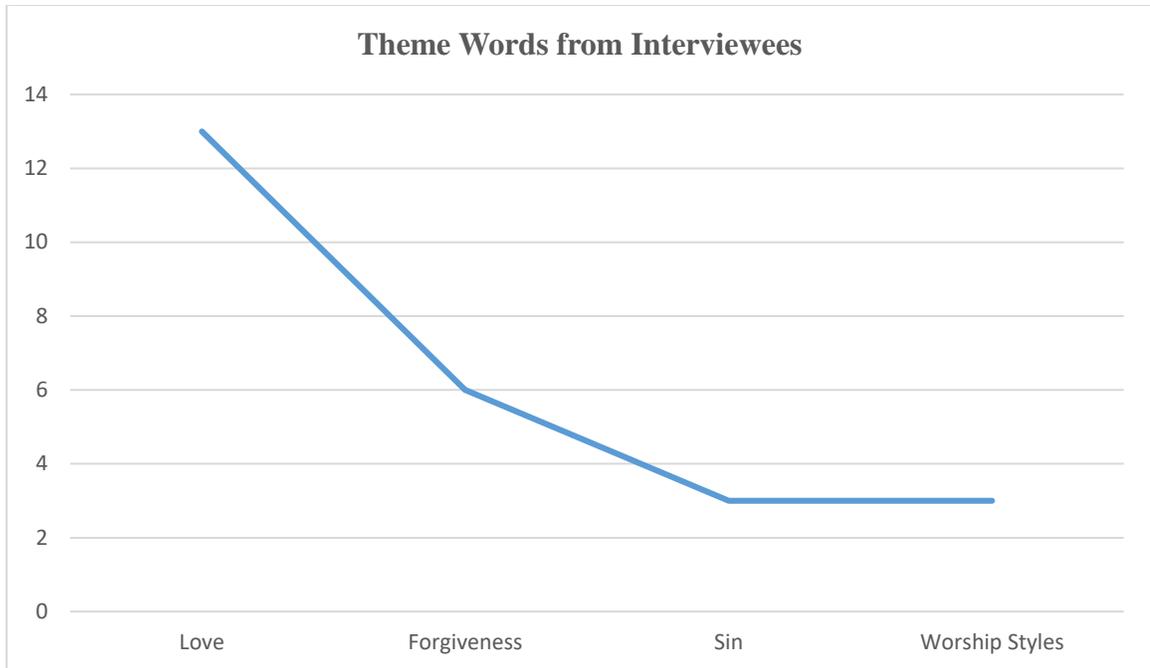
¹¹⁶ John F. Kilner, *Dignity and Destiny: Humanity in the Image of God* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2015), 189, ProQuest Ebrary.

ratifying every “ism” that venture to influence progression beneficial for racial reconciliation and multicultural evangelism. Shelton distinguishes the only truth that will liberate all people and extinguish falsehoods that foreground divisiveness between African American and Caucasian Christians.

The findings presented in this book are clear: black and white Protestants often think about and practice Christianity in vastly dissimilar ways. Results from our survey and in-depth interview data show that racial group membership strongly influences how black and white Protestants go about their religious faith. In conversation with members of our own respective racial groups, we have heard people question whether blacks and whites pray to or believe in the same God (you may know people who have wondered this as well). Questions and criticisms of this sort are not baseless, because it is true that black and white Protestant’s approach faith matters very differently, and faith matters very differently to these distinct groups of believers. But make no mistake about it: the findings presented in chapter 3 strongly suggest that black and white Protestants pray to and believe in the same God.¹¹⁷

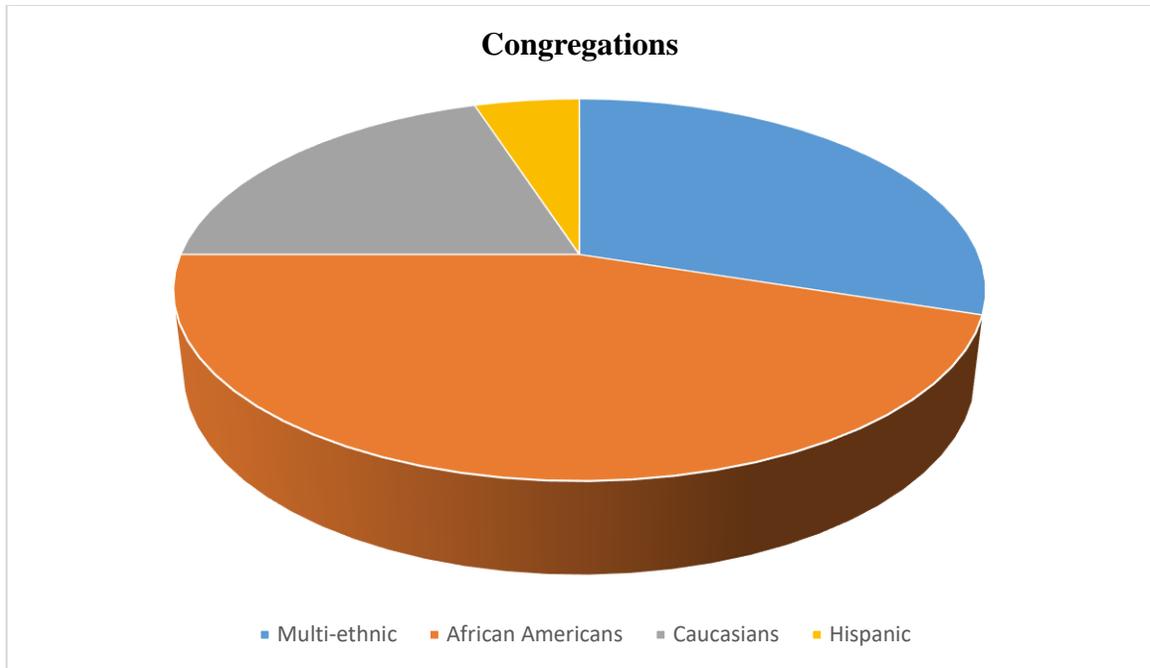
The results below are comprised of twenty interviewees and the percentages represent a majority for their congregations. There are six multi-ethnic churches, nine African American, four Caucasian, and one Hispanic church. Out of nine African American churches, two Caucasian males attend worship with predominately African Americans. This study only presents a minuscule of voices given the current climate among Christians, but the data validates the necessity for consecration, on-going conversations, prayers and plans for hope and healing.

¹¹⁷ Jason E. Shelton and Michael Oluf Emerson, *Blacks and Whites in Christian America: How Racial Discrimination Shapes Religious Convictions* (New York: New York University Press, 2012), 199, ProQuest Ebook Central.



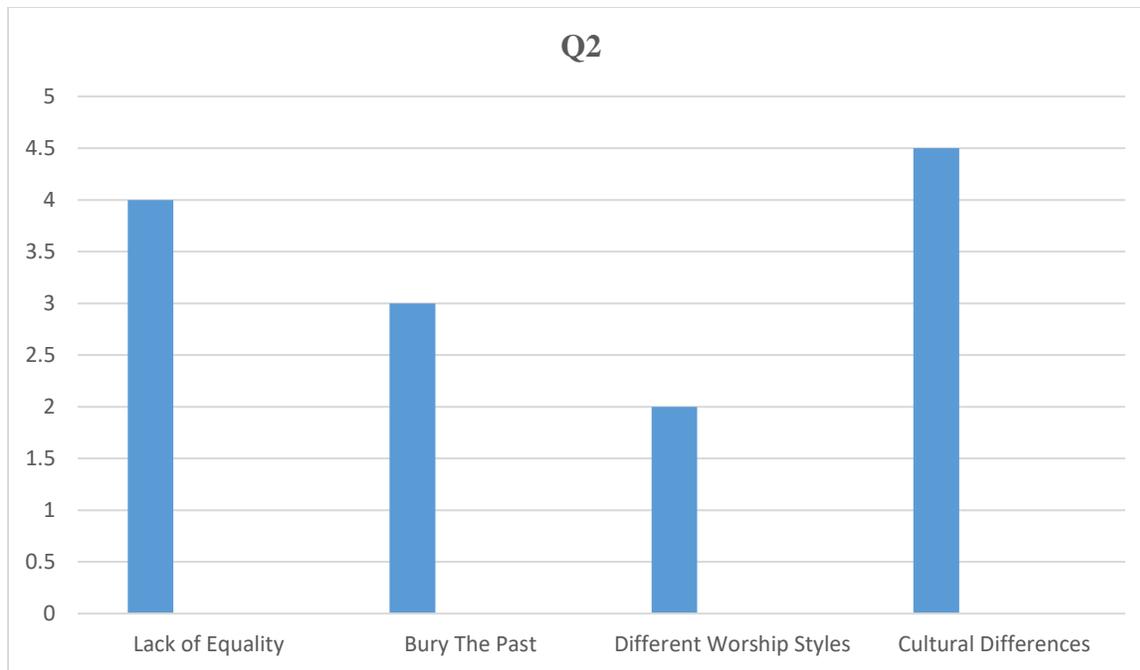
The personal dialogue with participants for the interviews revealed four common words out of fifty-four common words or phrases (love, forgiveness, sin, and worship styles) that thread the needle with God’s truth for all who are willing to listen, learn, and lean to the Holy Spirit for further guidance. The voices of twenty interviewees are visible with the below charts and analysis.

1. Are you connected, affiliated, a member of, or serve in a Christian church? If so, please share your affiliation with the church and if your church is comprised of people from different ethnicities. If there are no other ethnicities, to your knowledge, is your church welcoming to other ethnicities? If you are a pastor, please share your thoughts of the importance of racial diversity within the church of Jesus Christ.



The lack of diversity among African American and Caucasian Christian congregants is depicted in the chart above. The permanence of a lack of diversity has sparked proactive conversations and events with individuals and organizations, while pursuing answers and certainly praying for resolve and reconciliation. The impact of realizing the lack of diversity among congregants at West Haven and other churches may not be solely based on the deficiency of racial reconciliation, because the results present other faculties that can lead to racial reconciliation.

2. God created one human race with different ethnicities of people to love, co-exist, and serve as the Body of Christ called to fulfill the Kingdom plans of God over 2,000 years ago. Today, as Christians and as the church, divisions are still prevalent. What are your perceptions?



