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**The Worship Leader: Intentional Worship Equilibrium of a Christ-centered Perspective on  
College Campus and in the Community**

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Wayne Ravenell

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The Worship Leader: Intentional Worship Equilibrium of a Christ-centered Perspective on  
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By Wayne Darrell Ravenell

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APPROVED BY:

Dr. Betty Melinda Damon, Ed. D, DWS, Committee Chair

Dr. Zeb Balentine, DWS, Thesis Reader

Dr. Stephen Muller, D. Min, Dean

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## **Abstract**

Because of the diversity of collegiate cultures, Christ is depicted in various ways on campus; hence this study focuses on the gospel choir leadership influence. The impacts of Christ-centered gospel choir leadership are demonstrated in this qualitative study, as well as how it will lead to academic and community leadership influence. This study investigates the impact of collegiate gospel choir leadership on campus and local community worship. College and university gospel choirs from Charleston, South Carolina, provide the context for this qualitative study. This vital research takes a phenomenological approach to the impacts of mentorship and development of a collegiate gospel choir's worship experience as viewed by choir members and the Charleston community. Perspectives on the worship leader, mentorship, discipleship, and partnership aid with developing a holistic approach to the intentional worship equilibrium of the worship leader. Gospel music on a college campus continues to be a vehicle allowing students to demonstrate their heartfelt expression of love for Christ through the avenues of the gospel choir. When students gather for rehearsals, they do so not simply to prepare for performance but to represent Christ on campus and in their community. Leaders are therefore essential to ensure that each student has the tools necessary to provide a Christ-centered perspective on campus and in their community. As the culture of the United States becomes more diverse, building a successful balanced collegiate gospel choir program necessitates leadership that understands both the campus culture and the community, as well as how leadership will affect each student. Findings are based on data from interviews with gospel choir members from Charleston Southern University, College of Charleston, and The Citadel. The community component of this study is the congregation of Mount Moriah Missionary Baptist Church, North Charleston, South Carolina.



## CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

A well-balanced organizational structure fosters interpersonal harmony that is founded on ideals and principles of a biblical foundation perspective. In a collegiate gospel choir, Christ-centered leadership is the equilibrium that enables intentionality to encourage mentorship, discipleship, and partnership on campus and in the community. The worship leader's role and resources extend far beyond the title of the position, but the function and purpose are to bring Christ to those they lead in a sincere way. To better comprehend the relevance of the obligation to lead a Christ-centered environment within the collegiate gospel choir, it is necessary to investigate the perspectives of the worship leader.

### Background of The Worship Leader

Leadership is essential for an organization to thrive and flourish. A solid leadership presents someone who understands timing, momentum, and strategy – a person who leads with unwavering faith and commitment. Malphurs states that this person should also be a self-starter who is outgoing, innovative, and energetic.<sup>1</sup> The Bible declares, “The plans of the heart belong to man, but the answer of the tongue is from the Lord,”<sup>2</sup> This means that a good leader follows God's word rather than their desires. A leader directed by Christ will commit his thoughts and ways to the assignment – for his steps are to be ordered by God.

Worship leaders on a collegiate campus portray themselves in the context of leading young adults in a Christ-centered environment that generates disciples for Christ in a collegiate setting. It is more than singing the right song or playing an instrument. Leading entails gaining

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<sup>1</sup> A. Malphurs, *Advanced Strategic Planning: a 21st-century model for church and ministry leaders*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2013). 23

<sup>2</sup> Proverbs. 16:1. Unless otherwise noted, all biblical passages referred are in the English Standard Version (Wheaton, IL: Crossway), 198.

insight into the minds of those who are subjecting themselves to an authoritative figure. According to Sharon Young, who researched gospel choirs on collegiate campuses, the major objective of the gospel choir was to provide a place for Christian students to study and perform gospel music, as well as to minister to and bring students to Christ.<sup>3</sup> Having a gospel choir on campus provides students with an opportunity to interact with their friends and classmates in a group that fosters fellowship, comradery, and laughter. Students benefit from the environment by having conversations and developing relationships in a Christ-centered and socially acknowledged community that supports students in good times and stressful ones. Good leadership keeps this sort of atmosphere together. When students join the gospel choir, they get a personal look at another culture.<sup>4</sup> Clapping on the second and fourth beats, moving while singing, and singing in a declamatory style are all common gospel performance techniques.<sup>5</sup> Furthermore, students learn a musical repertoire that has typically been excluded from classroom music studies.<sup>6</sup> The more students participate, the stronger the bond becomes, transcending casual discussion and spreading a family-like attitude throughout the campus. Students feel the intentionality of being together as a family in unity rather than as individual singers because the leader understands the importance of teaching unification and wholeness within the choir.

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<sup>3</sup> Sharon Young, "Purposes of Gospel Choirs and Ensembles in State Supported Colleges and Universities." *Western Journal of Black Studies* 29, no. 4 (Winter, 2005): 677-81, <http://ezproxy.liberty.edu/login?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.proquest.com%2Fscholarly-journals%2Fpurposes-gospel-choirs-ensembles-state-supported%2Fdocview%2F200338174%2Fse-2%3Faccountid%3D12085>.

<sup>4</sup> Linda Walker, "Developing a Gospel Choir." *Music Educators Journal* 89, no. 3 (January 2003): 23. doi:10.2307/3399854.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

According to Julie Park and Nicholas Bowman, colleges have a strong interest in promoting cross-racial interaction (CRI), given the growth in racial diversity on campuses.<sup>7</sup>

Relationships built during rehearsals or performances detach themselves from racist, political, and religious beliefs, which can cause division within the choir. Park and Bowman suggest that in the college environment, religion appears more conducive to “bonding social capital,” which is a relational network based on similarity.<sup>8</sup> According to Shelley Hasinoff and David Mandzuk, bonding occurs when like-minded persons with close connections, such as family members, close friends, and neighbors, form tight inward-looking relationships. This is significant because worship leadership serves as the glue that keeps this behavior together. According to Matt Boswell, the worship leader's primary responsibility is to shepherd the congregation or the people towards the green pastures of God-centered, gospel-centered songs and away from the desert plains of theological pointlessness, meditations on human experience, and emotional excitement.<sup>9</sup> As students join a gospel choir, they are experiencing the knowledge and passion of Christ through worship leadership. Ronald Riggio believes that a leader builds personal credibility as someone deserving of trust and respect, making followers susceptible to the leader's persuasive influence.<sup>10</sup> A leader's influence should, but does not always, extend

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<sup>7</sup> Julie Park and Nicholas A. Bowman. “Religion as Bridging or Bonding Social Capital: Race, Religion, and Cross-Racial Interaction for College Students.” *Sociology of Education* 88, no. 1 (January 2015): 20–37. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0038040714560172>.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Matt Boswell, “Doxology and Theology: How the Gospel Forms the Worship Leader”, (B&H Publishing Group, 2013), p. 15. *ProQuest Ebook Central*, <http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/liberty/detail.action?docID=1164892>.

<sup>10</sup> Ronald E. Riggio, *Leader Interpersonal and Influence Skills: The Soft Skills of Leadership* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2014). 147.

beyond the classroom; it is the lifestyle they model in front of each student that allows each student to be a disciple of Christ on campus and in the community.

Opstal Van and Sandra Maria contend that in this generation and culture, more than ever, integrity as a leader is the key to influence.<sup>11</sup> According to Boswell, life integrity is the process of what people observe from the leader when accountability is behind closed doors, and what the people witness speaks clearly to the leader's integrity.<sup>12</sup> Worship leaders must practice the spiritual disciplines in order to stay sensitive to the Holy Spirit, not only for direction in the mission but for conviction of sin.<sup>13</sup>

Rob Morgan and Vernon Whaley share their views on worship. Morgan argues that everything dealing with worship starts in Genesis.<sup>14</sup> Adam and Eve had a relationship with God on a personal level. God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And then have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."<sup>15</sup> God gave man power for all of what He had spoken of - there is communication and communion with God under this influence. As believers engage in worship with God, they experience the truth of who God is in their lives. Like Adam and Eve, they had the best of both worlds. According to Whaley, Genesis was not written to describe how God created the universe but rather to exhibit or disclose the

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<sup>11</sup> Opstal Van and Sandra Maria. "The Next Worship: Glorifying God in a Diverse World," InterVarsity Press, 2015. *ProQuest Ebook Central*, <http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/liberty/detail.action?docID=4388717>.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Rob Morgan, "Worship As the Beginning", last modified 2016, [https://learn.liberty.edu/webapps/blackboard/content/listContent.jsp?course\\_id=\\_564979\\_1&content\\_id=\\_36495175\\_1](https://learn.liberty.edu/webapps/blackboard/content/listContent.jsp?course_id=_564979_1&content_id=_36495175_1).

<sup>15</sup> Gen. 1:26.

person of God.<sup>16</sup> In Genesis 1, God dealt with the entire world and its creation. In chapter 5, the conversation shifts to a generation where the people's minds had become evil. God raised a man called Abraham who worshiped and trusted him. Because of his loyalty and obedience to God, he was given seven promises: that he will show him the land, make him into a great nation, bless him, make his name great, he will be a blessing, and always to remember to bless those who bless and cures those who will cures him and all the people on earth will be blessed through him.<sup>17</sup> The communion and obedience Abraham had with God expanded the blessing for everyone.

Churches, whether denominational or non-denominational, have used the word "worship" to institute that there is a call to gather in order to adore Christ and his majesty. Individuals would open the service with a doxology and continue through the service, which ended with a benediction. This pattern would continue every week on a Sunday morning and during Bible study. While attending worship in a building is beneficial, it is essential for worshipers to gather in a building to encourage a worship experience that is pleasing to God. Tozer inspires readers not merely to work on the ritual of worship but to adopt an approach to the full worship experience that focuses on Christ.

Tozer's perspective encourages each reader to understand the foundational purpose within the fabric of the worship experience.<sup>18</sup> The biblical text says, "In the beginning, God

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<sup>16</sup> Vernon Whaley, *Called to Worship: from the Dawn of Creation to the Final Amen* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson), 2009. 34.

<sup>17</sup> Gen. 12:2.

<sup>18</sup> A.W. Tozer, *Whatever Happened to Worship?: A Call to True Worship* (Camp Hill, PA: First WingSpread Publishers, 2006), 35.

created the heavens and the earth.”<sup>19</sup> There was harmony – a place of one sound and one voice. When God made Adam and Eve, their purpose was to worship God continuously. Unfortunately, when disobedience entered their harmonious communion and environment, the sound of their worship changed. This was also what happened to Lucifer: when iniquity was present, the harmonious sound of horns that covered him changed. The Bible declares:

Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God; every precious stone was thy covering, the sardius, topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, and the carbuncle, and gold: the workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes was prepared in thee in the day that thou wast created.<sup>20</sup>

According to David Urban, Satan's rebellion does not defend doctrinal purity but instead provides his theological innovations; nor are his reasons and beliefs authentic, but rather are based on a dishonest narrative of false accusation and self-exaltation, as he inevitably confesses.<sup>21</sup> The truth can be distorted, perverted or twisted – this is what happens to Adam and Eve – they allowed Lucifer to bring division within the harmony of the garden. There is equilibrium wherever there is balance and harmony within leadership.

There is a call for the worshipper to return to the origin of worship, where Christ was the center of attention. As a worship leader, there is a mandate to serve the people by demonstrating the worship experienced toward God – this is what the worship leader offers every week – worship. All creation is designed to worship and adore Christ through the daily walk of the

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<sup>19</sup> Gen 1:1.

<sup>20</sup> Ez. 28:13, KJV.

<sup>21</sup> David V. Urban, “The Falls of Satan, Eve, and Adam in John Milton’s *Paradise Lost*: A Study in Insincerity,” *Christianity & Literature* 2017, Vol. 67(1) (2017), 89–112. DOI: 10.1177/0148333117731098 journals.sagepub.com/home/cal.

believer. Tozer expressed that worship is not about a building but a lifestyle that encourages the world to experience the love and passion of Christ through obedience.<sup>22</sup>

There are right and wrong ways to worship God. In today's church, there has been an adoption of a particular perspective concerning the worship experience, which has distorted the authentic worship of the church. Tozer gives several illustrations of non-acceptable worship and the effects it has on the believer.<sup>23</sup> Tozer argues that God was seeking worship from Adam, who unfortunately had sinned and, in rebellion, broke his fellowship.<sup>24</sup> The initial intent of God was not the tragedy of sin infiltrating the heart of man.<sup>25</sup> When the glory of God is not being displayed or illuminated in the church or building, it is not a natural display of his glory. Tozer contends that because of the condition in man, sin is natural, worship is unnatural, and so few people do it.<sup>26</sup>

With all the challenges within society and culture, worship is essential to the believer. True worship, according to Tozer, accords with the nature of God – we worship God according to what God is and not according to what he is not.<sup>27</sup> In other words, believers do not idol God but adore him for his love and compassion for his people. Tozer holds that praying in the spirit,

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<sup>22</sup> A.W. Tozer, *Whatever Happened to Worship?: A Call to True Worship*. (Camp Hill, PA: First WingSpread Publishers, 2006), 40.

<sup>23</sup> A.W. Tozer, *The Purpose of Man: Designed to Worship* (Compiled and edited by James L. Snyder. Bloomington, MN: Bethany House, 2009), 23.

<sup>24</sup> Tozer, *The Purpose*, 50.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> Tozer, *Whatever Happened*, 53.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid, 133.

with sincerity, simplicity, honesty, and from the heart is the best way to keep one's relationship with God in good standing.<sup>28</sup>

According to James White, when it comes to Christianity, people do not know much.<sup>29</sup> According to White, nineteen percent of Protestants think that salvation is acquired purely through faith rather than works or deeds.<sup>30</sup> Furthermore, he claims that just forty-five percent of the population can name the four Gospels, and only fifty-five percent comprehend that the Golden Rule is not one of the Ten Commandments.<sup>31</sup> Whaley claims that society's postmodern information era is addicted to loneliness.<sup>32</sup> Some would rather stay home and play electronic games or be on their phone than engage in person. To perfect the worship experience is knowing and being with God and enjoying Him forever.<sup>33</sup> The significance is obedience in worshipping God. Abraham's obedience to God was paramount, and because of his surrender to God, the nations were blessed.

The magnitude of the Pentateuch in the Old Testament is presenting a map back to Jesus. These books are a love relationship between God and his creation which started in the garden and ended in the creation.<sup>34</sup> The message of the Pentateuch can be summed in Deuteronomy 6

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<sup>28</sup> Tozer, *Whatever Happened to Worship*, 135.

<sup>29</sup> James Emery White, *The Church in an Age of Crisis: 25 New Realities Facing Christianity*, (Baker Books, 2012), 25.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>32</sup> Vernon Whaley, "Created for Relationship", Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2009. [https://learn.liberty.edu/webapps/blackboard/content/listContent.jsp?course\\_id=\\_564979\\_1&content\\_id=\\_36495175\\_1](https://learn.liberty.edu/webapps/blackboard/content/listContent.jsp?course_id=_564979_1&content_id=_36495175_1)

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>34</sup> Ed Hinson, "Old Testament Worship – Pentateuch". [https://learn.liberty.edu/webapps/blackboard/content/listContent.jsp?course\\_id=\\_564979\\_1&content\\_id=\\_36495175\\_1](https://learn.liberty.edu/webapps/blackboard/content/listContent.jsp?course_id=_564979_1&content_id=_36495175_1).



“Love God with all your heart, soul, and mind.” Abraham, in Genesis 22: 1-19, shows the benefits of following God.

The biblical text proclaims that God is a jealous God, “For you shall worship no other god, for the Lord, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God.”<sup>35</sup> Lavon Gray teaches that in today’s church, some experienced worship as an approach rather than a worship experience.<sup>36</sup> According to Gray, some may entertain an approach to worship than the object to worship. Ministries have suffered from a golden calf approach due to their worship not being completely focused on Christ.<sup>37</sup> When removing God from his throne, this is insulting to the Lord.<sup>38</sup> That is why the wrath of God in Exodus 32 was justified since their worship was contaminated. The Lord said to Moses, “Whoever had sinned against me, I will blot out of my book.”<sup>39</sup> The plague which the Lord sent was a direct response to their rebellion to worship the true and living God. The worship leader is a great responsibility to establish the experience of being in the presence of the Lord by being a living vessel. The Bible records, “I appeal to you, therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.”<sup>40</sup> The sacrifice of the worship leader is to present themselves as a living sacrifice in

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<sup>35</sup> Exodus 34:14.

<sup>36</sup> Lavon Gray, “Worship as the Golden Calf”, last modified 2016, [https://learn.liberty.edu/webapps/blackboard/content/listContent.jsp?course\\_id=\\_564979\\_1&content\\_id=\\_36495175\\_1](https://learn.liberty.edu/webapps/blackboard/content/listContent.jsp?course_id=_564979_1&content_id=_36495175_1).