Interviewees expounded upon this question with a diversification of answers, but the four categories are consistent with the those who expressed their views. The importance of burying the past was the sentiment among some African American’s and Caucasian Christians to invite change, however, some African Americans and Caucasians still warrant acknowledgements of truth from Caucasian Christians about the past. Adam Cooper is an African American pastor who serves in leadership with an organization that provokes racial reconciliation and declared, “It’s sad that today, we’re still in the position we’re in as far as racial matters. There’s too much hypocrisy in the hearts of Christians. This is a heart thing. I do not believe we have made race relations intentional and enough is enough!”¹¹⁸

Stewart McClain (pastor of West Haven) interviewed and expounded on his life and family’s experience in Africa and America interlacing reflections of divisions among Christians. The pastor discussed the history of America and Africa (slavery) that left a stain and pain that

¹¹⁸ Adam Cooper, interview by author, online, July 8, 2021

still pervades the minds of African Americans and Caucasian Christians when attempting to abide as the body of Christ. “When colonists in North America fought and won the war for independence from Britain, they used the rhetoric of liberty and natural rights to argue for the righteousness of their cause. While white soldiers and political leaders were declaring their inalienable right to independence, they were also enslaving countless women, men, and children of African descent. And the American church participated in and defended the contradiction between freedom and slavery embedded in the constitution of its young nation. Revisiting early American history reveals the shocking forms of hypocrisy that helped shape our society.”¹¹⁹

Brian Moore (former pastor of multi-ethnic church) went as far to describe the former systems (slavery) as human trafficking referencing there were nine US Presidents who were also human traffickers for the slave trade.”¹²⁰ Despite living in the 21st century, Brian asserted current systems (systemic racism) as human oppression and white privilege and white power are the reasons why African Americans and Caucasians cannot not move toward reconstructing new relationships. As white males, we have got to be intentional about transferring power to brothers and sisters who do not look like us.”¹²¹

While Brian’s words may be debunked, there are those antiquated voices that continue to stir modern day mindsets. “While discussing racism in a conversation that was a bit too rosy in tone, Giglio tried to explain how white privilege works. Instead, speaking the words that open this chapter, he inadvertently attested to a sentiment held dear by many Christians who lived in the nineteenth century. Giglio’s “we miss the blessing of slavery” in fact, echoed the lines from

¹¹⁹ Jemar Tisby and Lecrae Moore, *Color Compromise* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2019), 41 ProQuest Ebook Central.

¹²⁰ Brian Moore, interview by author, online, July 30, 2021

¹²¹ Ibid.

George Fitzhugh's 1857 proslavery book *Cannibals All! Or Slaves without Masters*. Giglio's comments caused such an outcry that he posted a video apology on social media the very next day."¹²² Voices as Giglio continue to impact specks of reconciliation improvements, however, the Kingdom influencers who were interviewed brought forth contrasting biblical beliefs to clamp hope and healing because of Christ.

The interview with Chance Howard, (former Caucasian pastor), sounded a different tune than Brian Moore for interview question two. Chance is convinced that racism is at a minimum in America and prejudice is the dominant problem for African Americans and Caucasians.¹²³

Carolyn Love, a Caucasian Christian was interviewed and posed thoughts of cultural and worship as top tenders for division among African American and Caucasian Christians. The researcher asked, "Why are divisions still prevalent among African American and Caucasian Christians as the church? Love responded, "One of the biggest hurdles are cultural differences and worship styles. I feel when we come together on one accord, there's a synergy to bring people out of their holy hurdles. We need more fellowship and coming together."¹²⁴ Lee Howard's experience previews the hope Carolyn Love speaks of. Lee Fuller attended a variety of churches. Through his experiences, Lee and his wife are Caucasian retired pastors who were drawn to worship with predominately African Americans. Lee stated, "We enjoy the preaching of the Word."¹²⁵

¹²² Anthea Butler, *White Evangelical Racism: The Politics of Morality in America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2021), 14, ProQuest Ebrary.

¹²³ Chance Howard, interview by author, online, July 26, 2021

¹²⁴ Carolyn Love, interview by author, online, June 29, 2021

¹²⁵ Lee Fuller, interview by author, online, July 27, 2021

Worshipping the Lord as one body of believers became a topic for discussion within the interviews. The topic of worshipping the Lord as a Christian broadened into the concept of cultural differences among African American and Caucasian Christians. Interchanging about the different styles of worship was framed as a possible reason African Americans and Caucasian Christians may not worship together was valid. The pool of literature equated to zero when searched as, “Why African American and Caucasian Christians do not worship together?”

Betsy Hale who has served within the same Christian denomination for fifty-one years and provides insight upon worship styles differing among African Americans and Caucasian Christians.

We have different ethnicities apart of our denomination, but the denomination does not reflect diversity within the churches, which means we are not reflecting Christ. You will see black people at churches with predominately people, but not the opposite. When you have a predominately white congregation and black people attend, it seems as though blacks are encouraged to start their own church. At our annual meetings or Camp meetings, you do not see diversity. For the National Conference, you see diversity, but there should be more representation of blacks at the top. There are National Black Leaders, but no black International Leaders. As far as worship, I prefer the style of worship, preaching, praising that is in the black church. We can get loud and rejoice.¹²⁶

Christian worship, including the multiplicity of styles is about worshipping a holy God and not an instrument to deter or defer people from engaging and learning together. “In the early Christian church, theology emerged as the knowledge of God from the interactive relationship between God and humanity.”¹²⁷

Chance Howard affirmed similar thoughts as Carolyn Love. Chance conveyed, “In his inner circle of predominately Caucasian Christians, some have voiced that African American

¹²⁶ Betsy Hale, interview by author, online, August 3, 2021

¹²⁷ Mary Eunjoo Kim, *Christian Preaching and Worship in Multicultural Contexts: A Practical Theological Approach* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2017), 100, ProQuest Ebook Central.

serve their God and they serve their own God.¹²⁸ Chance is not in agreement with such rhetoric and these thoughts were not invoked by any other interviewees. Stewart McClain confirms, “The divisions are still prevalent because the church does not see itself as one (body of heaven). The way racial segregation is in the world, it’s also in the church and this is a big challenge. The Generation Z church will not care about being segregated.”¹²⁹ “Davis and Learner are expert practitioners and pioneers who invite us to break new ground with them, making worship that more closely reflects God’s kingdom on earth as it is in heaven. Multicultural is more than a buzzword. It is God’s desire for the church.”¹³⁰

Overwhelmingly, each person interviewed for question three agreed without hesitation that racial reconciliation is important to them. Carolyn Love’s thoughts in interview question three resounded as many interviewed. “Racial reconciliation means coming together again. Our responsibility is to be one so that the world may see. We should display biblical love and unity for the world to see. The world is deceptive and demonic in getting blacks and whites to hate each other. I’ve witnessed racism and I’ve experienced racism personally. The current climate in our country continue to fan hatred and it continues because people are sinners, and the devil is active”¹³¹

The church of Jesus Christ was described in interview question four as the haven for reconciliation among all believers who bare His resemblance. Interviewees believe because God

¹²⁸ Chance Howard, interview by author, online, July 26, 2021.

¹²⁹ Stewart McClain, interview by author, online, August 24, 2021.

¹³⁰ Josh Davis and Nikki Leaner, *Worship Together in Your Church As In Heaven* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2015), chapter 1, EBSCOhost.

¹³¹ Carolyn Love, interview by author, online, June 29, 2021.

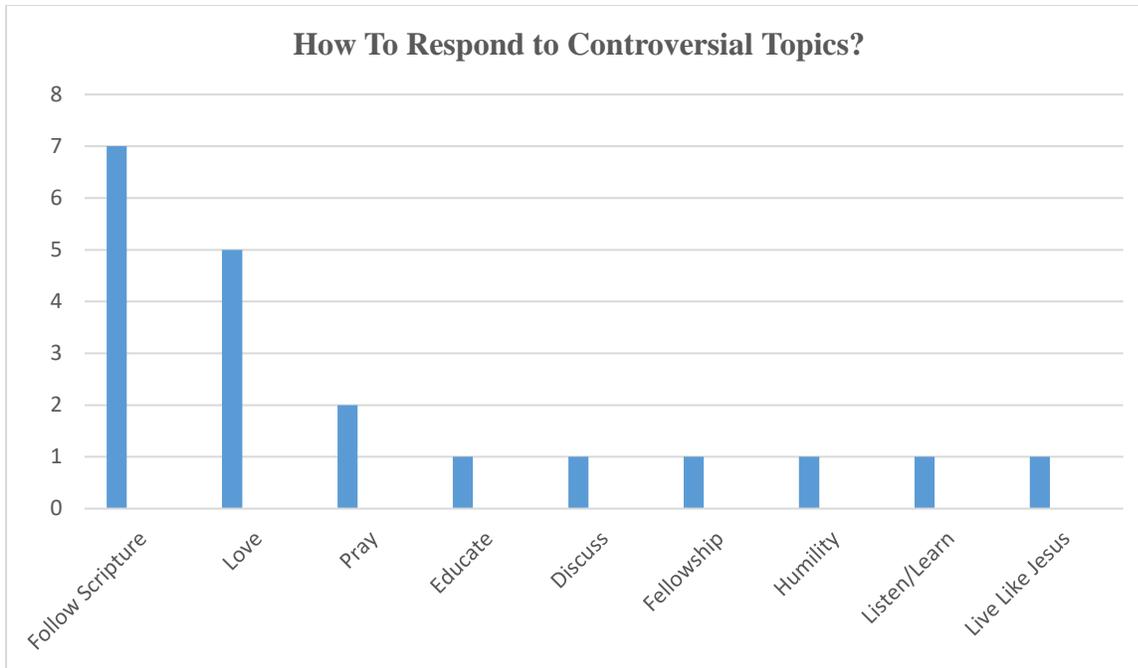
is reconciliation, that the body of Christ must intentionally teach and reflect unity to the world so that unbelievers will transition from living in darkness to the “marvelous light” (1 Pet 2:9).