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> Michelle Gray, *Dying to Worship: Surrendering My Golden Calf*, (N.p.: CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2015), 23.

<sup>39</sup> Exod. 34:14.

<sup>40</sup> Rom. 1:1-2.

that man may see the works. It does not matter the place, position, or title; the worship leader's responsibility will be recognized because of intention to show the love of God through servitude.

An excellent example of leadership was through the life of Dr. Jerry Falwell, Sr., former president of Liberty University. Without Dr. Falwell's strength and determination in planting himself into a vision that God whispered to his heart to lead the world in educational enrichment, there would be no professors, buildings, football team, library, or students. Dr. Falwell spoke a powerful message at the 2005 SBC Pastor's Conference. He offered a compelling argument that a good leader could build anything he can think of; if God is the center of the vision, then the foundation of the dream will be established.<sup>41</sup> He discussed his Christian education initiative in the late sixties, where God gave him the vision to build. Dr. Falwell's tireless commitment to his Kingdom assignment was a model for young and old pastors and leaders to emulate – getting up early in the morning and going to bed late was a model he utilized. His heart was in the right place to bless those whom he influenced. He says that whenever there is weak leadership, there is a weak church or “sleeping church” – a church that has silent preachers in the pulpits.<sup>42</sup> Falwell states that the difference between mediocrity or greatness in the Lord's work is vision – it is not educational credential or genius; it is vision.<sup>43</sup> The biblical text declares, “Where there is no vision, the people perish: but he that keepeth the law, happy is he.”<sup>44</sup>

Apostle Paul was a fervent defender of Christ's truth. Love for God led him to willingly devote himself and bear hardship and persecution. Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and the entire

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<sup>41</sup> Jerry Falwell, “Our Message, Mission, and Vision” [Video file], 2015. Retrieved from [https://learn.liberty.edu/webapps/blackboard/content/listContent.jsp?course\\_id=\\_531771\\_1&content\\_id=\\_32886983\\_1](https://learn.liberty.edu/webapps/blackboard/content/listContent.jsp?course_id=_531771_1&content_id=_32886983_1)

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> Proverbs 29:18.

world were on his mind as he sought to proclaim Jesus Christ's Gospel to every corner of the world. Dr. Stephen Newby presents a compelling argument concerning worship in the Epistles. He refers to 1Thessalonians 5:1, "The day of the Lord."<sup>45</sup> Here Paul is talking about worship and how to treat others. Newby contends that the Epistles are how the church should respond to family and government.<sup>46</sup> The model illustrates the perspective from which the church should follow Jesus' model and the methodology for the church's posture. The biblical text declares, "We ask you, brothers, to respect those who labor amount you and are over you in the Lord and admonish you, and to esteem them very highly in love because of their work."<sup>47</sup> In many ways, the church of Thessaloniki was a model church. Its followers loved God's Word and displayed evangelistic enthusiasm, confidence, hope, and love. These believers were not immune to resisting temptation and distraction. Paul acknowledges that church members are unreasonably critical of their spiritual leaders, so he instructs them to show great respect for the leadership of the church.

Dr. John Kinchen articulates how Romans 12 explains the worship by the early church and how that model is a map for the practice of worship in today's context. Kinchen states that the worship model in the New Testament is identical to the Old Testament. The difference is the faithful do not need to go into the building to experience the Lord's presence – the presence of the Lord is experienced wherever the faithful are.<sup>48</sup> In a New Testament perspective of worship, the believer will give their lives to Christ as a living sacrifice in the Old Testament – this is the

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<sup>45</sup> 1Thess. 5: 1-11.

<sup>46</sup> Steven Newby, "Worship in the Epistles" (Video Lecture at Liberty University, Lynchburg, VA), 2016.

<sup>47</sup> 1 Thes. 5:12-13.

<sup>48</sup> John Kinchen, "Roman 12-Model for Christian Worship" (Video Lecture at Liberty University, Lynchburg, VA, 2016).

place of sacrifices where the believer will endure persecution for declaring Christ as their savior and Lord. As a believer, Kinchen argues that being a living sacrifice means that things will not always be pleasant.<sup>49</sup> To make Christ, the center of the thinking process of the believer, the transformation of the mind must be established.

The Old Covenant is based on the law and involves animal sacrifices and temple worship. Jesus is the new model of worship – it is about the relationship and worshipping God based on the knowledge of who he is in the life of the believer. In today’s church, there are many worship styles – these styles express that it is modeling a love for God. Richard Krejcir comments that every congregation has a certain tone or feel of their worship experience – members do things a particular way.<sup>50</sup> Depending on the denomination, some models are not necessarily God-conscious but personality-driven. In other words, these experiences of worship operate only around the heart of the leader, who may not be wholly or fully acquainted with the framework of pure worship according to the biblical text – this seems more prevalent in most of the churches when there is an unbalance of spiritual formation and biblical knowledge. Ryan A. Brandt and John Frederick argue that spiritual formation is a matter of the person or community abiding in God.<sup>51</sup> To worship God is to follow his model of worship. In the early church, Whaley argues six points that today’s church should embrace from the early church; believers can participate in worship because God resided in the hearts of the believer, worship was centered through teaching, sharing, breaking bread, and praying, continued to worship in unity together in a building, facing persecution as a living sacrifice, encourage one another and people from other

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<sup>49</sup> Kinchen, “Roman 12-Model for Christian Worship.”

<sup>50</sup> Krejcir, Richard Joseph, *Into Thy Word*. (United States: iUniverse, 2000), 195.

<sup>51</sup> Ryan A. Brandt, and John Frederick, *Spiritual Formation for the Global Church: A Multi-Denominational, Multi-Ethnic Approach*, Westmont: InterVarsity Press, 2021, ProQuest Ebook Central.

nations to worship God was a way of discipleship. Whaley believes that Christians should use the Bible as their guide to reflect Christ better so that the lost can see the testimony of God's love through the living sacrifice of the believer.<sup>52</sup>

### **Problem Statement**

To lead a group of people is to understand the totality of leading an organization toward a goal or mission. There are student groups on every college campus that students manage. These student groups are often not sponsored by the institution. However, they are led by student leaders and university advisors – they serve as the executive board and have taken on the task of leading the students in a Christ-centered atmosphere. A gospel choir is an influential group of creative students who have recognized that gospel music is essential to their walk with the Lord. The choir is an opportunity to build relationships and infuse a healthy perspective with the campus community.

However, student organizations are challenged with selecting the right person for a leadership position. Students traditionally vote after each academic year to elect the organization's next president and leadership team. The majority of students that vote are unaware of the accountability and responsibility that each leader must possess to lead the choir properly. According to Linda Walker and Sharon Young, undergraduate students or student organizations outside the music unit operate most campus gospel choirs.<sup>53</sup> It is unlikely that prospective music teachers can learn what they need to know in these student-led structures because students lack

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<sup>52</sup> Vernon Whaley, "Lessons from the early church" (Video Lecture at Liberty University, Lynchburg, VA, 2016).

<sup>53</sup> Linda Walker and Sharon Young, "Perceptions about Gospel Choir in the College and University Music Curriculum: A Preliminary Investigation". *Contributions to Music Education* 30, no. 1 (2003): 87.

the formal training, knowledge, and experiences to teach the genre.<sup>54</sup> It is imperative that the leader understands gospel music and that it is through the experience of singing in the choir rather than by listening only.<sup>55</sup> According to Walker, when students participate in the gospel choir, they experience another culture firsthand.<sup>56</sup> Prospective leaders need to know style characteristics, the creative concepts involved, relationships between musical characteristics and their role and function in the black culture, the historical background and significance of the music, and how to analyze black music.<sup>57</sup> A preliminary investigation of gospel music in higher education institutions must examine the attitudes of faculty toward the inclusion of the genre. Linda Walker states that too many music programs and teachers are unfamiliar with African American music and other ethnic music.<sup>58</sup>

Worship leaders encourage students' hearts and minds to engage spiritually and emotionally in the choir by singing God's praise through gospel music. The intention of the leadership is to develop disciples for Christ, which is accomplished through heartfelt worship. According to Tozer, worship is a heartfelt desire expressed modestly. It is a place of adoration and reverence, where the wonder and overwhelming love of the Lord are recognized.<sup>59</sup> Ursula Geisler and Karin Johansson believe that choirs embody a collective voice with the capacity of expressing a great variety of symbolic meanings and that throughout history, these have

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<sup>54</sup> Walker and Young, "Perception," 84.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid., 85.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

<sup>58</sup> Linda B. Walker, "Developing a Gospel Choir", *Music Educators Journal* 89, no. 3 (01, 2003): 23.

<sup>59</sup> A.W.Tozer, *Whatever Happened to Worship?: A Call to True Worship*. (Camp Hill, PA: First WingSpread Publishers, 2006), 8.

developed in societal processes that have shaped as well as transformed the public sphere.<sup>60</sup> Leadership must embody the duties and responsibilities necessary to successfully express the love of Christ through the use of singing gospel music on campus.

The lack of knowledge of the worship leader's role has an impact on the campus and community because it prevents worship expression from expanding beyond the understanding of the worship leader, who has not been educated to manage the complexity of directing a gospel choir. The role of the worship leader not only affects the students in the choir but on campus and in the community. In an article, M. Dilling said a gospel choir could teach the university to relate better to the local community, be lively in its delivery of instruction, replace competition with cooperation, and teach students how to integrate their knowledge.<sup>61</sup> When local community residents join in singing with the choir, there is a connection between the choir or university and the local community.<sup>62</sup> Not only is audience participation important in performance, but choir members must also be active participants.<sup>63</sup> Even with its worldwide influence and acceptance, gospel music has yet to gain prominence in the academic area.<sup>64</sup> Unlike rehearsals and concerts of traditional choirs, the gospel rehearsal and concert invite hand-clapping, standing, moving, and verbal feedback. The enthusiasm and excitement of this music, which is critical to its sound, are enhanced by active audience participation.<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> Ursula Geisler, and Johansson, Karin, eds. *Choral Singing: Histories and Practices* (Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publisher, 2014), 32.

<sup>61</sup> Walker and Young, "Perceptions," 85.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid.

<sup>65</sup> Tozer, *Whatever Happened to Worship*, 20.

Linda Walker and Sharon Young described their finding about the collegiate gospel choir; they believed that a campus gospel choir should exist in order to explore the genre known as "gospel music." In addition to academic value, the gospel choir provides a cultural outlet for students whom the music department does not represent. Overall, gospel choir provides musical, artistic, and academic values in college or university music courses.<sup>66</sup> Although gospel music has gained wide acceptance in mainstream society, it has yet to achieve the same status in higher education.<sup>67</sup>

Myron Pope and Cynthia wrote in an article that expressed the benefits for Afro-American students who matriculate at a predominantly white institution of higher education. Though this research does not focus on the racial dynamics of being a member of a gospel choir, it does highlight the premise of being a member of a gospel choir at a higher education institution and the advantages of participation. In their survey, most participants stated that they became engaged in the gospel choir for social reasons. In short, they found that the gospel choir was perceived to provide a cultural outlet for students who are not served by the music unit. In this survey, students gave their gospel choir experience:

A friend of mine was in the choir, and she encouraged me to get involved, so I decided to join because I thought it would be fun. It was an opportunity for me to hang out with her while meeting new people as I became adjusted to campus."<sup>68</sup> Another choir member states, "My social skills did improve during the time I participated in the choir. With the choir, you are able to go into the first rehearsal and have people hugging you and welcoming you to the choir, so you have immediate opportunities to improve your social skills. After you spend at least a semester with the choir and other new people join, you will be the one who is going over to the new people and hugging and welcoming them to the choir."<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>66</sup> Walker and Young, "Perceptions," 89.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid.

<sup>69</sup> Pope and Moore, "The Afro-American Gospel Choir," 85.



To each student, the gospel choir is more than simply a place for students to hang out and have a good time; it is also a chance for them to share and convey their collegiate life experiences in the choir. Their confession shows the benefits of joining a choir with other students.

It is essential for leadership to recognize the importance of building community on and off-campus. There will always be a lack of community in the choir, on campus, and throughout the community if the leaders do not recognize the importance of their leadership and influence on each student. When the choir performs on campus, they are disciples of Christ, ministering to every student, faculty, and staff member. Events off-campus are ways the gospel choir represents the institution and encourages potential recruits and the disciple of Jesus Christ through the avenue of gospel music. Many of the regular activities for gospel choirs are provided by local churches. When students gather at a local church to perform songs they have been practicing, they are establishing community. Their participation inspires the young and elderly in that church and the neighboring communities, who love experiencing young adults singing gospel music. This is critical since many churches are becoming older and not recycling their young adults, and thus their worship experience is based on an older model or form of worship. When a collegiate gospel choir performs in a local church, the congregation becomes electrified with praise and thanksgiving.

### **Purpose Statement**

The purpose of this research examines the collegiate gospel choir worship leader's effect on campus and in the community through partnership, discipleship, and mentorship. By understanding the impact of Christ-centered leadership, institutions will better understand the qualifications needed to ensure that the campus and community are experiencing a qualified person(s) to lead. The results reveal the depth and complexity of having qualified leaders in the

position of the gospel choir. Their impact in mentoring, discipleship, and community establishes principles based on biblical text to maintain a Christ-centered atmosphere.

### **Significance of the Study**

Spiritually competent leadership engages the congregation to praise God through music, lyrics, and demonstration of praise. Leadership is a fundamental opportunity to present a posture of guiding worship to others which motivates and inspires individuals to follow Christ according to the demeanor and stance of worship. When there is unity within the organization, it creates an environment conducive to harmony infused with love and devotion. The worship leader is crucial to the core of a music ministry because of its several leadership components. The foundational outlook of a leader in a spiritual context, according to Oswald Sanders, should be a worship leader who is a spirit-filled person.<sup>70</sup> It should be an individual who understands the complexity of leading people into the presence of the Lord.

The leader(s) of a college or university gospel choir bears a huge duty to demonstrate Christ's love in everything that they do for the students entrusted to them by the school; providing guidance, support, encouragement, inspiration, and mentorship so each person can be an effective disciple for Christ on campus and in their communities. When a student joins a gospel choir at their school, they interact with a community of students who have similar musical interests. These students want to fit in, to be a part of a system that welcomes them for who they are, regardless of their appearance. When worship leaders lack leadership skills to encourage the student to grow and develop, there will be a lack of effectiveness on campus and in their community. Annika Lantz, Daniela Ulber, and Peter Friedrich argue that a lack of leadership

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<sup>70</sup> J. Oswald Sanders, *Spiritual Leadership: Principles of Excellence for Every Believer* (Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 2017), 91.

means that a team or organization is not as supported in its efforts as it should be.<sup>71</sup> When there is no defined leadership or lack of within a group of students, unity and direction will be limited or absent. Robbie Castleman says weak leadership and poor oversight of Israel's spiritual life had led to a relative fluidity in worship practice during the transition of Israel's leadership from judges to kings.<sup>72</sup> Castleman continues that the lack of national unity and authoritative leadership during the period of the judges weakened both Israel's military and spiritual life.<sup>73</sup> Though these examples highlighted insufficiency in Israel's military governance, they also raise the continuous challenges of collegiate leadership and its effectiveness. According to J. Oswald Sanders, a leader must resolve differences in a way that respects mutual rights and intellect while still achieving a peaceful outcome.<sup>74</sup> The worship experience is not about the person; it is about the obedience of each to lead the people to the heart of Christ. For this reason, it is imperative to understand how the worship experience may be facilitated through the worship leader on a collegiate campus and in the community.

### **Research Questions**

Research Question One: In what ways can spiritually mentored collegiate gospel choir members contribute to the sense of community according to residential students?

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<sup>71</sup> Lantz Friedrich, Annika, Daniela Ulber, and Peter Friedrich, *The Problems with Teamwork, and how to Solve them* (Milton: Routledge, 2019), 195.

<sup>72</sup> Robbie Castleman, *Story-Shaped Worship: Following Patterns from the Bible and History* (IVP Academic, 2013), 95.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid.

<sup>74</sup> J. Oswald Sanders, *Spiritual Leadership: Principles of Excellence for Every Believer* (Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 2017), 85.

Research Question Two: What strategies can be implemented by the leadership of the collegiate gospel choir to enhance the relationship between Charleston Southern University and the Charleston community?

Research Question Three: In what ways can the leadership of the collegiate gospel choir facilitate a deeper understanding of worship for both participants and audiences?

The impact of a gospel choir on campus has great dividends for the campus, students, and the community where they perform. Since the early 1970s, the popularity of gospel choirs in high school and on college and university campuses has increased tremendously.<sup>75</sup> Students get to travel and perform at different events to showcase their talent and their love for Christ. These performances could be for a grade or as part of a group of friends who enjoy singing gospel music. This is great when there is a healthy interaction between the worship leader and students. However, this is not always the case since some accepted the title without proving themselves worthy of the responsibility. There have been leaders who have taken up the mantle of leadership and started leading, issuing instructions, and even teaching but lacked the qualifications to maintain a comprehensive approach to being a worship leader. Having a person in a leadership role without being vetted can harm the sanctity and harmony of any organization, especially when it has not established qualifying measures to evaluate a suitable person for the position. Robert Morgan argues that as people go through life, they sometimes become infected and inflamed by certain unhealthy attitudes, toxic habits, and infectious sins.<sup>76</sup> Hence individuals are exposed to much spiritual contamination and easily succumb to depression, anger, anxiety,

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<sup>75</sup> Brenda Ann Ellis; Keith Hampton, "Interest Sessions: The Gospel Choir: Repertoire and Rehearsal Strategies for High School and College/University Gospel Choirs"; the Paul Laurence Dunbar Chorale." *Choral Journal* 41, no. 6 (01, 2001): 79.

<sup>76</sup> Robert Morgan, *Mastering Life Before It's Too Late: 10 Biblical Strategies for a Life of Purpose* (New York: Howard Books, 2015), 162.

discouragement, and bitterness.<sup>77</sup> All of which a worship leader has experienced in life, knowing what triggers the dark side of leadership is essential. It is vital to address and acknowledge what leadership strengths and weaknesses are for nurture and direction.

Robert Morgan contends that worship is our expression of admiration toward the God who has revealed himself.<sup>78</sup> As worship is Christ-centered, the people will experience the overflow of the worship leader's private worship with God. The biblical text declares, "God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth."<sup>79</sup> As the worship experience is centered on Christ, the flesh will not be on parade but be hidden in the humility of fear of worship in a strange fire perspective which is found in Leviticus, "Now Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, each took his censer and put fire in it and laid incense on it and offered unauthorized fire before the Lord, which he had not commanded them."<sup>80</sup> When the focus is away from Christ, there is a possibility that the worship experience can be polluted. Matt Boswell contends that worship should express more of what God has done for the believer and less of what will be done for Him.<sup>81</sup> The worship should lead the people to the feet of Christ. Tozer argues that the Holy Spirit only descends on a heart engaged in worship – He is not necessarily interested in jumping and starting some slapdash religious project.<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> Morgan, *Mastering Life Before It's Too Late*, 162.

<sup>78</sup> Robert Morgan, "Worship & Preaching – Part 1," (Video Lecture at Liberty University, Lynchburg, VA, 2016).

<sup>79</sup> John 2:24.

<sup>80</sup> Lev. 10:1.

<sup>81</sup> Matt Boswell, ed. *Doxology & Theology: How the Gospel Forms the Worship Leader* (Nashville: B&H Publishing Group, 2013), 8.

<sup>82</sup> A. W. Tozer, *The Purpose of Man: Designed to Worship*, Compiled and edited by James L. Snyder (Bloomington, MN: Bethany House, 2009), 96.

Being a worship leader is more than just a title of leading songs, directing, or playing an instrument – it is about teaching and mentoring, disciplining, and maturing in the knowledge of Christ. The significance of being a leader as a mentor is a game-changer for the mentor/mentee relationship. In this research, interviews with residential gospel choir students from the College of Charleston, Citadel, MUSC, and Charleston Southern University were conducted. Questions in the research are geared to understand better the significance of leadership within their gospel choirs and how their influence impacts the worship experience within the choir, campus, and the community.

### **Core Concepts**

This research examines the role of the leader in providing a Christ-centered experience for a collegiate gospel choir that benefits students at their university or college as well as the communities in which they live. Walker contends, “At the college or university level, non-music majors are typically the largest group served through the gospel choir.<sup>83</sup> Students build relational perspectives that encourage other students to join in the laughter, jokes, on-campus events, and even studies groups. A gospel choir leader has a great responsibility to establish a Christ-centered atmosphere for students to experience the love of Christ coming from the worship leader who desires to show Christ’s love through their servitude. The worship leader has to remember that they are not perfect but are being perfected through the blood of Jesus Christ. Matt Bowell argues that God cares deeply about how His people worship Him, and so it stands to reason that He also cares about who leads His people in worship.<sup>84</sup> To have the heart of the

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<sup>83</sup> Walker & Young, “Perception”, 88.

<sup>84</sup> Matt Boswell, *Doxology and Theology: How the Gospel Forms the Worship Leader* (B&H Publishing Group, 2013), 25.

people is to have the heart of God: “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.<sup>85</sup> If God can sacrifice his only son, it is the worship leader’s responsibility to be prepared to serve with humility and grace. Students are looking for someone to believe in, and the leader is usually the person they look to for reassurance and instruction. The worship leader must understand the authority of the position and set the tone and atmosphere for those who follow.

Institutions worldwide try to present leadership from an academic perspective modeled on campus and in the community where the students live, work, or play. At the collegiate level, students adopt the behavior of those they frequent. Students also glean from those who speak wisdom. When a student recognizes the significance of the knowledge they are receiving from the leader, it opens the door to more discussion and interaction, which would not have occurred if the student did not appreciate the perspective of the gospel choir’s leader.

Embracing worship as a standard of living is like fuel to the soul – it reminds the believer that their righteous living is only a filthy rag. The biblical text affirms, “We have all become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a polluted garment. We all fade like a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away.”<sup>86</sup> Kempis says that it is great wisdom and perfection to esteem ourselves as nothing and to think consistently, well, and highly of others.<sup>87</sup> When believers realize God’s authority in their lives, they approach his thrones like a sheep to a shepherd or a child to a parent. God in His uncreated nature is self-sufficient and possesses no

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<sup>85</sup> John 3:16.

<sup>86</sup> Isa. 64:6.

<sup>87</sup> Thomas Kempis, *The Imitation of Christ*, edited by Rosset, Rosalie De (Moody Publishers, 2007), 29.

lack whatsoever. Nevertheless, he looks to man created in His image for worship – this represents a spiritual oxymoron – the creator needs the creature.<sup>88</sup>

When leading students, there is a mentor/mentee relationship that is being developed and nurtured. Any advice which is shared will be valuable because of the relationship between the mentor and mentee. Leading or mentoring is more than just giving direction – it is a way to show the love of Christ through servitude and obedience. When a mentee can trust the fruits of the leader, they will follow the direction that is encouraged by the mentor or leader. In the same fashion, the mentee must respect the guidance of the leader, who will share his or her years of wisdom. The biblical text declares, “Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. Honor your father and mother (this is the first commandment with a promise), that it may go well with you and that you may live long in the land. Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.”<sup>89</sup> The principle of the text reinforces the mentor-mentee or parent-child relationship. It lets both mentor and mentee know they have a responsibility to the other, as the connection will encourage a healthy dialog to promote a Christ-centered environment.

When a young disciple who has little ministry experience says that they are ready for more ministry responsibilities, ask them to explain their statement to be more clear of what they are asking. By requesting clarification, the leader demonstrates that he or she is interested in the opinions of the mentee. Once they have exhausted all of their ideas and perspectives, present them with a few ministry objectives that will fulfill their desire for more. Explain the biblical text which says, “...to whom much was given, of him, much will be required, and from him to whom

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<sup>88</sup> Tozer, “*The Purpose of Man*,” 49.

<sup>89</sup> Eph. 1-4.



they entrusted much, they will demand the more.”<sup>90</sup> They must understand the gravity of ministry, the magnitude of the burden of the calling on their lives, and the importance of a lifelong devotion to Christ. Vernon Whaley believes that preparation is crucial in spiritual growth.<sup>91</sup> Education allows for wisdom to be more fluent when making important decisions. There is no need to want more and not seek to learn more about Christ. Proverbs echoes, “The beginning of wisdom is this: Get wisdom, and whatever you get, get insight.”<sup>92</sup>

Whaley contends that the longer the line of preparation, the greater the opportunity.<sup>93</sup> He goes on to say that each opportunity prepares a person for the next level of servitude.<sup>94</sup> Since each ministry level is unique, the mentee should be informed of the responsibilities that come with each level of devotion to Christ. The Bible declares, “Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.”<sup>95</sup> Preparing the mind for the next level of ministry requires obedience to the heart of God. The more the young disciple desires, the more they should be encouraged to worship – it is taking time to move away from all distractions and meditate on the goodness of Christ. The Bible says, “Therefore, preparing your minds for action, and being sober-minded, set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.”<sup>96</sup> Gabriel Miller contends that everything a believer does should be

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<sup>90</sup> Luke 12:48.

<sup>91</sup> Vernon Whaley, “The Preparation for Spiritual Growth”, (Video Lecture at Liberty University, Lynchburg, VA, 2017).

<sup>92</sup> Prov. 4:7.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid.

<sup>94</sup> Ibid.

<sup>95</sup> Rom. 12:2.

<sup>96</sup> 1Pt. 1:13.

from the position of rest in Christ.<sup>97</sup> As the believer meditates on scriptures, they are resting in obedience to the Lord. It is in this rest where God reveals himself to a yielded vessel.

### **Hypotheses**

Hypotheses One: Spiritually mentored collegiate gospel choir members contribute to the sense of campus community according to residential students by providing peer leadership, discipleship opportunities, and community partnership.

Hypotheses Two: Strategies that can be implemented by the leadership of the collegiate gospel choir to enhance the relationship between Charleston Southern University and the Charleston community include training, events sponsorship, and community event participation.

Hypotheses Three: Leadership of the collegiate gospel choir can facilitate a deeper understanding of worship for both participants and audiences by modeling a worship lifestyle, demonstrating spiritual discipleship, song lyric preparation, and facilitating Bible study opportunities.

The biblical support for hypothesis one comes from the book of Matthew 20:26, where Jesus had a conversation with the disciples. He encourages the group by expressing to them that whoever wants to be great must become a servant.<sup>98</sup> Jesus warned his followers not to imitate the rulers of the Gentiles who governed them. Instead, he encouraged the disciples/listeners to be leaders and not take on the existing status quo, especially if it involves force and abusive behavior. As the leader serves the students, they are mentoring and experiencing the wisdom of

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<sup>97</sup> Gabriel Miller, "Obedience – Continuing the Walk", (Video Lecture at Liberty University, Lynchburg, VA, 2017).

<sup>98</sup> Matt 20:26.

the leader. Solomon instructs that: “Iron sharpens iron, and one man sharpens another.”<sup>99</sup> Genuine leaders recognize another leader and desire to see that leader progress even more significant than themselves. Mentoring becomes more than a mentor/mentee relationship but an iron being available to sharpen the other for use. The leader sees the strength in the student and intentionally shares their wisdom by being a living example through their servitude perspective. Leaders should always encourage their followers with humility and strength, continually demonstrating Christ's love. The Bible declares, “Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit but in humility count, others more significant than yourselves.”<sup>100</sup> This passage emphasizes the significance of leaders being humble rather than arrogant, encouraging others rather than disregarding their lack of skill, and understanding each person's potential to be the greatest version of themselves.

Biblical support for hypothesis two is found in Philippians 2:3. Paul wrote, “And God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus.”<sup>101</sup> This verse was written to those who were partnering with Paul in the gospel and regularly giving to his work, “On the first day of every week, each of you is to put something aside and store it up, as he may prosper so that there will be no collecting when I come.”<sup>102</sup> A partnership is essential to ensure that the community lacks nothing. Paul is referencing a systematic methodology of deliberate givers. God prospers his people is so that they can establish His kingdom on earth, and if a person seeks to build that kingdom, God will provide a supernatural divine flow that will

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<sup>99</sup> Prov. 27:17.

<sup>100</sup> Phil. 2:3.

<sup>101</sup> Phil 4:19.

<sup>102</sup> 1 Cor. 16:2.

meet all the needs. When a person prays and asks God for direction, He will take care of the needs. “Therefore, I tell you, whatever you ask in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours.”<sup>103</sup>

In hypothesis three, the biblical reference supports the argument, “I appeal to you, therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.”<sup>104</sup> Having a relationship with Christ is walking in the obedience of his love. Holy Communion is not only about the act of having a deacon and pastor quoting the church’s covenant or deaconate ministry dressed in black and white on a particular worship service. It is about the relationship that a believer has with Christ and the commitment of knowing that the sacrifice Christ made for the world should be the heartfelt passion for echoing in the chambers of the world that they may see the love of Christ in the life of the worship leader. The Word of God is the sixty-six books of the Bible that open the door of the past to be revealed in the window of now, which shows the believer how to live virtuously. The idea of this book is to encourage a righteous methodology on the campus. The biblical text declares, “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”<sup>105</sup> It is the responsibility of believers to win laborers for Christ through obedience. The believer’s culture is built on the obedience of walking in the truth of the Bible; it is in this obedience that the believer recognizes their place in the world. The biblical text says, “Finally, brothers, whatever is true,

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<sup>103</sup> Mk. 11:24.

<sup>104</sup> Rom. 12:1.

<sup>105</sup> Matt. 28: 19-20.

whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable if there is any excellence if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.”<sup>106</sup> The word of God is rich with life-changing words of wisdom to redirect to the heart of God. Having the Word of God in the heart makes sin irrelevant in the life of the person who is filled with his love. Knowledge in the Bible is essential to anyone who desires to walk according to His statutes. Tozer argues, “Our purpose is to educate ourselves, develop ourselves, and perfect our intellectual nature.”<sup>107</sup>

### **Methodology**

This research employs a qualitative approach to address the study’s objective and answers research questions. The qualitative theory uses a broad explanation for behavior and attitudes. It has been completed with variables, constructs, and hypotheses – it provides an overall orienting lens for the study of questions.<sup>108</sup> According to Creswell and Creswell, the development of themes and categories into patterns, theories, or generalizations suggests varied endpoints for qualitative studies.<sup>109</sup> Qualitative research is a technique that focuses on gathering information through open-ended and conversational interaction and is centered on social sciences. As a result, qualitative research methodologies allow for in-depth probing and questioning of respondents based on their replies. The interviewer/researcher also attempts to understand their purpose and thoughts. Understanding how the target group responds has aided

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<sup>106</sup> Phil. 4:8.

<sup>107</sup> A.W. Tozer, *Whatever Happened to Worship?: A Call to True Worship*, (Camp Hill, PA: First WingSpread Publishers, 2006), 39.

<sup>108</sup> John W. Creswell and J. David Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*, (SAGE Publications, Inc, 2018), 61.

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.*, 63.

in concluding data analysis. Phenomenological research is the method of choice because it is designed of inquiry from philosophy and psychology, which describes the lived experiences of individuals about a phenomenon as described by participants.<sup>110</sup>

Creswell and Creswell hold that qualitative research is a method or process for exploring and gaining a deeper insight into social experiences within a natural context.<sup>111</sup> This research method involves developing questions, procedures, data analysis, interpretation, and significance of the information received. Creswell and Creswell add that data, evidence, and rational considerations shape knowledge.<sup>112</sup> The intention is to provide a perspective that develops significant, accurate assertions to explain the actual scenario or define causative relationships of interest. The research delves deeper into how collegiate gospel choir members are influenced by leadership and how their Christ-centered encouragement leads to the formation of disciples for Christ on campus and in their communities.

### **The Research**

The available literature on mentoring is devoted to the worship leader in conjunction with discipleship, partnership, and mentorship. The researcher created a survey instrument that includes seventeen questions for collegiate gospel choir students and fifteen questions for the community church members of Mount Moriah Baptist Church. The data collected from the sample students and community participants allowed for a better understanding of the impact of appointing a qualified worship leader as a mentor – encouraging college students in the gospel choir to be a good example of Christ on campus and in their community. The study reveals how

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<sup>110</sup> Creswell and Creswell, *Research Design*, 13.

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.*, 4.

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.*, 7.

important the leader is for the totality and tone of an organization promoting Christian values. Scriptures declare, “The Lord has sought out a man after his own heart and appointed him leader of his people.”<sup>113</sup> In Ezekiel, the Bible records, “I looked for a man among them who would build up the wall.”<sup>114</sup> Sanders echoes scripture that references being a leader has always required strength and faith beyond the average person.<sup>115</sup> This qualitative method, as suggested in the writings of Creswell and Creswell ends with comments about the narrative that emerged from the data analysis.<sup>116</sup> The qualitative report reflects the literature and the outcomes of all the material collected from the study findings. One of the best ways to understand a behavior is understanding the motivation behind the actions or response.

### **Definition of Terms**

Each term below provide clarity in order to explain the worship leader thoroughly. Since titles vary, they are taken into account in this study. Although leadership roles in churches and organizations are assigned differently, their tasks remain the same.

#### *Leader*

A leader is a secular term given to a person who has the responsibility to command a group of people or give instructions. The person who operates in this office understands the tremendous opportunity and responsibility to the guild and build a group of people to accomplish an established goal. When it comes to leadership, a person should have integrity, the capacity to

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<sup>113</sup> 1Sam 13:14.

<sup>114</sup> Ez. 22:30.

<sup>115</sup> J. Oswald Sanders, *Spiritual Leadership: Principles of Excellence for Every Believer* (Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 2017), 18.