Interview question five share commonality with reflections about Christians responding to sound Biblical doctrine in relation to racial reconciliation. Alvera Brown (pastor) quoted Scripture that reminds every Christian of the “ministry of reconciliation,” which is from God.¹³² Lee Fuller and Kevin Douglas (pastor of two predominately African American churches) pivoted to a new dimension in explaining Bible illiteracy as a grave factor in African American and Caucasian Christians continuing the great divide. Kevin states, “The challenge is getting people to focus on God and not on themselves.”¹³³ Lee, “I think a lot of people are not very versed in the Bible and most preachers are not preaching the Word. Bible illiteracy is real.”¹³⁴

¹³² Alvera Brown, interview by author, online, June 29, 2021

¹³³ Kevin Douglas, interview by author, online, July 8, 2021

¹³⁴ Lee Fuller, interview by author, online, July 27, 2021



The above chart provides a glimpse of the heart of twenty interviewees for question six who will exemplify to the world how to respond to controversial topics. It was unanimously agreed that Christians should respond as Christ would respond to controversial topics such as racism. The responses for interview question six validated the meaning of imitating Christ and corroborated the value of conforming to and complying with God’s Word. Loving and living like Christ must infiltrate the heart of Christians to withstand the testing of times and overcome the continued infestations of evils that infest people who are incorporated as the church.

The definitions provided by interviewees about racism in question seven were not textbooks driven but symbolized personalized definitions. According to Debra Bailey, “Racism is looking at the flesh and not the Spirit. Racism is sin and has intensified over time because we have (Christians) allowed Satan to have his way for so long.”¹³⁵ Stewart McClain shared his

¹³⁵ Debra Bailey, interview by author, online, June 29, 2021

version of racism in addition to why it has continued. “Racism is when one exalts his/her ethnicity above the Word of God and the Holy Spirit. It has continued because the church still has its systems today. I also believe the problem is a lack of biblical literacy.”¹³⁶

For question eight, the stories of racism, the effects, and on-going pain shared by interviewees solidify why this project matured beyond research. The maturation of this research ushered a sense of healing for interviewees who had not discussed their stories, or they placed a band-aid over an open wound that needs treatment. Jerry Edwards (African American) grew up as a Jehovah Witness and later accepted Christ as his Savior. Jerry also served and retired from the United States Military (wounded veteran). Jerry was proud to share the stories of how he served his country. In as much as Jerry was proud to share his success stories, Jerry paused with emotions to share his painful memories of racism. As a young officer, Jerry stated, “My leadership made me dress out and used dogs to chase me like the protests in Birmingham, Alabama. The dogs were released, and one actually bit me. This happened more than once. I didn’t have the right to say no despite being an officer. I was lesser because of the color of my skin.”¹³⁷

As Caucasian pastors, Nadean Greer and her husband were witnesses of racism toward two African American staff pastors who were married. While she and her husband pastored a multiethnic church, they traveled with their staff pastors. They stopped at a gas station and the manager (Caucasian) would not turn on the gas pump for the African Americans. Once Nadean and her husband appeared, the manager turned on the gas pump. Contrary to historical racial

¹³⁶ Stewart McClain, interview by author, online, August 24, 2021

¹³⁷ Jerry Edwards, interview by author, online, June 24, 2021

tensions, they sent their children to a school with predominately African American students and their experience was great.¹³⁸

Felix Williams considers himself a devout lover and follower of Jesus Christ who is very active in Urban Ministry, however, admitted his previous struggles with building relationships with Caucasians. Felix stated, “I have been called the N word for all of my life, from High School to being stopped by Police Officers. I went to college on a scholarship, and I was the only black male. I was in the Engineering Program, and I did not receive help, so I dropped out and went back ten years later.”¹³⁹

Denise Murphy (Caucasian Christian) and her husband pastored a multi-ethnic church for years and established sisterhoods and brotherhoods along the way. Denise along with others shared stories about racism from interview question eight.

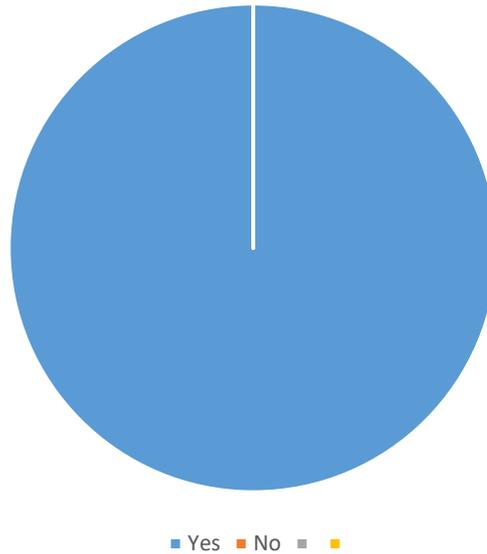
I lived in the 1960’s and I went to school with African Americans and Hispanics. Within the community we lived in, a railroad separated us, which means we were totally segregated. Many of us walked to the neighborhood Dairy Queen. One day, I looked out the window and the African Americans bought their food at the back window and sat on the ground to eat. I felt bad to see them go to the back. Years later, I also remember the day, segregation ended, all the children grabbed hands and were allowed to eat together.¹⁴⁰

¹³⁸ Nadean Greer, interview by author, online, July 1, 2021

¹³⁹ Felix Williams, interview by author, online, July 2, 2021

¹⁴⁰ Denise Murphy, interview by author, online, June 24, 2021

Are You Willing To Stand Against Racism?



Without hesitation, all twenty interviewees agreed and stated “yes” for question nine. In addition to standing up against all forms of racism, Devin Wesley (African American pastor of multi-ethnic congregation), stated, “in as much as it is important to stand against, it is equally important to “listen to, learn from, and lament with (be broken because I’m broken).¹⁴¹

The interviews ended with three significant questions for the substructure of this project. Questions ten, eleven, and twelve inquire about the journey of every believer and their faithfulness to fulfilling God’s kingdom plan through evangelism. Questions eleven and twelve provided each person the opportunity to advise other Christians about reaching the world for Jesus Christ individually and as the church. There was a multiplicity of words and phrases such as, walk in love, let it go, speak the truth in love, pray, forgive, remember the Great Commission is a mandate, be intentional, be friendly, remove the veil, just do it, share your story, multicultural evangelism is exciting, embrace diversity, be like Jesus, come from behind the

¹⁴¹ Devin Wesley, interview by author, online, July 6, 2021

walls, make disciples, the Gospel must be preached, bring glory to the Lord, be bold, this is Kingdom, it's time to go, immerse in the Holy Spirit, and be a bridge builder.

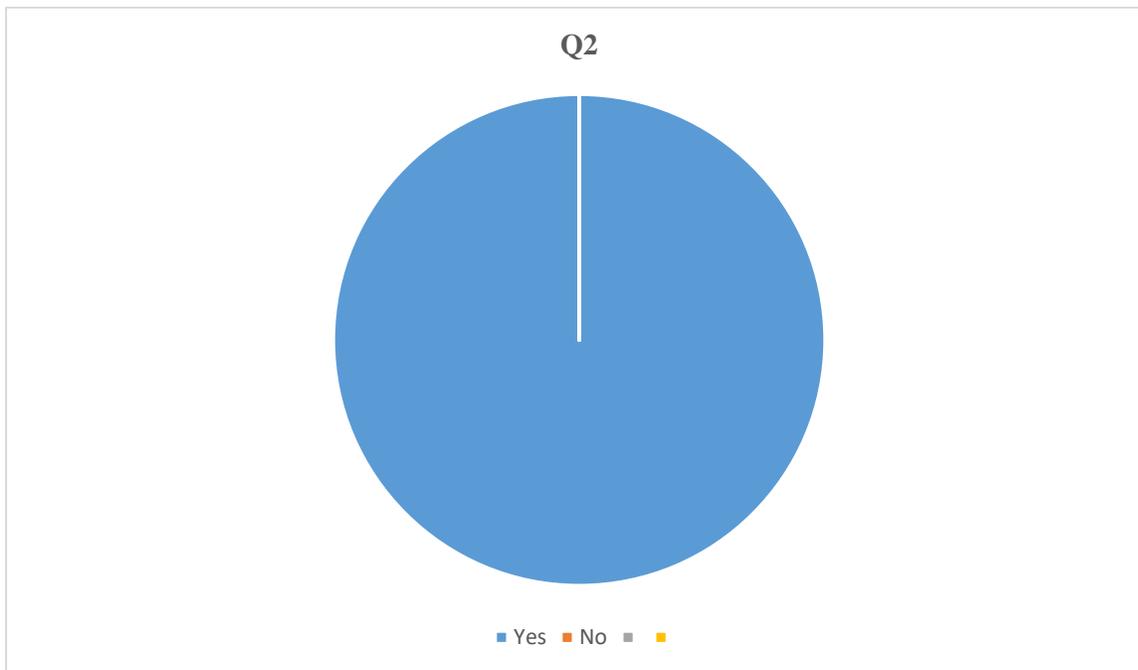
Survey Monkey presented the below results for the 10-question anonymous survey. The surveys opened the gate to hear the rationale of unknown silent voices.

Q1 Do you believe that Jesus Christ was born, died, and resurrected for the sin and salvation of all humanity? **(Yes=30 No=0 Skipped=0)**



The answers to survey question one acclaimed the participants beliefs that Christ became the atonement for the sins of every confessing believer. “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.” (1 John 1:9, NIV) Their answers also attest that without God’s grace and forgiveness of sins, salvation would be a mere thought rather than the only hope of escaping damnation and experiencing eternal life.

Q2 Are you a relative, friend, or an acquaintance with a person of another person from another ethnicity? **(Yes=30 No=0 Skipped=0)**



Knowing that survey participants are becoming more relational with different ethnicities is major for moving in a positive direction for reconciliation. Building relationships or acquaintances as revealed in survey question two is where God’s mission intersects with God’s vision. Docusen, (a pastor) was forced to face and filter through an epiphany empowered from the Holy Spirit to address issues of race, reconciliation, and building new relationships. We are one family, created in the beautiful “image of God” (Genesis 1:27). We need to move away from statements that create us versus them scenario. As image-bearers of the same Father, each one of us reflects a different aspect of the beauty of God. When we separate ourselves from others who are different from us, we cannot see the fullness of the beauty of God.”¹⁴²

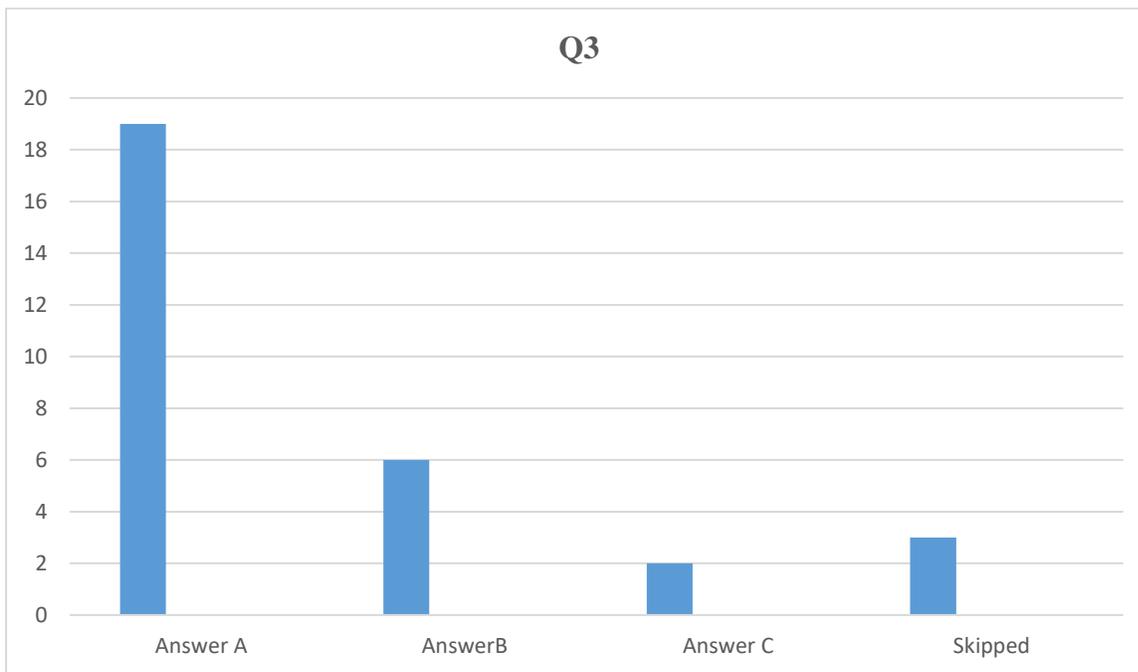
Q3 One definition for racism is expressing prejudice, discrimination, and hatred toward another human being based upon their ethnicity, characteristics, abilities, qualities, and more. As it relates to understanding racism, which answer below solidifies your view of racism and systemic racism in America? (A=19 B=6 C=2 Skipped=3)

¹⁴² David Docusen, *Neighborliness: Finding The Beauty Of God Across Dividing Lines* (Austin: Feed Books, 2020), 112.

(A) I believe racism is sin against God and requires repentance because sin separates the believer from God. I also believe there is systemic racism in America against African Americans.

(B) I believe racism is sin against God and requires repentance because sin separates the believer from God. I do not believe there is systemic racism in America against African Americans.

(C) I believe racism is sin against God and requires repentance because sin separates the believer from God. I also believe there is systemic racism in America against African Americans and Caucasians.



Question three was an intentional two-part question that revealed participants were divided in their answers toward the sin of racism and systematic racism. Though, this question also delivered skipped answers, it was pivotal to understand the ethos and mentality of people to procure new prospects and steer recommendations for stakeholders.

Q4 Have you witnessed racism or are you a relative, friend, or acquaintance of person who has stated they personally experienced racism? (**Yes=30 No=0 Skipped=0**)

(A) Yes

(B) No



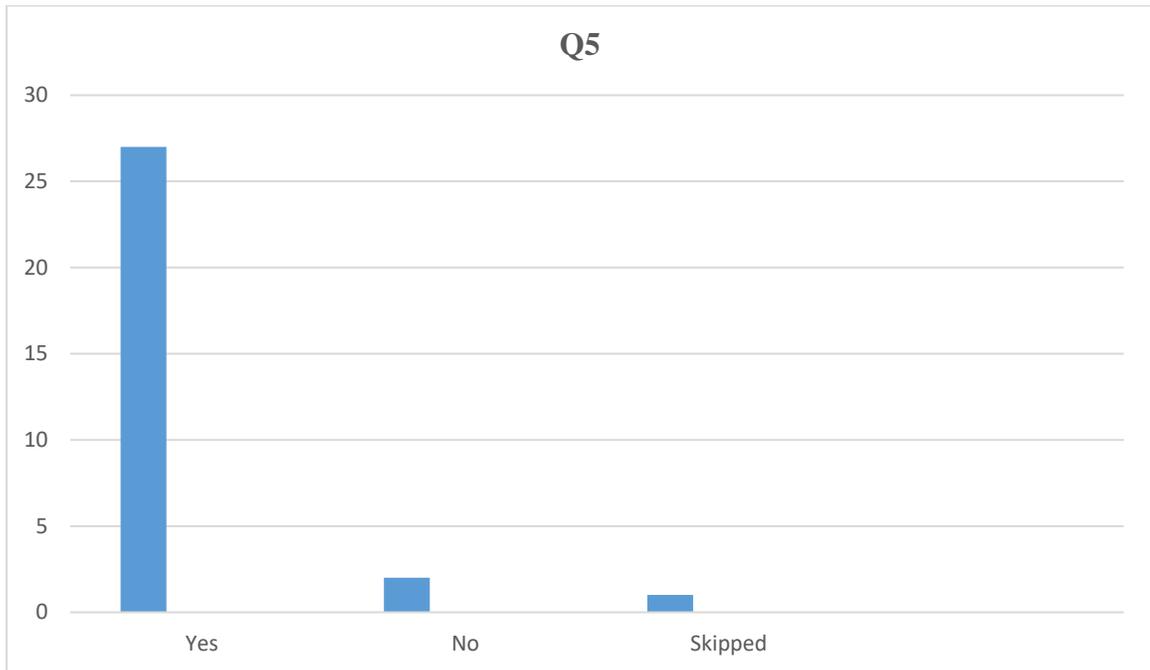
The survey revealed that all thirty participants either witnessed or were aware of stories of racism. The Huntsville Alabama article and heartfelt stories in question eight from interviewees reminds everyone that the sins of racism and prejudice are real, they are relevant, and stories riveting with details were revealed from interviewees. News Channel 19 posted a video and live article on June 1, 2020 titled, “Huntsville’s black leaders express frustration with racial injustices and where it stems from.

David Pearson and John Meredith have deep ties to Huntsville’s black community, and say they share the same frustrations that have inspired the nation to protest-and in some cases incite violence. “When you express your grievances and they’re completely ignored, after a while, you start acting out, said contributing Al.com columnist and business leader John Meredith. “That’s what’s happening with the rioting for at least those who started out honestly protesting the treatment of George Floyd got.” Community activist and leader David Person said it stems from decades of institutional racism, like Jim Crow laws. “We have an indisputable history of racism in the south,” said Community diversity and Inclusion Advocate Leader David Person. Understand that ultimately all of us are infected, affected, and infected, by this virus of racism. ¹⁴³

¹⁴³ WHNT 19 News, “Huntsville black leaders express frustration with racial injustices and where it stems From” (video), June 1, 2020, 10:34, <https://whnt.com/news/huntsville/huntsvilles-black-leaders-express-frustration-with-racial-injustices-and-where-it-stems/>

Q5 Are you willing to stand as the righteousness of Jesus Christ with a voice that speaks against all forms of racism whether in your church, within your family, on your job, or in any endeavor? (**Yes=27 No=2 Skipped: 1**)

- (A) Yes
- (B) No



There was an expectation that all participants would agree without pause or pondering on their stance to stand against racism, however, the skipped survey answer explains how all Christians are not in uniformity with issues of racism. Stewart McClain advocated during an interview, “We will continue to be an example. We need to be bold and consistent about standing against racism.”¹⁴⁴ Micah, the prophet was tasked to deliver a divine warning from God that was neither pleasant nor popular because of the continued social injustice, oppression, exploitation, and more from leaders and people. “He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does

¹⁴⁴ Stewart McClain, interview by author, online, August 24, 2021

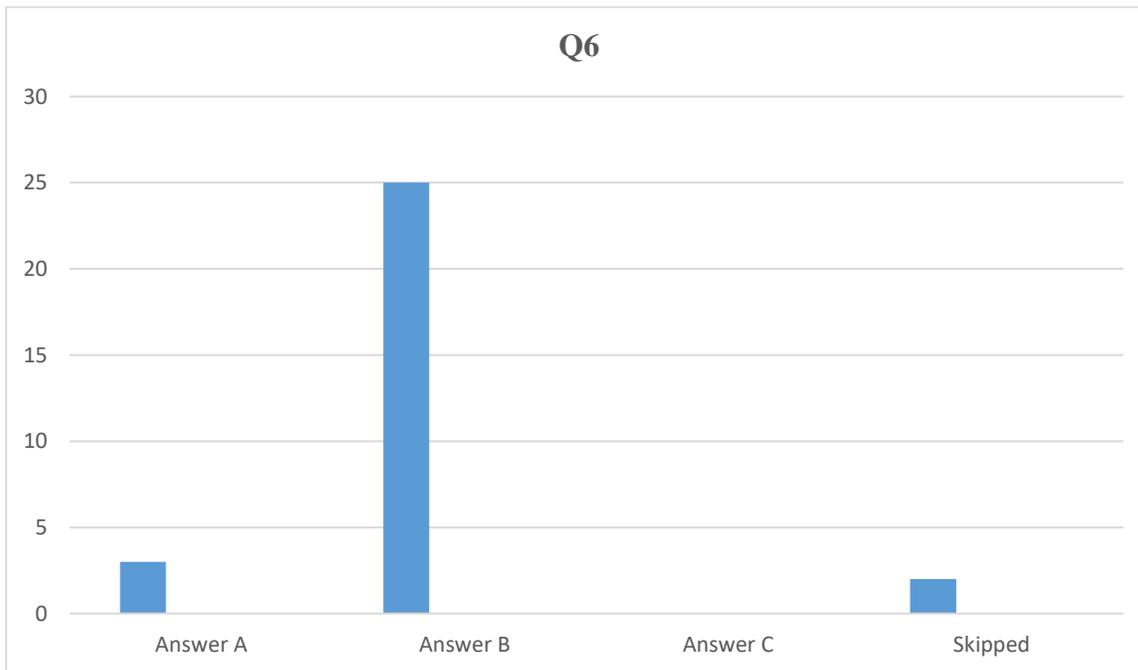
the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God”
(Micah 6:8, NIV).