<sup>116</sup> Creswell and Creswell, *Research Design*, 203.

delegate, communicate effectively, have a heart for the people they lead, and have a level of influence. John Maxwell says, “Real influence must be developed upon the foundation, and that position gives you a chance, but it usually carries with it very little real power, except in systems where the penalties for not following are dire.”<sup>117</sup> When someone is offered a leadership role, it may be because they have demonstrated potential in the eyes of someone with authority.

### *Worship Leader/Worship Pastor*

Traditionally, the Worship Leader (WL) or Worship Pastor (WP) operates the same and is known as a committed leader of worship who glorifies the splendor of God in Jesus Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit, skillfully integrating the Word of God with the music, inspiring the church assembled to declare the gospel, treasure the presence of God, and live to the glory of God. According to J. Oswald Sanders, when Jesus selected leaders, He ignored every popular idea of His day about what kind of person could fit the role.<sup>118</sup>

The title of the worship leader is more significant than conventional thinking of a title but the foundational perspective of a Christ-centered person(s) who leads with the heart of worship. Sanders claims not only is the title of worship leader an easily understood and widely identifiable title for the person who leads the church in corporate worship, but it is also perhaps the most helpful and descriptive because it refuses to limit the worship of God within the church to singing only.<sup>119</sup>

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<sup>117</sup> John Maxwell, *How Successful People Lead: Taking Your Influence to the Next Level* (Nashville: Center Street), 2013. 21.

<sup>118</sup> Oswald J Sanders, *Spiritual Leadership: Principles of Excellence for Every Believer* (Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 2017), 37.

<sup>119</sup> Stephen Miller, *Worship Leaders: We Are Not Rock Stars* (Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 2013), 24.



The worship leader, according to Sanders, has great privilege and responsibility of teaching, shepherding, and caring for His people. This person has set the qualifications bar high for anyone who would serve His church in this way.<sup>120</sup> The WL operates as a theologian – they are teachers of doctrine in the worship service.<sup>121</sup> The WL also functions as an evangelist. Miller contends that the WL is to go outside of the walls of the church and make loud the good news of who Christ is and what He has done.<sup>122</sup> Outside the walls is beyond just a church setting but anywhere where there are people to encourage. The biblical text declares, “Go into all the world and proclaim the gospel to the whole creation.”<sup>123</sup> “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”<sup>124</sup> The worship leader is more than a person who serves within the four walls of a local church; he or she is a person who has submitted to the voice of God through their service to people under their guidance.

### *Leadership*

Leadership is composed of a group of people who work together to lead the organization. This group of people is accountable for the tone, mood, and performance of the group. Sanders says the team of leaders takes lessons from the past but never sacrifices the future for the sake of

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<sup>120</sup> Ibid., 26.

<sup>121</sup> Ibid., 27.

<sup>122</sup> Ibid.

<sup>123</sup> Mark 16:15.

<sup>124</sup> Matt. 28:19-20.

mere continuity.<sup>125</sup> Integrity is vital and critical at this level of leadership to ensure that Christ is regarded as the cornerstone of the organization throughout all movement and growth. In essence, Spiritual leadership requires Spirit-filled people.<sup>126</sup> When those in leadership positions are not devoted to Christ, new difficulties will arise that will necessitate a spiritual response. Benjamin Forrest and Chet Roden argue that from the beginning, God vested humanity with the authority to rule over creation.<sup>127</sup> God charged humanity with the task of “ruling over” and “subduing” the created order.<sup>128</sup> The leadership does not have to be perfect but recognize that Christ is the foundation of their lives and decisions. Throughout the Bible, some leaders have made mistakes but still were influential in their calling. According to Forrest and Roden, David continued to sin, but in each case, accepted the Lord’s discipline, learned, and grew in his faith – his life is not one of perfection followed by a sudden and swift fall. <sup>129</sup> It is important to note that David struggled with sin both before and during his reign. It was because of the Lord’s sovereignty that David was not consumed. David’s prayer of gratitude says, “Because of your promise, and according to your own heart, you have brought about all this greatness, to make your servant know it.” <sup>130</sup> He recognized that if it had not been for the Lord in his life, things would have turned out different.

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<sup>125</sup> Sanders, *Spiritual Leadership*, 67.

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.*, 91.

<sup>127</sup> Benjamin Forrest, and Chet Roden, *Biblical leadership: Theology for the everyday leader* (Grand Rapids: Kregel Academic. 2017), 32.

<sup>128</sup> Gen. 1:26-28.

<sup>129</sup> *Ibid.*, 133.

<sup>130</sup> 2 Sam. 7:21.

### *The Worship Experience*

The worship experience is the atmosphere in which a person, congregation, or group experiences when being led by a Christ-centered leader. Robbie Castleman asserts that the worship experience must be centered on the nature and the pleasure of the One who is worshiped.<sup>131</sup> When God, who is both the object of and the mediator of worship, is not recognized or thought of, the outcome is generally an experience that reflects the effort, gifts, or intentions that delight the people while programming God out of the picture. The liturgy encompassed biblical patterns and focused on God as the only audience that can please God no matter the style of the worship. The worship experience, according to Castleman, is evaluated not by the satisfaction of personal preference but by its acceptance by God as pleasing and honoring to him.<sup>132</sup>

Worship is a place of releasing and giving God everything and going beyond the personal, humanistic pattern of adoration. Bruce Leafblad believes that the spirituality of worship is in mind, heart, and will.<sup>133</sup> Worship requires the Revelation of who God is – it is to remember all of which God has done and express it back to God, who is all-knowing, all-loving, having all authority, and not limited to time.<sup>134</sup> Dr. Sten-Erik Armitage argues that loving God in worship should be a Trinitarian love.<sup>135</sup> Armitage contends that Trinitarian love is other-centered – the

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<sup>131</sup> Robbie Castleman, *Story-Shaped Worship: Following Patterns from the Bible and History* (IVP Academic, 2013), 28.

<sup>132</sup> Ibid.

<sup>133</sup> Bruce Leafblad, “The Standard of Acceptable Worship,” (Video Lecture at Liberty University, Lynchburg, VA, Lynchburg, VA, 2016).

<sup>134</sup> Leafblad, “The Standard of Acceptable Worship.”

<sup>135</sup> Sten-Erik Armitage, “The Theology of Revival,” (Video Lecture at Liberty University, Lynchburg, VA, 2016).

love that exists inside of the Trinity – this is the community of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Each operates independently of the other, yet they are all part of one. The idea of the Trinity sets the stage for authenticity in our worship and relationships. To love God is to live in a state of obedience to whom he is or have revealed himself. Daniel Block maintains that all worship is drama – entering the presence of God and celebrating, reliving, and actualizing his grace in life <sup>136</sup> – it is that the people of God should be drawn into the cosmic drama of redemption, invited to celebrate his grace and send them out in this grace as redemptive agents. When the believer leaves a worship experience, there should be a level of excitement and enthusiasm to continue the praises of the Lord into their communities. Dr. Melvin Worthington contends that as the believer worships God, they are expressing their love and commitment to the Trinity.<sup>137</sup> As the believer enters into the presence of the Lord, they are expressing that He is the only and true God.

### Chapter Summary

Tozer asserts that the prophets and apostles witness throughout the Bible that God created man for a reason, and that purpose, is to sing His praises before the hushed audience of all creation.<sup>138</sup> Churches today are producing a worship expression every Sunday. It is beautiful to hear the voices of those who love God and are submitted to his voice – it is these voices that shape the worship experience.

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<sup>136</sup> Daniel Block, *For the Glory of God: Recovering a Biblical Theology of Worship* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2014).

<sup>137</sup> Melvin Worthington, “Worship and Holiness,” (Video Lecture at Liberty University, Lynchburg, VA, 2016).

<sup>138</sup> A.W. Tozer, *Whatever Happened to Worship?: A Call to True Worship* (Camp Hill, PA: First WingSpread Publishers, 2006), 34.

Having a balanced worship leader who understands the complexities of leading students is essential to having a healthy gospel choir. It is more than teaching songs and presenting historical perspectives of gospel music – it is about a balanced presentation that encourages a Christ-centered lifestyle to the student, campus, and the community. The worship leader should be concerned about the well-being of each student and how their impact may be the foundation of their thinking on how a leader should lead. The biblical text declares, “Whoever walks with the wise becomes wise, but the companion of fools will suffer harm.”<sup>139</sup> The insight gained from a leader sets the tone and ensures that everyone has the skills needed to overcome difficulties and barriers that hinder growth. Understanding the culture is a step in the right direction when understanding students. One characteristic of an unbalanced leadership will, in some situations, negatively influence the future of the students because of a leader not understanding the culture or refusing to change in order to be more fruitful. When the worship leader walks in obedience, they are submitting to hearing the voice of God. Whaley argues that Joshua had learned much about worship, both from his mentor, Moses, and from God Himself.<sup>140</sup> Joshua's experience and obedience under Moses molded him into a great leader. According to the Bible, God chose Joshua to lead Israel after Moses died because Joshua demonstrated faithfulness in God.

As with Joshua, students who enroll in a gospel choir class or join a gospel choir club need leadership who presents biblical wisdom as their foundation of teaching and leading the choir. Campus Life is a welcoming place where students can hang out with their friends, discuss current issues, and speak their concerns without being criticized. It is a place where students are encouraged to make sound decisions and to take on influential leadership positions within their

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<sup>139</sup> Prov. 13:20.

<sup>140</sup> Vernon Whaley, *Called to Worship: From the Dawn of Creation to the Final Amen* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson publisher, 2013), 85.

institution. Having a worship leader as a mentor will give each student a living example of making wise decisions based on wisdom and not emotions.

As students observe the proper reaction to life's problems and decisions, they will receive confidence and strength from the worship leader to persevere in the face of adversities. A pattern of strength is seen through the life of Fanny Crosby, though being blind since the age of six did not allow her limitation to stop her from writing thousands of hymns.<sup>141</sup> She was responsible for writing "Blessed Assurance." Her contribution was a foundation for many not to allow limitation to stop their praise and thanksgiving to God. Like the other eras, there was a pattern to assuring the life of a song. A consistent sound of praise and worship should reign in the worship leader's heart even when challenges in life present discouragement. This research demonstrates the imperative responsibility of worship leaders to disciple, mentor, and encourage a Christ-centered perspective on campus and the community while sharing the love of Christ through the collegiate gospel choir.

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<sup>141</sup> Robert Morgan, "The Gospel Era," (Video Lecture at Liberty University, Lynchburg, VA, 2016).

## CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Students who attend a college or university find themselves in an environment of other students from different belief systems and ideals. Many students join student-led clubs and organizations to get more involved in the campus community and feel closer to their peers – this is a pivotal time in the student’s life. Most students are unaware or misinformed of the responsibility or role of a worship leader. For this reason, there are many misconceptions of who the worship leader is.

This literature review demonstrates how the worship leader is an integral part of a college or university, as they have a significant influence and impact on each student along with their influence on campus and in the community. This research shows how leadership is not just about a worship leader as a title but about the person(s) who declares the Word of God through the song, which helps individuals, campus, and the community. According to J. Oswald Sanders, authentic leadership is centered on serving God and people rather than the residuals and advantages of high positions or holy titles.<sup>142</sup> Even Jesus knew the weight of good leadership when he asked, “Can you drink the cup I drink or be baptized with the baptism I am baptized with?”<sup>143</sup> As a mentee takes the cup of a leader’s influence, they are taking the mentor's burdens of influence. That exchange allows the mentee to have a greater listening ear from the mentor than others. As the mentee spends time with the mentor, their exchange is priceless. If a leader is to lead with integrity, he or she must suffer in the same way Jesus did for humanity.

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<sup>142</sup> J. Oswald Sanders, *Spiritual Leadership: Principles of Excellence for Every Believer* (Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 2017), 14.

<sup>143</sup> Mark 10:38.

## History of Gospel Music

What is gospel music? Where did it originate? Sharon Young states that Gospel music came into existence during the late nineteenth century and was a normal part of church services.<sup>144</sup> She continues to express that Southern black people brought their spirituals from the south during the great migration to northern cities.<sup>145</sup> It was in these urban cities that black Gospels took on the many characteristics of urban blues.<sup>146</sup> With so many definitions of Gospel music, Young presents her interpretation:

Gospel music or good news music is sacred in nature. This musical genre is a derivative of the spiritual and developed in the Pentecostal church. Gospel music utilizes the elements of call and response singing, polyrhythms, improvisation, and syncopation. Its popularity continues to grow and evolve, particularly on the campuses of state-supported colleges and universities. Gospel Music is not only popular in Historically Black Colleges and Universities but has gained appreciation on the campuses of predominately White colleges and universities. The purposes of Gospel choirs vary based upon its perceived function in the university environment.<sup>147</sup>

Young comprehends the essence of the gospel music perspective. The motions and expressions inside the music create syncopations experiences felt through the music's rhythms. Many colleges and universities are aware of the benefits of including this genre of music in their music curriculum. Despite this fact, many institutions do not intentionally hire professors qualified to instruct this style of music.

Robert M. Marovich states that Gospel music creates an artistic response to the Great Migration, one of the most significant cultural events in American history in the twentieth

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<sup>144</sup> Sharon Young, "Purposes of Gospel Choirs and Ensembles in State Supported Colleges and Universities," *Western Journal of Black Studies* 29, no. 4 (Winter, 2005): 677.

<sup>145</sup> Ibid.

<sup>146</sup> Ibid.

<sup>147</sup> Ibid.



century.<sup>148</sup> Thousands of southern African Americans who relocated to Chicago in the early and middle decades of the twentieth century faced traumatic situations along with being disempowering economic, social, and facing cultural obstacles.<sup>149</sup> In many ways, gospel music was the sole source of freedom for migrants. It provided them with relief from the everyday humiliations of being a black southern migrant in a harsh metropolitan North, as well as the opportunity to improve their spiritual, emotional, social, and economic circumstances.<sup>150</sup> Gospel songs, written, were created when blacks moved from Europe to North America, according to Linda Walker.<sup>151</sup> Spirituals seemed unsuitable for city life, according to Walker, so the sound re-created a more expressive and accompanied by instruments.<sup>152</sup>

Gospel music did not achieve broad recognition until Thomas Dorsey sang gospel music at the National Baptist Convention in the 1930s.<sup>153</sup> When gospel music played at the Newport Jazz Festival, Philharmonic Hall, and Carnegie Hall, as well as in London, Paris, Munich, and Berlin, it received international attention. "Take My Hand, Precious Lord" (hereinafter Precious Lord), a 1932 gospel hymn written by Thomas Dorsey, is one of the most lasting masterpieces in modern gospel music.<sup>154</sup> Thomas Dorsey is an important figure throughout the historic gospel period, recognized as the "Father of Gospel Music." The modern gospel period, according to

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<sup>148</sup> Robert M. Marovich, *A City Called Heaven: Chicago and the Birth of Gospel Music* (University of Illinois Press, 2015). 2.

<sup>149</sup> Ibid.

<sup>150</sup> Ibid.

<sup>151</sup> Linda Walker, "Developing a Gospel Choir." *Music Educators Journal*, vol. 89, no. 3, Jan. 2003, p. 23.

<sup>152</sup> Ibid.

<sup>153</sup> Maurice Wallace, "Precious Lord": Black Mother-Loss and the Roots of Modern Gospel." *Religions* 10, no. 4 (04, 2019). <http://ezproxy.liberty.edu/login?qurl=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.proquest.com%2Fscholarly-journals%2Fprecious-lord-black-mother-loss-roots-modern%2Fdocview%2F2326988199%2Fse-2>.

<sup>154</sup> Ibid.

Walker, began in the 1950s with professional touring singers, and that in the late 1960s and early 1970, Americans heard gospel music on radio and television.<sup>155</sup> Gospel music gained popularity in the Holiness, Sanctified and Pentecostal churches. His song is one of the contemporary gospel's foundational hymns, recorded by such musical luminaries as Mahalia Jackson, Rosetta Tharpe, The Blind Boys of Alabama, Elvis Presley, and Aretha Franklin.<sup>156</sup> His contribution to the composition of his song has left an indelible impression on the music industry. Beyoncé Knowles contributed to the song's success by performing it during the 57th Annual Grammy Awards in 2015.<sup>157</sup> According to Terrance Samuel of the Washington Post, Bob Darden, a leading gospel music critic who writes a weekly column for Billboard, says that being a part of a gospel choir is paramount because it remains true to the element that made gospel music powerful, one of the most important of which is spontaneity.<sup>158</sup>

While collegiate choral directors encourage students to join a chorus, gospel choir may better address the needs of minority students than other ensembles.<sup>159</sup> Students can improve their musicianship, choral methods, and auditory abilities by participating on a regular basis.<sup>160</sup> They can also learn to understand fundamental music terminology, sing in harmony, and recognize the basic form of music. Walker feels that gospel choir may provide students with an opportunity to improve their musical talents, study new repertoire, and appreciate music that is frequently

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<sup>155</sup> Linda Walker, "Developing a Gospel Choir." *Music Educators Journal*, vol. 89, no. 3, Jan. 2003, p. 24.