Q6 The Christian community appears to be divided about racial inequalities, religious liberties, and social justice. (A=3 B=25 C=0 Skipped=2)

(A) I am not concerned about the divisions among Christians, however, I am concerned about racial inequalities, religious freedoms, or social justice.

(B) I am concerned about the divisions among Christians, and I am concerned about how Christians are divided as it relates to sound Biblical doctrine and social issues.

(C) I am not concerned about the divisions among Christians, and I am not concerned about racial inequalities, religious liberties, and social justice.



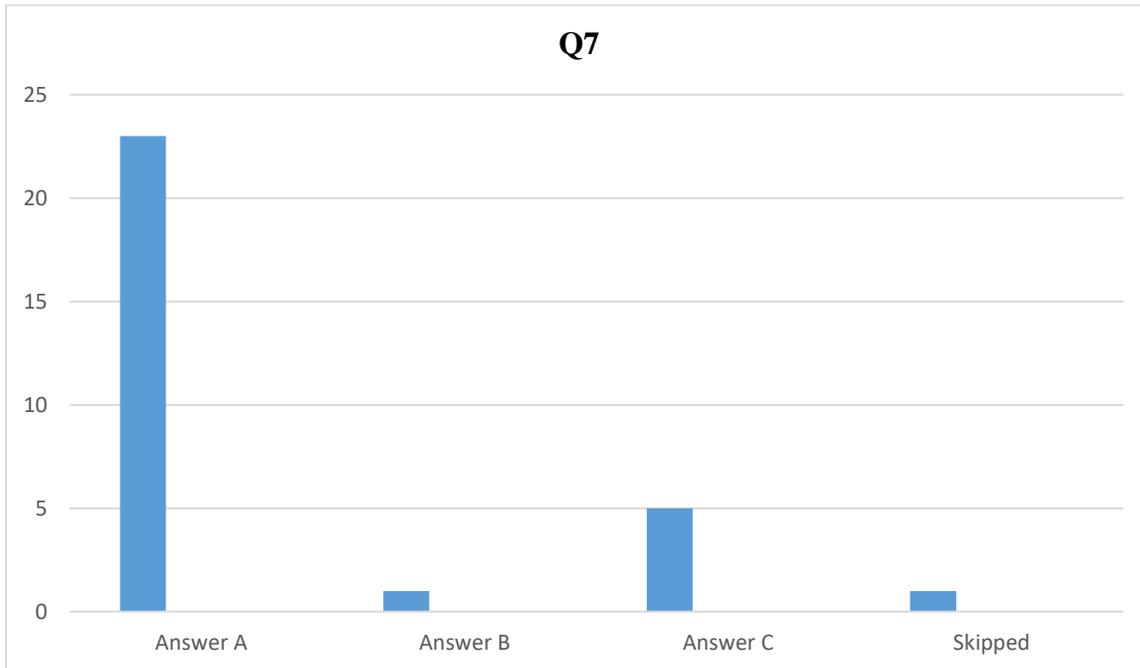
Question six of the survey coincides with the feedback from the interviews indicating that most Christians are concerned about the divisions among Christians and topics that trample the unification of Christians. The answers also highlight Christians who are not concerned about the divisions as well as two participants who skipped reflecting. Interestingly, no one allocated they were not concerned at all, which breeds optimism and anticipation for change.

Q7 What is the best method going forward for Christians as it relates to many worldly topics that are creating “The Great Divide” among Christians? (A=23 B=1 C=5 Skipped=1)

(A) The best method for Christians is to believe God’s Word, renounce every plan of Satan, and represent God’s Word, ways, and will without compromise because to love God is to obey God.

(B) The best method for Christians is to cultivate changes that will blend with all people even when it is contrary to the ways and will of God. Afterall, God is Love.

(C) None of the above



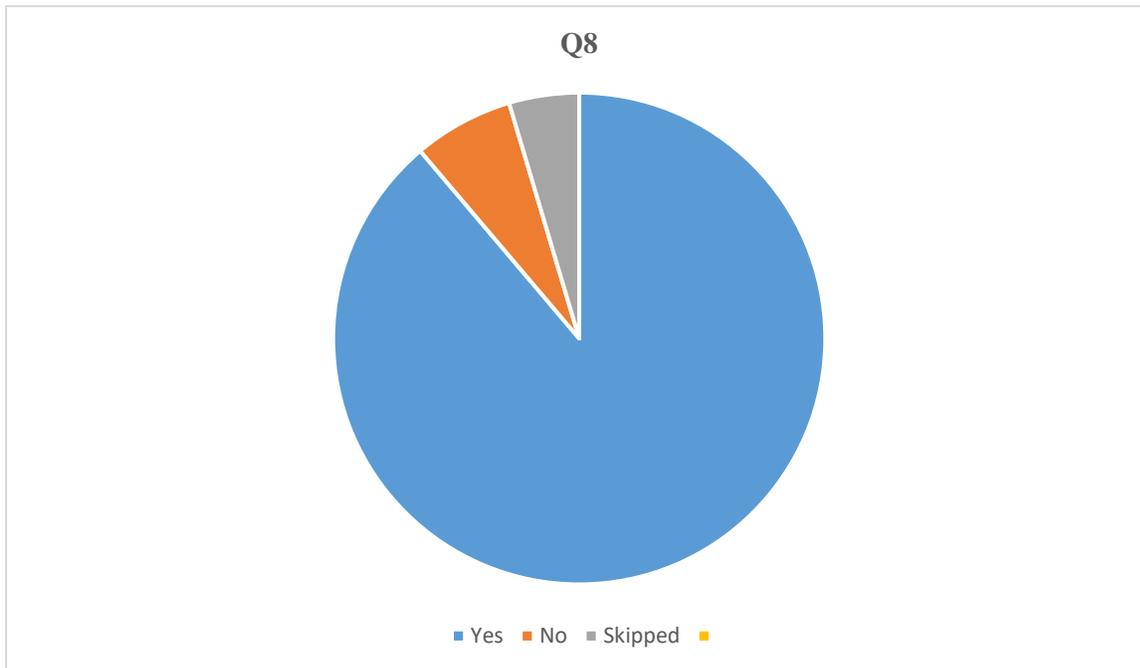
The answers reflect the Bible is the key that unlocks authentic reconciliation, as Christians are adamant to attest the importance of uniting as the body of Christ, becoming empowered through the Word of God, and equipped by the Holy Spirit, they become radiant in obeying God’s commandments and ready for change that creates reconciliation.

The church of Jesus Christ will continue to change. That is guaranteed. Congregations and denominations will rise and fall over time, just as they always have. But I am convinced, absolutely convinced, that God is not done with God’s church. Not yet. God will continue to empower God’s church to continue the mission of the gospel, even if that’s in unexpected and seemingly unorthodox ways. As we partner with God in this mission, we will continue to fall short, to make mistakes, wrong turns, and bad decisions.

Forgiveness will be needed. But sometimes in spite of ourselves, the love and grace of God will continue to be shared, change lives, and give life. ¹⁴⁵

Q8 One definition for racial reconciliation is a process for people to listen, learn, and make amends through reconciling about a conflict(s) pertaining to race related issues. Do you believe racial reconciliation is important to God and is it important to you?
(Yes=27 No =2 Skipped=1)

- (A) Yes
- (B) No



Despite survey question eight not revealing 100% of the people agreeing, it paints a broader picture of how some Christians have no regard for reconciliation and it unmasks how urgent the need is for Christians to embrace all people and engage in the Word of God that emphasizes how Jesus taught, prayed for, healed, congregated with, fed, and so much more

¹⁴⁵ Michael K. Girllinghouse, *Embracing God's Future without Forgetting the Past: A Conversation about Loss, Grief, and Nostalgia in Congregational Life* (Maryland: Augsburg Fortress Publishers, 2019), 253-254, ProQuest Ebrary.

among people who were different, believed different, yet salvation and discipleship via sound biblical doctrine is what made the difference in their lives.

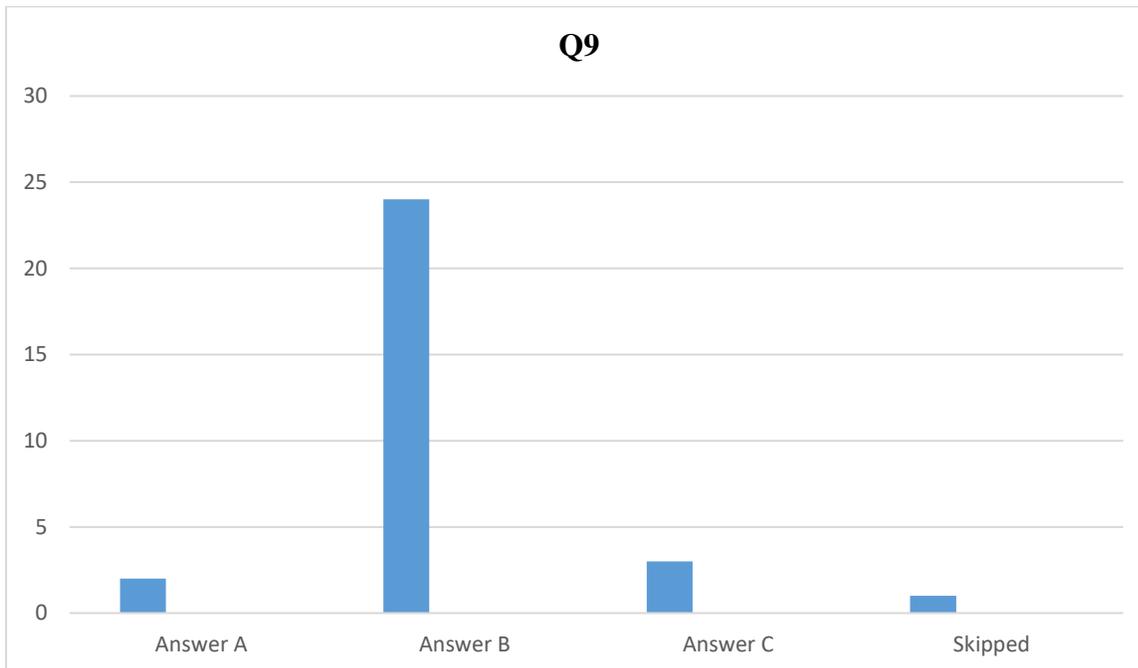
Q9 The church of Jesus Christ is “one body with many parts” according to 1 Corinthians 12:12-27, should represent the “fruit of God’s Spirit (love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control) in Galatians 5:22-25
(A=2 B=24 C=3 Skipped=1)

What is your belief about the responsibilities of African American and Caucasian Christians as it relates the “Fruit of God’s Spirit?”

(A) The church/Christians should not only welcome people, but make efforts to institute changes that will accommodate people even if it compromises the righteousness of Jesus Christ.

(B) The church/Christians must honor Biblical doctrine to not only replicate the “Fruit of God’s Spirit, but the church/Christians should intentionally create an atmosphere that welcomes all people, with respect to maintaining non-negotiables that comprise the righteousness of Jesus Christ.

(C) None of the above



The Fruit of God's Spirit makes a declaration for all Christian believers to mimic however, surveyed participants illustrate a small percentage of disagreements, but interviewee Charlotte Wesley divulged her testament of the "Fruit of God's Spirit" (Galatians 5:22-25). "Charlotte was born in another country with an African ancestry and co-pastors a multi-ethnic church with her African American husband who believes, "a house divided cannot stand. This verse is strategic for Satan as he is against the body of Christ."¹⁴⁶ Charlotte explained her story of experiencing racism while in college, but she also shared how her love for Christ and people prompted her to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ with a Caucasian family who were economically deprived. "The house was dirty and the lady offered me a glass of lemonade. Charlotte was hesitant and made a defining decision and drank the lemonade. Through this, the lady decided to attend the church."¹⁴⁷

Q10 In Matthew 28:19-20, prior to Jesus ascending into Heaven, Jesus stated to the disciples, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore, go and make disciples of all nation, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely, I am with you always, to the very end of the age." (A=1 B=3 C=26 Skipped=0)

As a Christian, have you obeyed what Jesus commanded over 2,000 years ago as it relates to engaging in evangelism with all people?

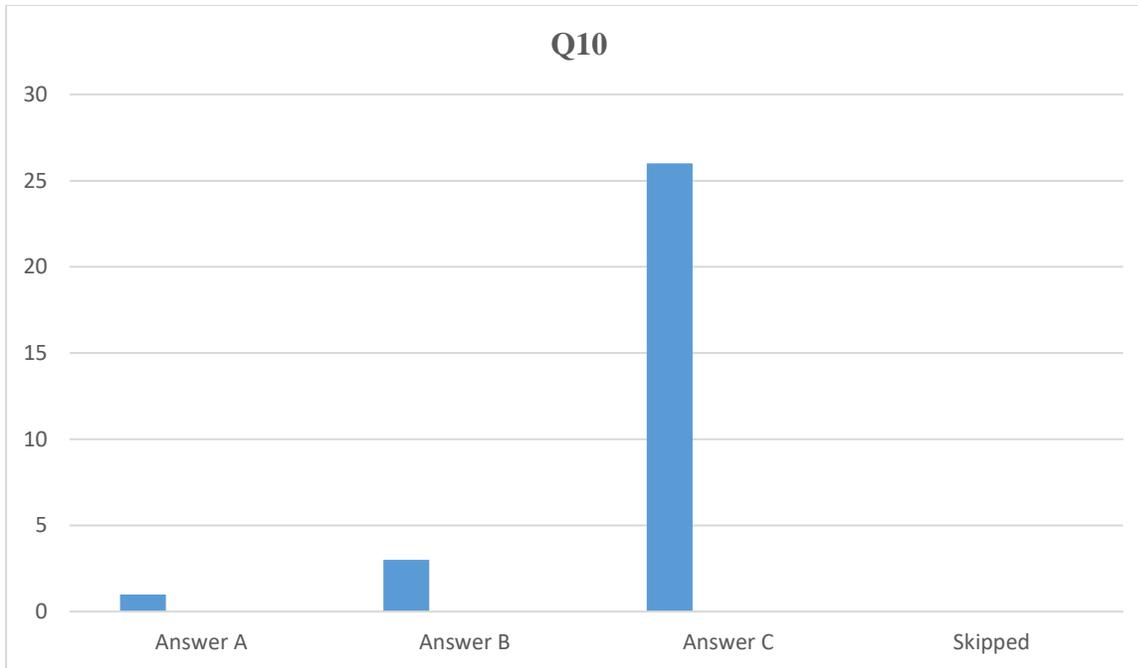
(A) No. I have apprehensions with communicating and sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ with people from different ethnicities.

(B) No. I prefer to sow monies to efforts that supports evangelism, but not engage with people.

(C) Yes. I believe in engaging in evangelism to advance the Gospel of Jesus Christ because Jesus loves all and died to save all people.

¹⁴⁶ Charlotte Wesley, interview by author, online, July 8, 2021

¹⁴⁷ Ibid.



Unlike the interviews (all have participated in evangelism), three participants from the survey prefer to sow monies only for evangelism and one participant is hesitant to engage with other ethnicities. There are many factors that drive fear within Christians to share their faith. Fear is clearly an enemy of God and rebellious toward the faith every Christian should harbor. The fear of the unknown is sometimes widespread and universal among Christians, but the Bible is concrete about fear, “Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has been pleased to give you the kingdom” (Luke 12:32, NIV).

Jerry Edwards brought enlightenment from his childhood memories about approaching all people through evangelism, “I would say learn from the Jehovah Witness and how they evangelize. Don’t focus on religion, just the methods that work. This is how my family, and I became Jehovah Witnesses.”¹⁴⁸ In other words, based on Jerry’s story, the Jehovah Witnesses did

¹⁴⁸ Jerry Edwards, interview by author, online, June 24, 2021

not discriminate about where and who they reached, and all were welcome to join them. From the voice of an interviewee in question twelve who enjoys going beyond the walls of her church that is predominately African American within a multicultural denomination, “I would tell the church, to stop making plans for the next meeting. Get out and meet the people where they are and they will want to come in because you came out.”¹⁴⁹ Now is the time for Christians to wake up and place God’s Master Kingdom Plan above all plans and pursue accomplishing His Kingdom will.

¹⁴⁹ Betsy Hale, interview by author, online, August 3, 2021

Chapter 5

Conclusion

As from the interviews and surveys, the researcher shows that the conclusion of this study solidifies God's Master Kingdom Plan for the church to reflect the love of Christ to the world and a concerted promise that relishes Christ "died for all" (2 Cor 5:15, NIV). From the reflections of interviewees, this study also concludes that a lack of racial reconciliation stagnates African Americans and Caucasian Christians from worshipping together and engaging in multi-cultural evangelism.

This study shows evidence that Christians have a charge to denounce all phenomenon against the Kingdom of God and God's Master Kingdom Plan as they prepare for God's proclamation in Revelation 9:7. "Let us be glad and rejoice and let us give honor to him. For the time has come for the wedding feast of the Lamb, and his bride has prepared herself." The bride (Church) must be ready for the return of the bridegroom (Jesus Christ) and evangelism is a step toward preparing the church. "We believe in God. We love God. But are we ready for God? When the shout goes out that the bridegroom has come for his bride, will we be found waiting with lamps brimmed, full of oil, and burning brightly?"¹⁵⁰

This research conveys a consequential message, Christians are in a continued battle, a spiritual war where the eternal destiny of generations of Christ followers is at stake. Ephesians 6:10-12 unmask the enemies of the spiritual war to prepare the believer, "For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms." As interviewees elaborated on spiritual war for generations of Christ followers, the Bible reminds Christians to

¹⁵⁰ Terri Clark, *Fanning the Flame: Reigniting Your Faith In God* (Chicago: Abilene Christian University Press, 2017), 119, ProQuest Ebook Central.

anchor their faith in biblical principles and disengage from voices and vices that attempt to directly impact the advancement of the Kingdom of God. “Since you are made in God’s image, saved by His Son, indwelt by God’s Spirit, and destined for God’s glory, Satan puts a target on your back and declares war.”¹⁵¹

Interview discussions revealed the world has become more anti-Christ, anti-Church, and anti-Christianity, the demand for Christians to unite in a global effort to evangelize all people has never been higher and the church of Jesus Christ (body of Christ) is defaulting in multicultural evangelism. The mandate and mission for Christians to present the Gospel of Jesus Christ has not metamorphosed, nor has it modified because the Word declares “And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come” (Matt 24:14, NIV).

The feedback from interviewees clarifies that African American and Caucasian Christians present malnourishment, for healing, understanding and acceptance, a listening ear, to speak without the risk of being judged or reprimanded, to become a voice that will be heard and not hindered. Stories asserted for the interviews and answers for the surveys, echo that racism is sin that continues to lurk not only in America, but within this world. The proposed problems stemming from race and racism have played a noteworthy role in destructing the progress of racial reconciliation, and distracting Christians from fulfilling their God-given duty to replicate Christ in this world.