<sup>156</sup> Ibid.

<sup>157</sup> Ibid.

<sup>158</sup> Terence Samuel. "Soaring with a Gospel Choir." *The Washington Post* (1974-), Jan 07, 1989. 1.

<sup>159</sup> Maurice Wallace, "Precious Lord," 4.

<sup>160</sup> Ibid.

excluded from school music curricula.<sup>161</sup> In gospel choirs, students get a chance to see another culture up close. In an article, ethnomusicologist Margaret Dilling says that participation in gospel choir causes students to think about race and racial bias in a structured and diverse environment.<sup>162</sup> Essentially, to understand anything, one needs to spend time with it to form a personal perspective on the facts rather than relying on the opinion of another source.

## **Worship**

To understand the “Worship Leader” is to go beyond the surface of cultural or social understanding. The concept of worship is woven within the pages of the biblical text from the beginning in Genesis to Revelation. Some have identified worship as an event with a choir, praise team, and band. Others consider it the ceremonial expression of hymns or spiritual music from many religions, traditions, and cultural influences. Because the Bible is the cornerstone of a Christian belief system, it is essential to understand what the Bible says about worship.

Jesus’s greatest commandments related to worship say, “The most important is, Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.”<sup>163</sup> This passage expressed the totality of the essence of worship. According to John MacArthur, worship encompassed all aspects of life and was intended to be a constant concern for God’s people.<sup>164</sup> The Tabernacle in the Old Testament represented the expression of reverence. Because the tabernacle was solely intended for worship, attention to detail was portrayed through seven

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<sup>161</sup> Maurice Wallace, “Precious Lord,” 4.

<sup>162</sup> Margaret Dilling, “Living the Life We Sing about: A Gospel Choir Challenges Academe,” *College Music Symposium*, Vol. 35 (1995), pp. 61-75. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40374270>.

<sup>163</sup> Mark 12:29-30.

<sup>164</sup> John MacArthur, *Worship the Ultimate Priority*, (Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 2012), 15.

chapters of Exodus. MacArthur contends that the Israelites did not go there to sit and be ministered to but to worship God and serve Him.<sup>165</sup>

Families were used by God in the Bible to lead worship. The Levitical tribes are known as the Bible's worship leaders because of their passion and obedience to their assignment. Levites were descended from Levi, son of Jacob. The Levites were one of Israel's most significant tribes since they were in charge of the Jewish religious leaders. Moses and Aaron were leaders of Israel, and both were from the tribe of Levi. Their lineage in the Levitical family prepared the way for their priestly duties. In other words, they were not just accepting a title, but their position was part of their family line. According to scripture, every Israelite fell and worshiped an idol and indulged in worldly behaviors except the Levites – they were faithful and obedient to their responsibilities. They remained committed to the Lord and defended the honor of the Lord with obedience.

Exodus records that Moses, as he came down from the mountain, saw that the Israelites were worshipping a golden calf. The dancing became shivering as Moses approached. They were humiliated as a result of their transgression. Moses' strategy for removing the blemish was to punish it rather than masking it or giving it a false color. The Levites were supposed to kill the ringleaders in this horrendous crime, but only those who publicly stood up in rebellion were put to death. In the biblical text, obedience is witnessed:

And when Moses saw that the people had broken loose, then Moses stood in the gate of the camp and said, "Who is on the Lord's side? Come to me." And all the sons of Levi gathered around him. And he said to them, "Thus says the Lord God of Israel, 'Put your sword on your side each of you, and go to and fro from gate to gate throughout the camp, and each of you kill his brother and his companion and his neighbor.'" And the sons of Levi did according to the word of Moses. And that day, about three thousand men of the people fell. And Moses said, "Today you have been ordained for the service of the Lord,

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<sup>165</sup> MacArthur, *Worship the Ultimate Priority*, 16.

each one at the cost of his son and of his brother so that he might bestow a blessing upon you this day. <sup>166</sup>

The sons of Levi walked in obedience and did not flinch when given an assignment. They were faithful. Obedience is worship. As with Moses, Daniel also understood the importance of obedience because of his experience of being thrown into the lion's den for worshipping the Lord. For three days, Daniel remained faithful to God. The biblical text says, "He got down on his knees three times a day and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as he had done previously."<sup>167</sup> Even in the midst of danger, Daniel was obedient. When someone is fully committed to serving the Lord, they will approach their responsibilities with reverence. Obedience is the floor or foundation of worship because it is the place that reveals the heart of man. The biblical text declares, "The heart of man plans his way, but the Lord establishes his steps."<sup>168</sup> Worship requires submission to a greater authority. When a believer gives their life in obedience to the Lord, they choose to live in line with God's Word and methods, surrendering to His will.

Vernon Whaley argues that in the Old Testament, Job, Abraham, David, and others were commended and rewarded by God for their faithful worship.<sup>169</sup> When the believer worships, he, in return, bless his children.<sup>170</sup> The biblical text declares, "Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen."<sup>171</sup> The discipline of obedience was the glue that

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<sup>166</sup> Exodus 32:25-29.

<sup>167</sup> Dan. 6:10.

<sup>168</sup> Prov. 19:9.

<sup>169</sup> Vernon Whaley, *Called to Worship: From the Dawn of Creation to the Final Amen* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson publisher, 2013), 8.

<sup>170</sup> Ibid.

<sup>171</sup> Heb 11:1.

unified all those who walked with God in worship. Whaley contends that God placed an inner yearning in the heart and mind, what some have referred to as a “God-sized hole,” which sets the believer apart from all living creatures.<sup>172</sup>

## **Leader**

Leadership tackles the constant changes in people’s personalities and characteristics. The challenge of leadership is to create change and facilitate growth.<sup>173</sup> Leadership works with individuals and their personalities, which are continually evolving. Leadership can be one of the most underrated titles and the most essential to any organization’s growth and development. The leader is the servant leader of the people and must know their responsibility to serve those under their leadership.

John C. Maxwell, along with Gary McIntosh and Samuel Rima, explores the boundaries in leadership. Their point of view dives into the ground of leadership; how a person accepts a title but lacks the core capabilities to lead and handle personal issues that might stifle a healthy community of leaders. According to Maxwell, there are five levels that he believes produce successful leaders: Position, Permission, Production, People Development, and The Pinnacle.<sup>174</sup> Each level is a step ladder or a school of thinking representing the influence and character needed to sustain at each position or level. Maxwell claims that level one is the starting point for all leadership levels.<sup>175</sup> It is the lower floor and the basis on which leadership needs to be built.

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<sup>172</sup> Vernon Whaley, *Called to Worship: From the Dawn of Creation to the Final Amen* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson publisher, 2013), 18.

<sup>173</sup> John Maxwell, *How Successful People Lead: Taking Your Influence to the Next Level* (NY: Center Street. 2013), 3.

<sup>174</sup> *Ibid.*, 25.

<sup>175</sup> *Ibid.*, 8.

On this basis, real influence needs to be established. The second level, Permission, is solely dependent on relationships. It is at this level that individuals choose to follow because of the emotional connection they experience.<sup>176</sup> The third level, Production, is where individuals follow the leader because of their contributions to the company.<sup>177</sup> The People Development level is the fourth level, where individuals follow the leader because of what they have done for them.<sup>178</sup> The fifth and highest levels of leadership, according to Maxwell, are where individuals follow the leader because of what they have represented consistently over time – this is the legacy of senior leadership.<sup>179</sup> There is an old saying, “you must pay your dues.” No one should be given the authority to lead without proving themselves before elevation into a position. When a person is offered a leadership role, it is typically because a leader sees the potential of the individual’s talent. Responsibility for better leadership rests within the boundaries of respecting those that are represented by the leader. Maxwell believes that if a person believes that the position makes the leader, they will have a hard time becoming a good leader.<sup>180</sup>

#### Leadership Challenges/Struggles

Personal problems or flaws are a part of an individual's development because it affects their viewpoint on perceiving and leading. Because it is part of the personality, those same difficulties are accentuated much more as a leader because of the position which they hold. The higher a person's status, the more likely they are to hide it from public scrutiny. Sadly, many leaders hide behind their struggles, never completely free because of the pride of exposing their

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<sup>176</sup> Maxwell, *How Successful People Lead*, 8.

<sup>177</sup> Ibid.

<sup>178</sup> Ibid.

<sup>179</sup> Ibid.

<sup>180</sup> Ibid, 25.

battle. McIntosh and Rima contend that no matter the dilemma, no one can completely eradicate their dark side.<sup>181</sup>

Because of the dark side of thinking, the impacts of mental trauma that a person has encountered in life can hinder forward momentum. McIntosh and Rima contend that the dark side of leadership is a trait that is sometimes hidden, misunderstood, and unaware of the internal stresses, compulsions, and dysfunctions before an emotional outburst occurs.<sup>182</sup> John Ortberg claims that there is a profound war in the spiritual life fought by the wicked one for the essence of the emotions that travel through the mind.<sup>183</sup> Hidden problems that a leader faces are the concerns that have not been resolved in their life or that have been misunderstood for power or even coping strategies for dealing with vulnerability and lack of self-confidence. Deficiency-like characteristics at each level of leadership will be illuminated. John Ortberg claims that the fight of temptation is a valiant challenge, but if a believer attempts to repress the impulse, it will drive them into the ground with unhealthy thoughts.<sup>184</sup> The biblical text says, “But the one who did not know, and did what deserved a beating, will receive a light beating. Everyone to whom much was given, of him, much will be required, and from him to whom they entrusted much, they will demand the more.”<sup>185</sup> The responsibility of the leader to know who they are as a person is essential when leading. When leaders understand their strengths and weaknesses, they create a supportive environment that helps and develop others to lead better than they have. This

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<sup>181</sup> Gary McIntosh, & Samuel Rima, *Overcoming the dark side of leadership: How to become an effective leader by confronting potential failures* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books. 2007), 153.

<sup>182</sup> *Ibid.*, 28.

<sup>183</sup> John Ortberg, *The Me I Want to Be: Becoming God's Best Version of You* (United States: Zondervan, 2010), 98.

<sup>184</sup> *Ibid.*, 12.

<sup>185</sup> Luke 12:48.



leadership level demonstrates their appreciation by recognizing the good in all leaders, even the most difficult to lead.

In Acts, God informs Ananias that Paul would have to suffer greatly for the sake of the name of Jesus. Paul, in 2 Corinthians, testified of his challenges of suffering:

I must go on boasting. Though there is nothing to be gained by it, I will go on to visions and revelations of the Lord. I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago was caught up to the third heaven--whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows. And I know that this man was caught up into paradise--whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows and he heard things that cannot be told, which man may not utter. On behalf of this man, I will boast, but on my own behalf, I will not boast, except of my weaknesses. Though if I should wish to boast, I would not be a fool, for I would be speaking the truth. But I refrain from it so that no one may think more of me than he sees in me or hears from me. So to keep me from becoming conceited because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to harass me, to keep me from becoming conceited. Three times I pleaded with the Lord about this, that it should leave me. But he said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.' Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong.<sup>186</sup>

Paul's suffering helped to establish the brilliance of his leadership. Paul's experiences gave him a remarkable capacity to tolerate stress within his weakness, which helped him achieve great success. He can deal with his circumstances because of his constant faith and reliance on God. Despite the difficulties which he faced, he persevered because he continued to walk in obedience. His thorn serves as a reminder of his humanity and the difficulties he would face if Christ were not the foundation of his faith.

God originally made the believer flourish in harmony with Him. God did not create a worship leader to be like everyone else but to use the blessing He had placed inside them before the beginning of time. No matter the mistakes made in practice, Christ does not throw a person

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<sup>186</sup> 2 Cor. 12:1-10.

away because of a mistake. God creates, and if it is flawed, he will rescue and make it all over. The biblical text says, “But now, O Lord, you are our Father; we are the clay, and you are our potter; we are all the work of your hand.”<sup>187</sup> The potter takes pride in his handiwork, and where there is a problem, he continues to use the clay simultaneously with the imperfections.

A man in his home can be the husband, father, and grandfather all at the same time because of the relationship which is associated with each person. God exists in three persons: God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Each reveals themselves according to the need of the person – this is the same premise for the worship leader. There will be times when the worship leader will have to reveal themselves according to the need of the team. As a servant leader, there will be times when the worship leader will have to understand the layers of leadership in order to produce an excellent worship experience. Paul says, “Though I am free and belong to no one, I have made myself a slave to everyone, to win as many as possible... I do all this for the sake of the gospel that I may share in its blessings.”<sup>188</sup> He recognized that he had to minister to each based on their need.

God created Adam, the first leader, and gave him a partner, Eve, according to Genesis. The first man, Adam, walked and communicated with God, who also gave him instructions. He disobeyed God's commandments. Adam's rebellion represents a promise that turns into a curse according to Genesis 3, where God says; “because you have listened to the voice of your wife and have eaten of the tree of which I commanded you, you shall not eat of it, curse is the ground because of you.”<sup>189</sup> This image of disobedience is seen in many biblical leaders who have

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<sup>187</sup> Isa. 64:8.

<sup>188</sup> 1 Cor 9: 19-23.

<sup>189</sup> Gen. 3:17.

developed exceptional leadership skills and yet cannot secure or follow through with their end of the deal with God.

### **Leadership Themes**

The Old Testament takes an anthological approach which provides the reader with an opportunity to witness an account of truths from an author's perspective, which took place over centuries. These truths are about the history and religion of the people in Israel. God positions his word by making a covenant with his people. Throughout biblical leadership, there are several themes considered: Godly leadership, flawed leadership, and the grace of God in the lives of the Old Testament leaders. According to McIntosh and Rima, leaders must be willing to embrace their flaws – those currently unusable aspects of their personalities – and allow God, through the Holy Spirit's catalyst, to begin composting them into the spiritual humus from which their most powerful and fruitful ministry will emerge.<sup>190</sup>

#### *Godly Leadership*

From the beginning, God vested humanity with the authority to rule over creation – Under his divine blessing, God charged humanity with the task of “ruling over” and “subduing” the created order according to Genesis 1:26-28.<sup>191</sup> This meant that humanity was responsible for being an overseer or steward over what God had created. It was the call of leading according to the mandate which God had instructed from the initial contact with the leader. Forrest adds that because of God's dominion and sovereignty over all of creation, he has the authority to govern

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<sup>190</sup> Gary McIntosh, & Samuel Rima, *Overcoming the dark side of leadership: How to become an effective leader by confronting potential failures* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books. 2007), 162.

<sup>191</sup> B.K. Forrest, *Biblical leadership: Theology for the everyday leader* (Grand Rapids: Kregel Academic, 2017). 20.

overall he has created.<sup>192</sup> The Lord's command is final, and his instructions must be carried out. Both man and the rest of his creation must follow his commandments. When obeying God's instructions or corrections, the demands of God's will are essential. God chooses leaders for a specific reason and purpose. Forrest believes that when God uses a leader, it is not necessarily the best-designed circumstance; instead, it is the leader's devotion to God's instructions.<sup>193</sup>

A prophet during this time was necessary because of his communication with the King and the people of what God had said. The prophet's words to the king guide his matters in war and politics. As a servant leader, the prophet had the responsibility not only to serve the King but also to serve the people. According to the biblical text, God chooses the leader who will carry out his will. When God speaks to the prophet, there is a release of favor because there is a desire to obey the Lord's message.

In the Pentateuch, Moses is considered the most significant human leader. Moses was chosen for essential tasks in Exodus 3. As a leader, he was challenged to be fully conscious of God's holiness and to respond appropriately to it. Forrest says that along with being familiar with God's holiness, he had to know God's previous interactions with the patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.<sup>194</sup> Knowing the shoes he was filling gave him an understanding of the great responsibility and obligation he was entering. This is significant since most leaders who encourage others to lead never seek out previous leaders for nuggets that may be used when necessary. He also needed to know what God had in mind for his people's future. Another essential responsibility of Moses is a more in-depth and more intimate knowledge of God

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<sup>192</sup> B.K. Forrest, *Biblical leadership*, 20.

<sup>193</sup> Ibid.

<sup>194</sup> Ibid.

himself. In the biblical text, God revealed himself as “I Am.” God said to Moses, “I am who I am. And he said, “Say this to the people of Israel, I am has sent me to you.”<sup>195</sup> In other words, God is saying that He is the past, present, and future, along with his eternity and immutability. Leaders like Moses, Jeremiah, David, Gideon, Samuel are leaders who have been called for a unique and significant assignment to enrich the Kingdom of God.