African American and Caucasian Christians believe reconciliation is a matter of the heart. As reconciliation relates to the church, it appears that the best efforts still render minimal results

¹⁵¹ Stephen Kendrick and Alex Kendrick, *Defined: Who God Says You Are* (Nashville: B&H Publishing, 2019), 164, ProQuest Ebrary.

masked as maximized progression. “Reconciliation is not a magic word that we can trot out whenever we need healing or inspiration. Deep down, I think we know this is true, because our efforts to partake of an easy reconciliation have proved fruitless in the world. Too often, our discussions of race are emotional but not strategic, our outreach work remains paternalistic, and our ethnic celebrations fetishize people of color. Many champions of racial justice in the Church have stopped using the term altogether, because it has been so watered down from its original potency.”¹⁵²

The consensus among interviewees agree that now is the time for Christians and the church to demobilize elements that fracture the Kingdom of God and disband all components that contradict God’s Master Kingdom Plan. “Churches should be centers for such loving activity. It’s where heaven’s love shows up, first in the pronouncement of Christ’s love for us in the gospel, and second in our love for insiders and outsiders alike.”¹⁵³

The voices of interviewees are clear and without error indicating the need for sustainable and authentic changes. Raymond Clay is an African American male who states, “I don’t think on racism and really don’t focus on it. I love all people. The traditions keep us divided. I believe the millennial churches are bridging racial gaps because they are younger without former challenges that the older people had.”¹⁵⁴ Pastor McClain concurs with uniting voices of this study. “Look at the church of Antioch in Acts 11, they were one body and did not divide the body of Christ. We

¹⁵² Austin Channing Brown, *I’m Still Here: Black Dignity in a World Made for Whiteness* (New York: Covington Books, 2018), 167, <https://web-b-ebsochost-com.ezproxy.liberty.edu/ehost/ebookviewer/ebook/bmxlYmtfXzE1NjE0NTVfX0FO0?sid=41cb895c-1240-4927-a0b9-97e3a0bcc044@pdc-v-sessmgr01&vid=0&format=EK&lpid=navPoint-21&rid=0>.

¹⁵³ Mark Dever, *Understanding the Great Commission* (Nashville: B H Publishing, 2016), 14, ProQuest Book Central.

¹⁵⁴ Raymond Clay, interview by author, online, August 2, 2021

should love people as Christ so loved the world to reach out to them to gain their ear and attention.”¹⁵⁵ Kevin Douglas is an African American who serves as a pastor and agrees that it is time to navigate from the old and run with the new. Kevin stated, “Remove the veil. Jesus tore it down and now it’s time for you to tear it down.”¹⁵⁶ Darryl Wyatt and his wife are both African American and serve as ministers of the gospel. Darryl believes, “Love and forgiveness is the catalyst.”¹⁵⁷ Roger and Marissa Sterling are Caucasians who pastored and shared their desires and prayers for change. Roger believes and states, “American churches focus too much on the direction of the country rather than focus on souls being saved.”¹⁵⁸ Marissa agrees with what has been spoken within this research, “We’ve got to pray more now than ever before. We need to understand the Word and follow as led by the Holy Spirit. We need to see things as God sees them and not our foremothers and forefathers.”¹⁵⁹ Pastor McClain (West Haven Assembly of God) was the center of this study and the last person interviewed who concluded, “Racial reconciliation means we are one race based on the blood. We are one body and one church with everything in common. We should not allow our differences or negatives to affect us as the church. The Lord Jesus within us should be enough.”¹⁶⁰ The concluding thoughts and insight for Christians and pastors from Pastor McClain resonate with a majority and not the minority of interviews and the surveys. “I would tell Christians around the world to bring glory to the Lord by living as His people in the way He loves them, and I would tell the pastors to re-invent the

¹⁵⁵ Stewart McClain, interview by author, online, August 24, 2021

¹⁵⁶ Kevin Douglas, interview by author, online, August 2, 2021

¹⁵⁷ Darryl Wyatt, interview by author, online, July 6, 2021

¹⁵⁸ Roger Sterling, interview by author, online, July 12, 2021

¹⁵⁹ Marissa Sterling, interview by author, online, July 12, 2021

¹⁶⁰ Stewart McClain, interview by author, online, August 24, 2021

biblical communion and fellowship.”¹⁶¹ All interview participants and the author agree that only Jesus Christ can change the hearts of people and there is an emergent need for an awakening for unbelievers and revival for believers. “For if, while we were God’s enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life” (Rom 5:10, NIV).

Recommendations for Spiritual Development

The foundation for Christianity is the Word of God and it is paramount for every believer to ensure their foundation is solid as a rock through becoming students of God’s Word. “The pure in heart have their whole lives, public, and private, transparent before others. Their very heart-including their thoughts and motives-is pure, unmixed with anything devious, ulterior, or base. Only the pure in heart will see God, see him now with the eye of faith and see his glory in the hereafter, for only the utterly sincere can bear the dazzling vision in whose light the darkness of deceit must vanish and by whose fire all shams are burned up.”¹⁶²

Obedying God is the key to reconciliation and redirection for Christians as the church provides love to the lost, light to those in darkness, hope and healing to the broken, shalom to the bewildered, clarity to the seekers, and freedom to the one in bondage. This is the true church as the imagery of Jesus Christ spotlighting, “Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves. Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord” (Rom 12:9-11, NIV).

¹⁶¹ Stewart McClain, interview by author, online, August 24, 2021

¹⁶² John Stott. *The Beatitude: Developing Spiritual Character* (Westmont: InterVarsity Press, 2020), 37, ProQuest Ebook Central.

Having faith, fasting (consecration), and praying are essential elements for spiritual formation, witnessing, and receiving the manifestations of God’s miracles. Consecration intensifies the believers love for Christ and communing with Christ as a holy temple of the Lord.

When we consecrate ourselves, God will fill us with his best to transform our worst. And consecration, done rightly, offers two main fruits: it draws us into deeper intimacy with God and produces in us an authentic spiritual authority. It connects us to his spiritual authority. When we consecrate ourselves, we make room for God to re-ignite white-hot love for him. The very act of consecration is sacrificial, which itself is in the nature of love.”¹⁶³

For the world to visualize Christ through believers, fasting coupled with praying is one avenue, but this avenue loses its fervor among Christians and the church. “Most Christians in America do not fast. It’s not a part of the liturgy of high churches, and many congregational churches do not practice it. Yet Jesus assumed it as part of a healthy prayer life.”¹⁶⁴

Recommendations for Practical Ministry

The stated recommendations should be enacted for evangelism and discipleship. Christians are Christ’s Agents in the world and the gospel message must resound not only in words, but also in deeds. *The Insanity of God* book delivers a true story detailing the outpouring of God’s miracles. “The truth is these things that we take for granted are all miracles.”¹⁶⁵ Ministering to and welcoming new believers to the Kingdom of God remains as a top priority for the church which necessitates intentionally teaching Christians how to evangelize and disciple within this 21st century. “In order for the human to have the ability to choose to love, honor, and

¹⁶³ James Choung and Ryan Pfeiffer, *Longing for Revival: From Holy Discontent to Breakthrough Faith* (Westmont: InterVarsity Press, 2020), 75-76, ProQuest Ebook Central.

¹⁶⁴ Elmer L. Towns, *Fasting with the Lord’s Prayer: Experience a deeper and More Powerful Relationship with God* (Grand Rapids: Bethany House Publishers, 2013), 21, ProQuest Ebook Central.

¹⁶⁵ Nik Ripken and Gregg Lewis, *The Insanity of God: A True Story* (Nashville: B & H Publishing Group 2013), 216, ProQuest Ebook Central.

obey God, He was given an opportunity to choose to trust, love, and obey God. You are invited into the kingdom of God.”¹⁶⁶

The first recommendation is to host a Re-Imagine Evangelism and Re-Engage Discipleship Seminar with a major emphasis on evangelism and discipleship within the 21st century. Pew Research reports expected trends and multi-cultural growth the world is facing over the years.

The first formal forecasts using data on age, fertility, mortality, migration and religious switching for the world’s eight major religious groups – finds that the religious profile of the world is rapidly changing. By 2050, the number of Muslims around the world will nearly equal the number of Christians. With the exception of Buddhists, all of the world’s major religious groups are poised for at least some growth in the coming decades. Meanwhile, the share of those who do not identify with a religious group will decline. As of 2010, Muslims are the group that has the largest share of their population that’s under 15. Over a third of Muslims, 34%, are under 15, compared to 27% of the world’s population and only about one-in-five Buddhists and the people who are in the unaffiliated category – atheists, agnostics and those who claim no religion – are under 15. What this means is that the Muslim population has more people who are going to grow into their childbearing years in the years to come than any other religious group.¹⁶⁷

Evangelizing in the 21st century that encapsulates cultures and subcultures, requires creativity and innovation. The purpose of this seminar is to equip Christians about sharing the love of Christ to communities through a curriculum and a practicum. The church of Jesus Christ must prepare to enter the world of the lost from different venues, while intermixing with various forms of technology. Advancing the gospel of Jesus Christ via technology allows the transmission of the Word of God to nations and the visibility of the church. “As Scripture reveals

¹⁶⁶ Annegret Benson, *Welcome to the Kingdom of God* (Chicago: Total Publishing, 2019), 14-15, ProQuest Ebook Central.

¹⁶⁷ Alan Cooperman, Event: “The Future of World Religions: What the Findings from the Pew Research Centers Global Religious Mean for Society, Foreign Policy and National Security” (2015), Event: The Future of World Religions | Pew Research Center (pewforum.org).

over and over again, God works through people. We are the instruments God uses to change the world.”¹⁶⁸

Building a 21st century style website and social media such as Facebook, Instagram, Podcast, and Twitter, are additional outlets to allure people to the gospel. As casted, social media is on the rise, so, the church must incorporate sharing the gospel via all means available. Television and radio outlets continue their pace with reaching thousands of people as an effective means of sharing the gospel and recommended as a viable. Jeffrey Skier is an author studying the religion and the digital influences. “Siker is clear that with this new vernacular comes some interesting side effects-from Twitter mega-pastors to celebrity YouTube channels, both of which seek to present a particular form of Christianity but also to dominate the dialogue around the Bible.”¹⁶⁹

Scripture defines the effects when discipleship is fruitless and failing to fulfill the intended purpose of preparing and equipping believers. “When all that generation had been gathered to their fathers, another generation arose after them who did not know the LORD nor the work which He had done for Israel.” (Judg 2:10) The purpose of the seminar is to teach leaders and laity how to love, serve, and follow Christ as these teachings are replicated for new believers. A curriculum for Christianity One-On-One is recommended for new believers and re-enforce the knowledge of any believer who desires to attend. “The goal of Disciple-Makers is the ongoing process of discipling people into the life of the Trinity as best as they understand

¹⁶⁸ Adam Hamilton, *Half Truths: God Helps Those Who Help Themselves and Other Things the Bible Doesn't Say* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2016), 29, ProQuest Ebook Central.