Leadership in the prism of the Pentateuch presents that God promotes leaders through ordination. Throughout the biblical text, God shows his love for those who have been chosen and appointed to lead according to the word of the Lord. This important approach shows that his love is unconditional. When God calls his leaders, he urges them to do His work. Even leaders who are not qualified are considered to lead not because of their stature but their willing heart. He chooses the unqualified and makes them qualified. The Apostle Paul wrote:

For consider your calling, brothers: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, so that no human being might boast in the presence of God. And because of him, you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption, so that, as it is written, ‘Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord.’<sup>196</sup>

God’s calling is displayed in the heart of the devoted servant. When a Christian is not qualified but has the desire to follow what the Lord has said, that individual is an excellent candidate to carry out the will of the Lord. God has always selected someone flawed in some fashion and

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<sup>195</sup> Ex. 3:14.

<sup>196</sup> 1 Cor. 1:26-31.

given them a key role in His plan of salvation for the world. J. Oswald Sanders contends that Jesus chose people with little education, but they soon displayed remarkable flair.<sup>197</sup>

### *Flawed Leadership*

No matter the title or years of experience as a worship leader, all have come short of the glory of God, according to Romans 3:23. Many people have found themselves in compromising situations that might have damaged their integrity, but God's mercy has protected them. David was a great leader and a man after God's own heart. Lions and bears were some of the most powerful animals and would consume sheep. Only the bravest and capable men would attempt to kill a lion or a bear. David, a shepherd boy, took on that challenge in each situation and won. The strength of protection is one of the many ingredients which became a hallmark of his success as king. With all the attributes of a great leader and the strength of a warrior, He had a flaw in his life. After becoming King, he would commit adultery with Bathsheba and murder her husband Uriah to cover up the result of their affair. He, unfortunately, allowed his eyes to override his good judgment. This is resonated in rooms of office leaders who have, at some point was faced with this dilemma. David's life is not one of perfection followed by a sudden and swift fall – He struggled both before and during his reign with sin. Most Bible figures who survived failure, according to J. Oswald Sanders, had a stronger understanding of God's grace.<sup>198</sup> They learned about the God of second chances, and sometimes third and fourth chances as well.<sup>199</sup>

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<sup>197</sup> J. Oswald Sanders, *Spiritual Leadership: Principles of Excellence for Every Believer* (Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 2017), 37.

<sup>198</sup> *Ibid.*, 163.

<sup>199</sup> *Ibid.*

The period of the judges was a dark time in Israel's history – Joshua and Caleb had passed on, and there was a leadership void in the nation.<sup>200</sup> During this time, people were doing what was right in their eyes. Israel desperately needed a king to sustain balance and stability. An aging Eli was a good man and lived a pure lifestyle. He was a man who delighted himself with doing the work of the Lord. He was in charge of the central sanctuary at Shiloh, where the ark was housed, but he was an ineffective leader. His flaw was a lack of parental control over his children. His two sons, Phinehas and Hophni, were abusing the sacrificial system by indulging in sexually promiscuous behavior with some of the female workers. The problem with Eli was his lack of solid leadership. Even when he confronted them and rebuked them, it was not as firmly as one expected. The issue was that he reasoned with them but did not order them to stop. Eli was too soft and did not take a firm position with his boys. Ultimately, he left the choice up to them, rather than exerting his authority and forcing them to stop their actions by removing them from their positions. This is seen all the time in today's churches when pastors and leaders are afraid to protect their congregations from poor leadership. In Eli's situation, he valued his sons over his people. This is typically the same issue with organizational leadership. They see the tyranny of the people caused by inadequate leadership but instead bury their heads in the sand like an ostrich, hoping that the situation will go away. Eventually, Eli was confronted by the Lord through a prophet, who declared Eli's and his son's fate.

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<sup>200</sup> Forrest, *'Biblical leadership,'* 54.

### *The Grace of God Toward Leadership*

To understand the grace of God, consider the unmerited favor of God toward man, loving-kindness, divine favor, God's will, and free gift.<sup>201</sup> Leaders in the biblical text were not perfect and had displayed a lack of control in the face of a test. These elements of the grace of God are seen in Genesis, where the biblical text declares, "Noah finds favor in the eyes of the Lord."<sup>202</sup> This came about due to the Lord being grieved at how man's wickedness had manifested. Because of his relationship with God, Noah and his family's experienced the grace of God.

When God called Abraham, that was an act of grace; "Now the Lord said to Abram, 'Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great so that you will be a blessing.'<sup>203</sup> Because of Abraham's obedience and love for the Lord, grace was bestowed upon him. In Genesis, it depicts the grace of God over Abraham as a result of his obedience to the voice of God; "and said, 'by myself, I have sworn, declares the Lord, because you have done this and have not withheld your son, your only son, I will surely bless you, and I will surely multiply our offspring as the stars of heaven. And in your offspring shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, because you have obeyed my voice.'<sup>204</sup> Again, God continues to show his love through obedience.

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<sup>201</sup> John MacArthur, *Worship the Ultimate Priority* (Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 2012). 20.

<sup>202</sup> Gen. 6:8.

<sup>203</sup> Gen. 12: 1-2.

<sup>204</sup> Gen. 22:15-17.



Forrest believes that God had prepared Nehemiah to be in a place of responsibility and influence.<sup>205</sup> Nehemiah experienced the favor of God and said, “You are the Lord, the God who chose Abram and brought him out of Ur of the Chaldeans and gave him the name Abram.”<sup>206</sup> Nehemiah’s immediate resort upon hearing the distressing news from Jerusalem was the prayer. His prayer, according to Forrest, is soaked in scripture – He was not just a concern for his private spirituality but the corporate interests of all God’s people.<sup>207</sup> His prayer unto the Lord showed his consistent and spontaneous prayer life of worshipping God through obedience. The historical narrative of Nehemiah is one part of the story of God communicated to humanity, and because of this, we can be inspired by his leadership and the grace upon his life.

### **The Worship Leader**

A leader, from a secular perspective, has a great responsibility to shape the future of the people who are submitting to authority. Training, managing, teaching, and mentoring are a few obligations of being a leader in any position of power. As a worship leader, the characteristics are similar, yet the divine vocation for this Kingdom assignment as a worship leader has significant divine responsibilities. Dr. Vernon Whaley and Robert Morgan give a compelling argument, recognizing the importance of becoming a leader of worship in the house of the Lord. As a disciple of Jesus Christ, it is imperative to proclaim and encourage others to embrace the love of Christ in their lives.

Whaley contends that the role or characteristic of the worship leader is: worshiper, disciple theologian, evangelist, professional, artist, musician, servant leader, pastor,

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<sup>205</sup> B.K. Forrest, *Biblical leadership*, 35.

<sup>206</sup> Neh. 9:7.

<sup>207</sup> B.K. Forrest, *Biblical leadership*, 30.

administrator, staff member, producer, teacher, mentor, student, counselor, and family person.<sup>208</sup>

Each area is a foundational perspective that is rich in accountability to lead as a servant of God.

Morgan suggests that the leader should commit themselves to the Lord without reservation.<sup>209</sup>

The worship leader should embody the heart of God to maintain and sustain a level of commitment to present creative worship experiences to the congregation to experience the Holy

Spirit. As the leader is leading worship, they are serving the people of God as they prepare to hear the Word of God through the pastor. It takes an unusually gifted person to lead worship.

The biblical text declares, “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change.”<sup>210</sup> As the worship leader serves the people, they are expressing love through servitude. “As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God’s varied grace....”<sup>211</sup>

Being a worship leader is not about the ability to sing or play an instrument – it is the foundation or the genuine heart of being a worshipper. Whaley argues that to be effective as a worship leader; one must possess the heart for God, have been broken, does not walk after the flesh, has a selfish demeanor, and is not self-sufficient.<sup>212</sup> Being broken by God is being crushed by the sin and darkness of making a wrong decision and recognizing that because of making a bad decision, the only place to turn to is God for redemption. An example of this is when David

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<sup>208</sup> Vernon Whaley, “Brokenness and Worship” (Video Lecture at Liberty University, Lynchburg, VA, 2015).

<sup>209</sup> Robert Morgan, “The Most Pleasant Life Anyone Can Live” (Video Lecture at Liberty University, Lynchburg, VA, 2015).

<sup>210</sup> Jas 1:17.

<sup>211</sup> 1 Peter 4:10.

<sup>212</sup> Vernon Whaley, “Brokenness and Worship” (Video Lecture at Liberty University, Lynchburg, VA 2015).

sinned with Bathsheba. In Psalms 51, David, after being confronted by Nathan the prophet, repented to God:

Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin! For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight, so that you may be justified in your words and blameless in your judgment. Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me. Behold, you delight in truth in the inward being, and you teach me wisdom in the secret heart. Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones that you have broken rejoice. Hide your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from your presence, and take not your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and uphold me with a willing spirit. Then I will teach transgressors your ways, and sinners will return to you. Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God, O God of my salvation, and my tongue will sing aloud of your righteousness. O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth will declare your praise. For you will not delight in sacrifice, or I would give it; you will not be pleased with a burnt offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.<sup>213</sup>

David's guilt was committed as a result of his immorality with his neighbor's wife. This transgression serves as a caution to leaders who may find themselves in a similar situation in the future. David's repentance demonstrates to the leader the pathway to heartfelt brokenness that convicts man of his wrongdoing by pouring out his heart to God in prayer for forgiveness. His humble prayer to God was his way of casting himself on God's mercy, knowing he had messed up and needed to repent. Sin defiles the person making them disgusting in the sight of the holy God, and renders the believer unworthy to communion with God. When God forgives sin, He washes the believer from it, making them acceptable to Himself and granting them liberty and access to Him. Being broken is a perspective of being standing on the promises of the Lord – it is

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<sup>213</sup> Ps. 51: 1-17.

a place of assurance or rest in God. “Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your understanding.”<sup>214</sup>

When a leader declares the awesomeness of God, they are entirely devoted to being a follower of Christ.<sup>215</sup> As a worship leader and a follower of Christ, Whaley references biblical narrative 2 Peter 1 to encourage the leader with eight steps to mature discipleship is: salvation, separation, scholarship, service, suffering, submission, sharing, and spiritual maturity.<sup>216</sup> As the worship leader declares God’s Word in song, there is a transformation to the congregation, which will experience the love of God in hopes of making disciples for Christ.

When leading a group of students, the worship leader must exercise many degrees of leadership. The uniqueness of each student necessitates that the leader is prepared to deal with the complexity of individuals. Each leadership level reflects a potential student’s need or function necessary for each student to experience. Each role functions at the level of the need and ensures that students experience a spiritually healthy experience.

#### *Worship Leader as Servant Leader*

Being a servant leader is more about humility in leadership than being self-inclusively egotistic. To be a servant is to serve – it is the position of humility and servitude. The Bible says, “For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned.”<sup>217</sup> Rory Noland argues that true humility is having an accurate view

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<sup>214</sup> Prov. 3:5.

<sup>215</sup> Vernon Whaley, “Guidelines for Discipleship” (Video Lecture at Liberty University, Lynchburg, VA, 2015).

<sup>216</sup> Ibid.

<sup>217</sup> Rom. 12:3.

of yourself.<sup>218</sup> As a servant leader, there is a heightened level of faith that must be expressed in life as others will commit to the fellowship of the leader. In servant leadership, the people are looking for a shepherd to lead them. The biblical text declares, “As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God’s varied grace.”<sup>219</sup> Servant leadership is a fundamental perspective that all great leaders have encountered because they can identify with the cost of servitude. Servant leadership, as such, is not a style of leadership or technique. It is instead a long-term behavior that is adopted.

The servant-leader possesses the influence to move people onto God’s plan. It is leading them to the obedience of the will of God in their lives. Vernon Whaley argues that servant leaders move people from where they are to where God wants them to be – they do this by way of performing, teaching, and how they live their lives in front of others. Having patience with others is an essential attribute as situations occur in ministry that the untrained ear of the leader can misunderstand. Tozer suggests that a true and servant leader has no desire to lead but is forced into a leadership position by the inward pressure of the Holy Spirit and the press of the external situation.<sup>220</sup> Many people desire to lead and be in charge of people to fulfill a void in their personal life. The responsibility of leading appears to be powerful because the thought of giving direction and being the person calling the shots is attractive. To serve is to love the people whom God has entrusted the leader to govern. 1 John says, “Anyone who does not love does not know God because God is love.”<sup>221</sup> The Bible continues with, “Beloved, let us love one another,

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<sup>218</sup> Rory Noland, “Engaging the Worship Leader as a Servant Leader” (Video Lecture at Liberty University, Lynchburg, VA., 2015).

<sup>219</sup> 1 Peter 4:10.

<sup>220</sup> A.W. Tozer, *Whatever Happened to Worship?: A Call to True Worship*, (Camp Hill, PA: First WingSpread Publishers, 2006), 34.

<sup>221</sup> 1 John 4:8.

for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God.”<sup>222</sup> “So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three, but the greatest of these is love.”<sup>223</sup> It is essential to know that when the action of the leader is operating in disobedience, God separates himself from them, “Behold, the Lord’s hand is not shortened, that it cannot save, or his ear dull, that it cannot hear, but your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, and your sins have hidden his face from you so that he does not hear.”<sup>224</sup> The idea is that the servant leader should operate in scriptural obedience to ensure that his life is an example for all to emulate and that God recognizes the obedience of their servant leadership.

### *Worship Leader as Pastor*

The leader of a church or religious organization represents the authority of the Holy Spirit and should be embraced as a life-long commitment to God. The pastor is the representative of heaven and should possess the qualities of a leader. Vernon Whaley says that the leader should have the ability to lead or manage other people because everything rises and falls on leadership.<sup>225</sup> The more the leader understands, the more they will find that leadership makes a difference. Whaley identifies ten weaknesses in leaders: Poor thinking, negative attitude, a bad fit, lack of focus, a weak commitment, unwillingness to change, a shortcut mindset, relying on talent alone, response to inadequate information, and having no goals.<sup>226</sup> Understanding personal shortcomings as a leader are critical to acknowledge because if it is not, a leader would believe

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<sup>222</sup> 1 John 4:7.

<sup>223</sup> 1 Cor. 13:13.

<sup>224</sup> Isa. 59:1-2.

<sup>225</sup> Vernon Whaley, “Joshua’s Leadership Model – Part 1” (Video Lecture at Liberty University, Lynchburg, VA., 2015).

<sup>226</sup> Ibid.

that their accomplishments are due to their decision making rather than God. When God chooses a leader, there is no doubt of their obedience. Jeremiah declares, “And I will give you shepherds after my own heart, who will feed you with knowledge and understanding.”<sup>227</sup> Their obedience flows in their commitment to God.

Leading people is not easy but rewarding. It is a blessing for a leader who loves their people to witness the joy of seeing their lives change toward God because of their commitment to expressing the Love of Jesus Christ in their everyday living. Walking in faith, knowledge, and the love of Christ is having the heart of God. Joshua is an excellent example of good leadership who walks according to obedience. Whaley says that Joshua leads his people with a prepared heart, obedience, walking in holiness, communicating his heart to those who followed, and committing to developing his team.<sup>228</sup>

Being ready to lead an assembly can be challenging at times. Knowing the individuals who are submissive to leadership and exercising self-control in the presence of God is behavior that provides everyone and anyone who admires one's leadership a favorable perspective. In his leadership style, Joshua was effective because he had the right mindset and leadership approach. People followed Joshua because he prepared to lead, maintained the right attitude, resisted dictatorship in decision making, resisted sloppy delegation, shared the success, and practiced the principle of affirmation.<sup>229</sup> Joshua's organization was paramount throughout scripture. Robert Morgan says, “the Creator is organized in His very nature, and He has built efficient

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<sup>227</sup> Jer. 3:15.

<sup>228</sup> Vernon Whaley, “Joshua's Leadership Model – Part 1” (Video Lecture at Liberty University, Lynchburg, VA., 2015).

<sup>229</sup> Ibid.

organizational structures and systems into all He has done.”<sup>230</sup> Pastoring people not only has to be knowledgeable of the Word but show the love of God when congregants are challenging – this is the reason the pastor must possess self-control and patience to speak just what God says and not what their flesh is experiencing at the moment of the infraction. Morgan contends that by faith and experience to maintain oneself on this earth is not a hardship but a pastime if we will live simply and wisely.<sup>231</sup> As the pastor is obedient to God, they will not only experience the love of God but the rest of God to handle any situation which they may encounter.

### *Worship Leader as a Professional*

A worship leader has a great responsibility to lead the people of God into the Glory of His presence. However, each person who has identified with their calling; should always reach for clarity and timing in the season when God has called for the title or position to be the most fruitful and productive. As a professional, artist, or musician, it is a great responsibility to accept the call of God on your life while pursuing the vision. Dr. Vernon Whaley contends that God forms the heart of the leader of worship by a call that is divinely designed to set apart the leader of worship for a specific purpose or mission.<sup>232</sup>

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<sup>230</sup> Robert Morgan, *Mastering Life Before it's Too Late: 10 Biblical Strategies for a Life of Purpose*. (NY: Howard Books. 2015), 86.

<sup>231</sup> Ibid, 94.

<sup>232</sup> Vernon Whaley, “The Worship Leader and Commitment to Calling” (Video Lecture at Liberty University, Lynchburg, VA, 2016).



### *Worship Leader as a Person of Faith*

Many students attend colleges to study and to discover who they are. They will have their beliefs challenged and occasionally ridiculed as they pursue their ambitions of academic achievement. Pursuing degrees that would enhance their lives, they risk acquiring ideas that contradict their faith. As a result, leaders must be a walking example of scripture in order for students to see the love of Christ through faith and obedience.

A worship leader must embrace faith – faith is the foundation of a believer’s belief system and should be the common denominator in all the decisions that enhance the Kingdom of God. As a professional, the worship leader ensures that doubt is never an option of thought or conversation because of the knowledge obtained from scripture and through the relationship with Christ. There will be times where self-control and patience will be paramount when leading in unstable situations. The Bible declares that being a person who walks according to scripture is essential “But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.”<sup>233</sup> Trusting God is resting in His love and grace. Walking in faith requires constant communication with the Savior to ensure compliance with His directives. Putting Christ first in everything is critical when making decisions in the heat of the moment. Robert Morgan argues that no matter how vigorously a person follows their goals unless they comply with the will of the Father, they are wasting the lives which God has entrusted into our hands.<sup>234</sup> Education presents a foundation perspective that allows for a better understanding of the dimensions of the calling. When people gather in the sanctuary or online, they will experience the love and kindness of God in the presentation. This will establish a “safe place” to accept the worship experience.

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<sup>233</sup> Rom, 8:25.

<sup>234</sup> Robert Morgan, *Mastering Life Before It’s Too Late: 10 Biblical Strategies for a Life of Purpose* (New York: Howard Books, 2015), 48.

Leadership in the biblical text presents several platforms to consider when understanding the lineage of leaders and their influences. These areas offer a compelling illustration of the relationship between the leader, God, and the people. The Old Testament renders rich overtones or nuance from biblical characters, which indicate differences in leadership style, approach, and technique – coupled with fortitude or apathy. These leaders operated in a time where leadership was essential to fulfill a responsibility given to them to enhance the Kingdom assignment. Biblical leadership allows the reader to take a glimpse at the characteristics of good leadership and the aspects of bad leadership – and how each operates when faced with challenges and adversities which ultimately affect their lives, family, and their followers. Though the Bible is not a leadership textbook, it does speak to leadership. Specifically, it speaks to the origin of leadership, the benefits of godly leadership, and issues that stem from poor leadership.<sup>235</sup>

#### *Worship Leader as Artist*

The worship leader as an artist is similar to a painter who has a brush. Before the artist places a brush on a canvas to start painting, they have a vision – it is the creative methodology that comes as a completed picture. The artist has a vision for the canvas. The worship leader, as an artist, uses their faith that God will speak an experience that will allow the people to experience Christ. The artist must be knowledgeable about their craft as an instrument in the hands of a musician. The artist must be careful not to take any glory for themselves – this is the reason the worship leader should demonstrate patience and self-control when being tempted to take the slightest blessing as their doing instead of to the Lord. The biblical text declares, “Whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who serves by the

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<sup>235</sup> B.K. Forrest., *Biblical leadership*, 25.

strength that God supplies – so that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.”<sup>236</sup> As an artist serves the people, they are demonstrating the love of God through their gift. Private worship of the artist is displayed publicly for the congregation to witness the awesomeness of Christ through submission.

### *Worship Leader as Musician*

A worship leader as a musician has great benefits – they can sing, direct the singers, and play the instrument, and, in some situations, lead the band. The musician’s faith walk with God implies that the leader recognizes and emulates the heart of God. Lucifer, before the fall out of heaven, was a great musician until iniquity was found in his heart. David echoed that “If I had cherished iniquity in my heart, the Lord would not have listened.”<sup>237</sup> When there is no self-control, it opens the door of sin in the heart – it is that heart which God will not attend. The more time the worship leader spends with God, the more the worship leader will experience the rest of God. It is wise to take all opportunities to spend time with God. Allow His voice to penetrate any self-absorbing perspectives which hinder ministry. Hearing the heart of God will become strange to the musician if he or she does not pray or devote a short amount of his or her day to hearing the voice of God. Morgan suggests doing big things in a short stretch of time.<sup>238</sup> Starting small is like a bodybuilder who is using light weights to strengthen his body to be stronger.

Music is such an essential part of the worship experience and should be ministered to in excellence. It is also the same for spending time with God. The time spent with God is like

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<sup>236</sup> 1 Pt. 4:11.

<sup>237</sup> Ps. 66:18.

<sup>238</sup> Robert Morgan, *Mastering Life Before It's Too Late: 10 Biblical Strategies for a Life of Purpose* (New York: Howard Books, 2015). 69.

having the best breakfast in the morning — it starts the day off right. The same is with a musician. Time in practicing the right songs, rehearsals with the singers and band are all critical to having a great musical presentation on a Sunday worship experience. However, when there is no time taken with the Lord, the foundation of the worship experience will be of little effect because God is not the foundation of the worship experience.

Spending quality time in scripture and prayer is vital to a fluid worship experience. Morgan believes that until we appreciate the value of time and learn to manage it with skill, we can never manage ourselves until we understand the importance of time while learning to control it skillfully.<sup>239</sup> The Bible is the manual for life. The longer the leader spends in the scriptures, the more they are tuned to the Word of God. It is essential to hear the Word of God clearly as a musician operating in an atmosphere of worship. Without committing to God's Word, deception can be experienced because of misleading practices and, worse, misleading the congregation into a strange fire worship experience.

#### *Worship Leader as Administrator*

As a worship leader, many roles and responsibilities accompany the position. It is easy to have tunnel vision as a worship leader because of the conventional roles which are part of being in charge of the worship experience. According to Dr. Vernon Whaley, the administrator applies to the stewardship of God's gifts... Incredibly human and physical resources God has called on us to manage.<sup>240</sup> When ministering in a particular fashion, it is essential to know how to lead as an administrator. The faith it takes to be an administrator sets the principle for leading a group of

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<sup>239</sup> Morgan, *Mastering Life*, 46.

<sup>240</sup> Vernon Whaley, "The Role of the Worship Leader as an Administrator" (Video Lecture at Liberty University, Lynchburg, VA, 2015).

people to their goals. The expertise required in this position needs knowledge not only to lead but also to execute specific assignments through the Bible, which is the foundation of how the leader implements through faith.

A worship leader should understand the complexities of managing people. People sometimes can be challenging to manage, especially when there is a departmental concern by a few people who bleed over into the group, causing unrest. The leader should remember to lead by example. The way the situation is handled will be a mirror for others under the leadership to emulate when similar situations arise. John Maxwell holds that the leader more than anyone else on a team sets the tone in a department or for an organization.<sup>241</sup> The atmosphere is controlled by a thermostat, which stabilizes the environment to ensure the temperature does not fluctuate. This analogy is how the leader should display a controlled environment. Robert Morgans contend that God is not a God of confusion; therefore, everything must be done properly and in an orderly manner.<sup>242</sup> The order on how authority is to be exercised will be centered on authenticity. People would obey anyone they think is trustworthy. There is no momentum if there is no trust.

Setting schedules assures that there is clarity of song selection, musicians who will play an instrument, rehearsal, and any art form needed to display during the worship experience. Through a clear strategy, the mission is carried out with consistency and a fair playing field. Morgan argues that an average person who develops the habit of setting clear priorities and

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<sup>241</sup> John Maxwell, *How Successful People Lead: Taking Your Influence to the Next Level* (Nashville, Center Street. 2013). 89.

<sup>242</sup> Morgan, *Mastering Life*, 117.

getting important tasks completed quickly will run circles around a genius who talks a lot and makes excellent plans but gets very little done.<sup>243</sup>

### *Worship Leader as Staff Member*

The leader as a staff member is a person who works as a team player by regularly contributing to their community of believers to complete assignments, reach goals, or execute initiatives. When sharing responsibility, there is a community that engages and accepts the challenges with teamwork. “Iron sharpens iron, and one man sharpens another.”<sup>244</sup> Great team players share their information, knowledge, and experience with the rest of the team and take the initiative to inform the rest of the group. As a believer, the staff member walks in faith through the knowledge of the Bible. As the worship leader operates in the fashion of staff members, they will encounter conflicts. Having self-control during times of tension is a biblical attribute. “For God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control.”<sup>245</sup> It will be a disaster if the leader is responding out of a Godly character.

Being a living example is being Christ-like. The question should always be, “What would Jesus do?” This is hard if walking according to the flesh since it is impossible to be on the Lord’s side when there is so much infraction within the leader’s heart. The biblical text says, “And godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love.”<sup>246</sup> Servitude is paramount with encouraging “like-heart” people to consistently produce the love and humility needed to be expressed by each person within a community. “And we beseech you, brethren, to know them

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<sup>243</sup>Morgan, *Mastering Life*, 124.

<sup>244</sup> Prov. 27:17.

<sup>245</sup> 2 Tim 1:7.

<sup>246</sup> 2 Pt. 1:7.

which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you.”<sup>247</sup> The way a leader begins their day is the foundation, in most cases, of how they will operate the rest of the day. According to Robert Morgan, daily devotions represent a personal appointment with our father and friend, in which we converse with Him – talk to Him in prayer and listen to Him by reading and meditating on His Word.<sup>248</sup>

### *Worship Leader as Teacher*

There is grace upon leaders who understand the influence of education – it is not only from a written document but also in the leader's life. It provides explanations and suggestions on reacting to a situation or an issue that can impact a person's life. This Bible is the universal truth of humanity. The biblical text says that “All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness.”<sup>249</sup> The Bible is the ground of truth that always speaks. The teacher has the authority to instruct through faith the Word of God through whatever median of influence. The knowledge of the word gives validity to all who will follow the teachings of Jesus Christ. “So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.”<sup>250</sup>

In an educational style, individuals know how to respond correctly to something, which may raise questions. In John 5, there is a principle of patience in the face of adversity; “Be patient, therefore, brothers, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, being patient about it until it receives the early and the late rains. You

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<sup>247</sup> 1Thes. 5:12.

<sup>248</sup> Morgan, *Mastering Life* 115.

<sup>249</sup> 2 Tim. 3:16.

<sup>250</sup> Rom 10:17.

also be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord, is at hand.”<sup>251</sup> It is important to remember that there will always be a situation that will challenge faith, patience, and self-control – it is part of living on the earth. With all which is happening in the world, the leader must know when to take time to withdraw. Withdrawal is safe because of detrimental exhaustion. Above all, it increases the ineffectiveness, decreases pressures, strains schedules, makes the job more challenging, and will shorten a person’s life if it continues over time.<sup>252</sup>

Knowing the rest of God is to know the peace of God. Several scriptures echo the sediment of rest “The Lord gave them rest on every side;<sup>253</sup> My soul finds rest in God;<sup>254</sup> Take my yoke upon you and learn from me...and you will find rest for your souls.<sup>255</sup> Morgan says that rest is the Lord, and wait patiently for him; do not fret.<sup>256</sup> Whenever there is a lack of rest, there will be a lack of patience and love because of the fatigue which the person may face. Morgan contends that rest is God’s gift to you to replace what work takes out.<sup>257</sup> Teaching requires stamina and poise when handling a precious gift – the believer.

### *Worship Leader as Counselor*

There will be instances in which team leaders will need wise counseling to navigate their thoughts through the obstacles they face. Counseling should be on the foundation of the Word of God to advise others – nothing else. When appropriately used, biblical counseling teaches,

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<sup>251</sup> James 5:7-8.

<sup>252</sup> Morgan, *Mastering Life*, 143.

<sup>253</sup> Josh. 21:44.

<sup>254</sup> Ps. 62:1.

<sup>255</sup> Matt. 11:29.

<sup>256</sup> *Ibid*, 145.

<sup>257</sup> *Ibid*, 147.



encourage, rebuke, and guide the counselee through life's issues. Counselors encourage others to focus their attention on what Christ has spoken in the Bible and not on their feelings. Tim Clinton and Ron Hawkins contend God's permissive will is what he allows to happen because it is under the hand of a Holy God.<sup>258</sup>

While attending school, students will face a variety of personal obstacles. It is the responsibility of leadership to redirect the student's thoughts to biblical guidance from a qualified leader. Listening is the priority of the leader to hear and understand the heart of the matter. Sanders argues that genuine listening seeks to understand another without prejudgment.<sup>259</sup> He continues that leaders who want to show sensitivity should listen often and long and talk short and seldom.<sup>260</sup> True leaders understand the value of time spent listening.

The Scriptures continually tell the believer to renew their minds. "Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect."<sup>261</sup> The worship leader counsels even without being in a closed session. When the worship leader gives instructions, says a prayer, or has a heartfelt conversation – there is a component of counseling that occurs. Clinton and Hawkins say having God's peace concerning a previous action; is confident to receive it as God's confirmation.<sup>262</sup> The key is to give the Word of God and not personal opinions.

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<sup>258</sup> Tim Clinton and Ron Hawkins, *The Quick-Reference Guide to Biblical Counseling* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2009), 68.

<sup>259</sup> Sanders, *Spiritual Leadership*, 88.

<sup>260</sup> Ibid.

<sup>261</sup> Rom. 12:2.

<sup>262</sup> Clinton and Hawkins, *Biblical Counseling*, 68.

### *Worship Leader as Mentor*

Mentoring students is an essential responsibility for an individual who has walked the different responsibilities of leadership. Being a mentor guides the student through the forest of understanding – using the examples of errors that gave insight into the appropriate way to address concerns or challenges that rely on strong leadership to respond appropriately. Vernon Whaley believes that a mentor is an experienced advisor, supporter, counselor, coach, or trainer.<sup>263</sup> Mentoring has several departments within the fence of leadership to ensure that the mentee can learn the correct way of addressing the concerns of being a leader. Whaley maintains that mentors should be able to see potential in a person, accept mistakes in order for potential developments to occur, should be flexible with the needs of the mentee, should be respectful to the mentee, and be able to guide the mentee through lack of vision and the ability to see future outside the current circumstance.<sup>264</sup> Mentoring has a relationship component that allows for access when a conversation is needed. Mentoring includes interaction, trust, acceptance, and the creation of relationships.

When mentoring, it is essential to know where the person is in their perspective or thinking. The biblical text says, “Blessed are you, O Lord; teach me your statutes.”<sup>265</sup> When a mentee has the heart of a servant, they will experience to benefit from the legacy of the person they are emulating to be a better leader than their successor. Melvin Worthington claims that the worship leader is a mentor, model, pattern, example, and mold.<sup>266</sup>

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<sup>263</sup> Vernon Whaley, “The Making of a Mentor – Part 1” (Video Presentation, Liberty University, 2015).

<sup>264</sup> Ibid.

<sup>265</sup> Ps. 119:12.

<sup>266</sup> Melvin Worthington, “The Philosophy of Mentoring” (Video Presentation, Liberty University, 2015).

As the mentor and protégé form a relationship, a bond is created that inspires the student's attitude toward everything he or she will encounter. Lance D. Erickson and James W.

Phillips present a definition of a mentor:

A more experienced person who seeks to further the development of character and competence in a younger person by guiding the latter in acquiring mastery of progressively more complex skills and tasks in which the mentor is already proficient. The guidance is accomplished through demonstration, instruction, challenge, and encouragement on a more or less regular basis over an extended period of time. In the course of this process, the mentor and the young person develop a special bond of mutual commitment. In addition, the young person's relationship with the mentor takes on an emotional character of respect, loyalty, and identification.<sup>267</sup>

As the student spends time with the leader, mentoring creates partnerships because the student's view of their relationship with an adult makes it meaningful and valuable for adolescent development.<sup>268</sup> Regardless of how the relationship develops, a mentor can be practically anyone who values the development of a person they entrust to influence positively. Adults who play social roles that explicitly incorporate interactions are more likely to be identified by youth as a mentor.<sup>269</sup> Teachers, families, employers, and ministers are among the examples.<sup>270</sup>

A worship leader is a person who walks in the oracles of faith through the knowledge of the Bible. Walking in faith is vital to producing a rock-solid leader because others will follow the leader's leadership. As the worship leader, mentoring is loving them unconditionally – primarily through the process of how to guild others to the will of God. Scripture should be the foundation of the faith of any believer. The life of Jesus is an example of goodness that the mentor should

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<sup>267</sup> Lance D. Erickson and James W. Phillips, "The Effect of Religious-Based Mentoring on Educational Attainment: More than just a Spiritual High?" *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 51, no. 3 (2012): 569.

<sup>268</sup> Ibid.

<sup>269</sup> Ibid.