¹⁶⁹ Peter M. Philipps, *The Bible, Social Media, and Digital Culture* (Taylor and Francis Group, 2019), 22, The Bible, social media and digital culture | Peter M. Phillipps | Tayl (liberty.edu).

following Jesus to be because learning to keep the teachings of Jesus is our concrete pathway into that mysterious name we receive in and through Baptism.”¹⁷⁰

Canvassing a variety of communities broadens opportunities for multicultural evangelizing and discipleship through seeking to develop relationships along with assessing and responding to the needs of the communities. “Since Jesus’s Great Commission (Matt 28:16-20) contains the central command to make disciples of all the nations, churches largely agree that discipleship should be a priority for the mission of the church. Unfortunately, they would also usually agree on another point: their track record for discipleship is not so good.”¹⁷¹

Contacting other pastors of multicultural churches for coaching and to evaluate their kingdom plan (not duplicate) is recommended for pastors to increase knowledge and lessons learned. In “*Who Moved My Pulpit*,” Ryan took his time leading the church to change.”¹⁷² Change is inevitable but making changes require prayer and careful consideration.

Being a small congregation often means what Jesus said to the disciples, “The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few” (Matthew 9:37, NIV). Kingdom partnerships are a vital organ to the functioning body in their efforts of evangelizing. Having a kingdom outlook means reaching people and planting the seed even if the seed does not grow at the intended church. Seeking and building relationships with other Christian leaders to cement cohesiveness and collaborations can be invaluable for reconciliation and multicultural evangelism. Searching for and contacting other churches (with and outside of fellowships and denominations), ministries,

¹⁷⁰ Brooks St. Clair Morton, *The Great CoMission: Making Sense of Making Disciples* (Maryland: USA, 2012), 72, ProQuest Ebook Central.

¹⁷¹ W. Jay Moon, *Intercultural Discipleship (Encountering Mission): Learning from Global Approaches to Spiritual Formation* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2017), 16. ProQuest Ebook Central.

¹⁷² Thomas S. Rainer, *Who Moved My Pulpit?: Leading Change In the Church* (Nashville: B&H Publishing Company, 2016), 113.

and organizations to build new partnerships is recommended. “Developing a great team takes a lot of work; it doesn’t just happen. Disciplined efforts by people wanting to become true teams rather than just a work group is the only way to develop a high-performance, thriving team.”¹⁷³

It is recommended for pastors and staff leaders to explore Christian organizations whose mission is within Biblical principles. Building collaborations is inclusive of attending, participating, and hosting fellowship meetings, events, and more. “Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor if either of them falls down, one can help the other up. But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up” (Eccl 4: 9-10, NIV). There is power in unity among the body of Christ that increases the potential for multicultural evangelism.

The excellence and necessity of unity among Christians is made apparent by this vehement and affectionate prayer for it by the Savior. When He puts the whole company of believers together, He pitches upon this as the most eminent matter, that they be one. And although our Savior had not the Spirit in measure, and so could not vainly repeat the same thing often, yet within a little space, He does four times mention this in John 17:21-23. It is not pardon of their sins, justification, adoption, glorification that is mentioned here, but unity. It is as if the whole kingdom of grace and glory consisted in this; obtain this and you have all. As our Savior prayed, then, so He preached love and unity.¹⁷⁴

In conclusion, from the beginning, throughout, the end results, and recommendations are about Christians loving Christ, one another, and people enough to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ, live according to, and accomplish God’s Kingdom will through evangelizing and discipling the world. This research contends it is time for African Americans and Caucasian Christians, the church of Jesus Christ to pray, lead the way for the world to follow by repenting, forgiving, and reconstructing new pathways for restoration and reconciliation.

¹⁷³ Ryan T. Hartwig, *Teams That Thrive: Five Disciplines of Collaboration Church Leadership* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2015,) 75, ProQuest Ebook Central.

¹⁷⁴ Anthony Burgess and Matthew Vogan, *Advancing Christian Unity* (Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books, 2019), 25, ProQuest Ebook Central.

As Christians continue carrying their cross for Christ as His ambassadors and armor bearers within the world, the Word of God declares, “Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts. And whatever you do, whether in word or in deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him” (Col 3:15-17, NIV).

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CONSENT

Consent Title of the Project: The Messiah, the Mandate, and the Mission to Implement Multicultural Evangelism Through Intentional Racial Reconciliation Among African Americans and Caucasian Christians Principal Investigator: Panisha L. Stigger, Ordained, Assemblies of God Fellowship

Invitation to be Part of a Research Study

You are invited to participate in a research study. In order to participate, you must be an African American or Caucasian Christian, 18 years old or older. 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 my research is to gather qualitative data from African Americans and Caucasian Christians, identify perceived problems with racial reconciliation, and recommend potential solutions that will produce pragmatic paths for multicultural evangelism.

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. Participate in an interview via Zoom, via phone or in person. This should take approx. 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.

What risks might you experience from being in this study?

The risks involved in this study are minimal, which means they are 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. Published reports will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a subject. Research records will be stored securely, and only the researcher will have access to the records. Data collected from you may be shared for use in future research studies, presentations, or with other researchers. If data collected from you is shared, any information that could identify you, if applicable, will be removed before the data is shared.

- Participant responses will be kept confidential through the use of pseudonyms. Interviews will be conducted in a location where others will not easily overhear the conversation.

- Data will be stored on a password-locked computer. After three years, all electronic records will be deleted.

How will you be compensated for being part of the study?

Participants will not be compensated for participating in this study.

Is study participation voluntary

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether to participate will not affect your current or future relations with Liberty University. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time 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 contact the researcher at the email address/phone number included in the next paragraph. Should you choose to withdraw, data collected from you will be destroyed immediately and will not be included in this study.

Whom do you contact if you have questions or concerns about the study?

The researcher conducting this study is Panisha L. Stigger. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, you are encouraged to contact her. You may also contact the researcher's faculty sponsor, Dr. Jeff W. Brawner.

Whom do you contact if you have questions about your rights as a research participant?

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

Your Consent

By signing this document, you are agreeing to be in this study. Make sure you understand what the study is about before you sign. You will be given a copy of this document for your records. The researcher will keep a copy with the study records. If you have any questions about the study after you sign this document, you can contact the study team using the information provided above. I have read and understood the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers. I consent to participate in the study.

Printed Subject Name _____

Signature & Date _____

Liberty University IRB FY20-21-603 Approved on 6-16-202

Interview Questions for The Messiah, the Mandate, and the Mission to Implement Multicultural Evangelism Through Intentional Racial Reconciliation Among African Americans and Caucasian Christians

African Americans and Caucasian Christians mimic one human race and must become revolutionary, re-emerge, and re-engage through a “911” effervescent perspective to share the gospel message to one another, juxtaposing to all people. God’s creativeness of humankind extends to God’s “beloved” church as the established community of believers encapsulating, “All of you together are Christ’s body, and each of you is a part of it” (1 Corinthians 12:27).

1. Are you connected, affiliated, a member of, or serve in a Christian church? If so, please share your affiliation with the church and if your church is comprised of people from different ethnicities. If there are no other ethnicities, to your knowledge, is your church welcoming to other ethnicities? If you are a pastor, please share your thoughts of the importance of racial diversity within the church of Jesus Christ.
2. God created one human race with different ethnicities of people to love, co-exist, and serve as the Body of Christ called to fulfill the Kingdom plans of God over 2,000 years ago. Today, as Christians and as the church, divisions are still prevalent. What are your perceptions?
3. What is your meaning of racial reconciliation and is this important to you?
4. What is your belief about the responsibilities of African Americans, Caucasian Christians, and the church as it relates to being intentional to teach and exemplify racial reconciliation?
5. The Bible deposits deep emphasis on ethnicities and diversity from Genesis to Revelation? What do you perceive as concerns and challenges (if any) for African Americans and Caucasian Christians responding to sound Biblical doctrine concerning racial reconciliation?
6. The Christian community is divided about racial inequalities, religious freedoms, and worldly falsehoods, which has continued a dividing line among African Americans and Caucasian Christians. How should Christians respond to such topics?
7. What is your definition of racism and do you believe racism is sin against God? If you believe racism is sin against God, why has this sin continued as a plague?
8. Have you witnessed racism or are you aware of a factual story of racism? If so, please expound.
9. Are you willing to stand as the righteousness of Jesus Christ with a voice that speaks against all forms of racism whether in your church, within your family, on your job, or in any endeavor? How would you respond to racism toward you, within your family, within your church, on your job, or in any endeavor?
10. As a Christian, have you obeyed what Jesus commanded over 2,000 years ago as it relates to engaging in multicultural evangelism? If so, please share a story of how your life was impacted.
11. If you could speak to every Christian in the world to bolster change that would create innovative plans for Christians to canvass this world for Jesus Christ, what would you say?

12. If you had a portable pulpit to travel the world, what would you convey to the church of Jesus Christ about multicultural evangelism?

June 16, 2021

Panisha Stigger

Jeff Brawner

Re: IRB Approval - IRB-FY20-21-603 The Messiah, the Mandate, and the Mission to Implement Multicultural Evangelism Through Intentional Racial Reconciliation Among African Americans and Caucasian Christians

Dear Panisha Stigger, Jeff Brawner:

We are pleased to inform you that your study has been approved by the Liberty University Institutional Review Board (IRB). This approval is extended to you for one year from the following date: June 16, 2021. If you need to make changes to the methodology as it pertains to human subjects, you must submit a modification to the IRB. Modifications can be completed through your Cayuse IRB account.

Your study falls under the expedited review category (45 CFR 46.110), which is applicable to specific, minimal risk studies and minor changes to approved studies for the following reason(s):

7. Research on individual or group characteristics or behavior (including, but not limited to, research on perception, cognition, motivation, identity, language, communication, cultural beliefs or practices, and social behavior) or research employing survey, interview, oral history, focus group, program evaluation, human factors evaluation, or quality assurance methodologies.

Your stamped consent form(s) and final versions of your study documents can be found under the Attachments tab within the Submission Details section of your study on Cayuse IRB. Your stamped consent form(s) 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(s) should be made available without alteration.

Thank you for your cooperation with the IRB, and we wish you well with your research project.

Sincerely,

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