<sup>270</sup> Ibid.

strive to achieve. Christ died on the cross for the sins of man in order to give a gift called eternal life – this premise is the framework that mentors should follow when leading others on the road to being a great leader. It is critical for a mentor to spend time with Christ before beginning their day. George Morgan argues that it is supremely biblical to begin each day with a sacred ritual, a spiritual routine, including a standing appointment with the Lord to hear His voice, seek His blessings, and get His agenda for the day.<sup>271</sup> There must be a deposit of prayer because there will be a time when the leader will have to cash in patience. When there is a deposit of prayer, the mentor will respond appropriately and, thus, represent the heart of Christ in a way that is pleasing to God. The Bible says, “As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another.”<sup>272</sup> As the mentor is revealing their leadership style to the mentee, there is an exchange of knowledge and understanding, which helps both in the relationship to be better leaders at each level of their leadership. In Ecclesiastes, it says, “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.”<sup>273</sup>

Throughout history, there are stories of mentor and mentee relationships. Deuteronomy mentioned that Moses began mentoring Joshua at the beginning of his journey in the wilderness. Much after, God selected Joshua as the new king of the Israelites as he possessed the faith of Moses and had been mentored to the leadership role. In Kings, the Bible stated that Elisha, by his close connection to the prophet Elijah, was fitted for his prophetic ministry. As Elijah was carried up to heaven, his mantle fell on Elisha, and he got a double portion. In each situation,

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<sup>271</sup> Robert Morgan, *Mastering Life Before It's Too Late*, 110.

<sup>272</sup> Prov. 27:17.

<sup>273</sup> Eccl. 4:9-10.

there was a connection or access. It was not until the transition that the mantel or responsibility came upon the mentee. As the mentee served the mentor, a transference gave the mentee a more exceptional appointment because of their faithfulness to their leader.

### Summary

Knowledge is power, and students should get textbook knowledge and an awareness of how to live on campus as a student through the tutelage of the leader. Society is constantly changing, and it is essential to remember that things can shift in the blink of an eye. According to Vernon Whaley, God is raising this generation to usher in the next great awakening and the art discipline to facilitate this revival.<sup>274</sup> The new generation does not appear or act in the same way as earlier generations. As a result, students must comprehend the relationship between their talent and their ability to impact the world for Christ. Whaley says that every great awakening experienced in the history of the church was started or mobilized by young people.<sup>275</sup> Lavon Gray contends that vision is to see what has not yet come into play.<sup>276</sup> The eyes of each student are on the heels of the worship leader. Their teaching and mentorship serve as a guide for students as they seek to live out their faith on campus and in the community.

The worship leader has to be relevant to innovation and forward-thinking. In the biblical text, Matthew's account says, "Neither is new wine put into old wineskins. If it is, the skins burst and the wine is spilled, and the skins are destroyed. But new wine is put into fresh wineskins, and so both are preserved."<sup>277</sup> New wine is a new revelation and should not be packaged in the

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<sup>274</sup> Vernon Whaley, "The Relationship between our Artistic Disciplines and worship of God- A Holistic Approach: Part 2" (Video Lecture, Liberty University, 2017).

<sup>275</sup> Ibid.

<sup>276</sup> Lavon Gray, "Casting Vision for the Worship Ministry" (Video Lecture, Liberty University, 2017).

<sup>277</sup> Matt. 9:17.

old wineskins. Tradition is not bad; however, when it is not rooted in biblical truth, it will not stand when the waves of life happen. During a transformation, the skill-set needed for a worship leader is to articulate the vision with clarity and encourage the students to experience Christ-centered worship through the life of obedience.

Speaking in the future is communicating in faith. The biblical text says, “Where there is no prophetic vision the people cast off restraint but blessed is he who keeps the law.”<sup>278</sup> Casting the vision allows doubt and unbelief not to have a foothold in the ministry. Will Mancini believes that no leader should lead, no team should meet, and no initiatives should start without understanding the vision.<sup>279</sup> These are goals that are larger than the worship leader. Those ideas must be part of their plan to build the music ministry of the gospel choir to the next level because vision begins with the leader. The leader must share the details to ensure compliance.

One of the crucial responses to ensuring a healthy gospel choir is the spiritually healthy worship leader who has a Christ-centered lifestyle. The Bible says, “For the love of Christ controls us, because we have concluded this: that one has died for all; therefore all have died; and he died for all, that those who live might no longer live for themselves but for him who for their sake died and was raised.”<sup>280</sup> The worship leader’s life should be Christ-centered so that those who follow will see the light of Christ in their heart and leadership. The Bible proclaims, “Do nothing from rivalry or conceit, but in humility, count others more significant than yourselves.”<sup>281</sup> The layers of the worship leader have to serve the people with humility and love

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<sup>278</sup> Prov. 29:18.

<sup>279</sup> Will Mancini, *Church Unique: How Missional Leaders Cast Vision, Capture Culture, and Create Movement* (Jossey-Bass, a Wiley imprint, 2008), 113.

<sup>280</sup> 2Cor 5:14-15.

<sup>281</sup> Phil. 2:3.

so that Christ is on display and not the transition. A layer of leadership, according to Steven Miller, is a worship leader, as an evangelist, should not be ashamed of the gospel but proclaim it with all the passion knowing that it is the death-abolishing, eternal life-given power of God for salvation to all who believe.<sup>282</sup> Bob Kauflin contends that God has sent his Spirit to help us, and we should ask him to empower us by his Spirit.<sup>283</sup> When the life of the worship leader is focused on the things of Christ, the love of God will shine through the transition so that the people will only see Christ working within the leader. There is no room for anything but God being the focal point of any transition.

As the leader mentors the students, their influence will maneuver through campus and the community as a beacon of light in a dark world. Revival will begin to happen on campus like fire because leadership understands their role as not only a singer but a teacher, mentor, pastor, counselor, and disciple.

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<sup>282</sup> Stephen Miller, *Worship Leaders, We Are Not Rock Stars* (Chicago: Moody, 2013), 98.

<sup>283</sup> Bob Kauflin, *Worship Matters: Leading Others to Encounter the Greatness of God* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2008), 82.

## CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

### Introduction

Christ-centered leadership within the collegiate gospel choir is essential to mentoring, discipleship, and partnership on campus and within the community. As a result, a set of questions was created for collegiate gospel choir students from Charleston Southern University, the College of Charleston, The Citadel, and members of Mount Moriah Baptist Church in North Charleston, South Carolina. The belief is that this particular church would be a good representation of the entire community because of its member size, involvement with colleges, and community influence. This research investigated the impact and significance of Christ-centered leadership within collegiate gospel choirs.

### Design

Selecting the proper research method is essential to ensure that the proper research designs are appropriate. Consideration for the research design and methods is in the data collection, analysis, and interpretation of philosophical assumptions the researcher brings to the study.<sup>284</sup> The goal is to educate the readers by mentoring particular designs, carefully reflecting on this researcher's position within the study, drawing from an ever-expanding list of the type of data sources, utilizing specific protocols for capturing data, evaluating the information through many phases of analysis, and guiding techniques for establishing the methodological integrity or accuracy of the data.<sup>285</sup>

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<sup>284</sup> Creswell and Creswell, *Research Design*, 3.

<sup>285</sup> *Ibid.*, 179.



After a careful analysis of the three methodologies, the qualitative method approach was chosen because of the exploratory character of the study, which involves the participants' viewpoints when they associate their experience with a worship leader. The sample and the data collecting and recording processes will be discussed in this study. It will also go through the data analysis processes and the strategies for presenting the data, analyzing, verifying, and revealing research results. The primary concept of qualitative research is to learn about an issue or situation from individuals and then conduct research to collect that knowledge.

The study is phenomenological since it explores the experiences of a group of people who experiences the same phenomenon. Participants in this study have first-hand knowledge, which they use to articulate their understanding. The collegiate gospel choir and church members are a part of the ensemble, which has experienced the same phenomena. The research describes the lived experiences of persons concerning phenomena as stated by participants.<sup>286</sup> This account culminates with the essence of the experiences of various people who have all witnessed the phenomenon.<sup>287</sup>

### **Questions**

Perspectives on the worship leader, mentorship, discipleship, and partnership assist in the development of a comprehensive approach to the worship leader's purposeful worship balance. The chapter outlines the research methodologies used to fulfill the study objectives and provides answers to the following three questions.

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<sup>286</sup> Creswell and Creswell, *Research Design*, 13.

<sup>287</sup> Ibid.

Research Question One: In what ways can spiritually mentored collegiate gospel choir members contribute to the sense of community according to residential students?

Research Question Two: What strategies can be implemented by the leadership of the collegiate gospel choir to enhance the relationship between Charleston Southern University and the Charleston community?

Research Question Three: In what ways can the leadership of the collegiate gospel choir facilitate a deeper understanding of worship for both participants and audiences?

### **Participants**

To better understand the viewpoints of gospel choir students on different campuses in the Charleston, South Carolina areas, three universities were selected for this study; College of Charleston, The Citadel, and Charleston Southern University. Each school has students who are part of the gospel choir representing the school on campus and in the community. Some of the information came from each school's websites, and others came from their directors.

Mount Moriah Missionary Baptist Church of North Charleston, SC, represents the community. The congregation is under the teaching of Rev. Dr. Bryon Benton, senior pastor. This church is a beacon of light in the city of North Charleston, which continues to show the love of Christ not only in the four walls of the building but in the community.

#### *College of Charleston Gospel Choir*

The College of Charleston is a nationally recognized public liberal arts and sciences university located in the center of historic Charleston, South Carolina.<sup>288</sup> The College, founded in

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<sup>288</sup> "College of Charleston," *College of Charleston*, accessed February 3, 2022, <https://cofc.edu/about/#:~:text=Located%20in%20the%20heart%20of,education%2C%20student%20life%20and%20affordability>.

1770, is ranked among the top universities in the country for excellent education, student experience, and affordability.<sup>289</sup> The College includes over 10,000 undergraduates and nearly 1,000 graduate students with a dedicated faculty of around 800 teachers-scholar.<sup>290</sup> It blends a small-college vibe with the benefits and diversity of a mid-sized, metropolitan institution.<sup>291</sup> They collaborate closely with a dedicated faculty of around 800 teacher-scholars.<sup>292</sup>

The gospel choir is made up of students from different denominational backgrounds. The College of Charleston Gospel Choir is a vibrant ensemble that focuses on repertoire from the gospel tradition. Directed by Brenten Weeks, The Gospel Choir has toured extensively and been featured on statewide ETV, festivals, and local church events. According to Weeks, the choir is a group of students who take pride in the art of Gospel music.<sup>293</sup>

### *The Citadel Gospel Choir*

The Citadel is a Charleston and South Carolina landmark known for its academic reputation and rich history.<sup>294</sup> The institution was founded in 1842, and the Corps of Cadets consists of over 2,300 students.<sup>295</sup> Another 1,000 students are part of their online programs,

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<sup>289</sup> College of Charleston,” *College of Charleston*, accessed February 3, 2022, <https://cofc.edu/about/#:~:text=Located%20in%20the%20heart%20of,education%2C%20student%20life%20and%20affordability.>

<sup>290</sup> Ibid.

<sup>291</sup> Ibid.

<sup>292</sup> Ibid.

<sup>293</sup> Ibid.

<sup>294</sup> “Home - the Citadel - Charleston, SC,” *The Citadel*, accessed February 3, 2022, [https://www.citadel.edu/root/careers?gclid=CjwKCAiAI-6PBhBCEiwAc2GOVCMSuk2FQdYS6vJWbHHk2U\\_o0qRPV60VxJLYpM5E23CeWtsBu5qv6hoCtIUQAvD\\_BwE.](https://www.citadel.edu/root/careers?gclid=CjwKCAiAI-6PBhBCEiwAc2GOVCMSuk2FQdYS6vJWbHHk2U_o0qRPV60VxJLYpM5E23CeWtsBu5qv6hoCtIUQAvD_BwE)

<sup>295</sup> Ibid.

including graduate, professional, and undergraduate degrees.<sup>296</sup> The Citadel is well recognized around the country for attracting students from over 45 states and a dozen nations.<sup>297</sup> The men and women of the Corps live and learn in a classical military institution that emphasizes leadership and character development, a vital component of the educational experience.<sup>298</sup>

The Citadel Gospel Choir was originally started in the 80s but revived in August 2015.<sup>299</sup> The Citadel gospel choir is under Reverend Rodney Barrentine and Class of 2000 alumnus Momolu Cooper, who has worked with the group for more than two years. The Citadel Gospel Choir has about sixty men and women that sing together every week on campus for practices and potential events.<sup>300</sup>

### *Charleston Southern University Gospel Choir*

Charleston Southern University, originally known as Baptist College, is a private Southern Baptist university in North Charleston, South Carolina. Charleston Southern University is the only Christian university in the Lowcountry.<sup>301</sup> Students come from all around the country and represent a wide range of religious beliefs. The university believes that the gospel can change people's lives and that God has given each individual a unique set of skills and abilities.<sup>302</sup>

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<sup>296</sup> Home - the Citadel - Charleston, SC," *The Citadel*, accessed February 3, 2022, [https://www.citadel.edu/root/careers?gclid=CjwKCAiAl-6PBhBCEiwAc2GOVCMSuk2FQdYS6vJWbHHk2U\\_o0qRPV60VxJLYpM5E23CeWtsBu5qv6hoCtIUQAvD\\_BwE](https://www.citadel.edu/root/careers?gclid=CjwKCAiAl-6PBhBCEiwAc2GOVCMSuk2FQdYS6vJWbHHk2U_o0qRPV60VxJLYpM5E23CeWtsBu5qv6hoCtIUQAvD_BwE).

<sup>297</sup> Ibid.

<sup>298</sup> Ibid.

<sup>299</sup> "The Revival of The Citadel Gospel Choir," *The Citadel Today*, accessed February 3, 2022, <https://today.citadel.edu/revival-the-citadel-gospel-choir/>.

<sup>300</sup> Ibid.

<sup>301</sup> Jenna Johnson, "History: CSU," *Go to CSU*, last modified June 19, 2019, accessed February 3, 2022, <https://www.charlestonsouthern.edu/about/history/>.

<sup>302</sup> Ibid.

Students are encouraged to grow in their religion and discover their life's purpose. The school's vision is to be a Christian university nationally recognized for integrating faith in learning, leading, and serving; the university's mission is to promote academic excellence in a Christian environment.<sup>303</sup>

The Charleston Southern University Gospel choir was started as a club by students under the umbrella of campus ministries. In the fall of 2021, Wayne Ravenell, who had been the director of the choir for more than 25 years, designed the program and the gospel choir became a class in fall 2021. Ravenell stated that students in this class demonstrate syncopation and rhythm movement from a cultural viewpoint each week as they prepare for future events on campus and in the community. He believes that gospel music on a college campus has been a vehicle allowing students to demonstrate their heartfelt expression of love for Christ through the avenues of the gospel choir. When students gather for rehearsals, they do so not simply to prepare for performance but to represent Christ on campus and in their community.

#### *Mt. Moriah Missionary Baptist Church*

With representing the community in the Charleston area, this research uses the members of Mt. Moriah Missionary Baptist Church. Mount Moriah. The church was founded in 1892 by its first pastor, Reverend Stephany Milligan. The church has grown from a few members in a small wooden church on the side of a dirt road to over 2000 members and one of the leading African American churches in the Charleston area. The members represent six generations. Mt. Moriah believes in the Bible's inspiration and authority, Christ's Godhead, and redemption by grace through trust in the crucified and resurrected Lord Jesus Christ. They also emphasize the

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<sup>303</sup> Jenna Johnson, "History: CSU," *Go to CSU.*, last modified June 19, 2019, accessed February 3, 2022, <https://www.charlestonsouthern.edu/about/history/>.

local church's autonomy and believe in baptism for Believers. The worship experience is weekly, with two Bible studies on Wednesdays and a Sunday morning worship experience. The membership is traditional, with many of the retired military members continuing to be faithful to the call of ministry. In recent years, the church has seen transformational growth due to a new and younger pastor who has implemented a robust worship and ministry style, bringing the church from conventional to more modern.

The researcher chose this church because it invites different college gospel choirs during the fall and spring semesters. The collegiate gospel choir would be the guest choir, representing one choir from around South Carolina and North Carolina during their morning worship services. These choirs would lead the congregation in singing and praise, making the worship experience more engaging and joyful. The presence of these young, energetic students allowed the collegiate gospel choir participation in the worship experience, encouraging the young and older congregants to give God the highest praises. As the students sang, the church members of all ages would join in with hand clapping and singing as they encouraged the student with their joyous worship expressions. Once the morning worship experience has been done, students would have an opportunity to eat a home-cooked meal and interact with the church members after service.

### **Setting**

Qualitative research methodologies can observe average life through interpretive frameworks to get close to the study's setting and reveal developing social processes or

behavior.<sup>304</sup> In analyzing the data, this research will use Survey Monkey, a cloud-based survey tool that allows researchers to produce and evaluate the findings from surveys in real-time. The gospel choir advisors at the College of Charleston, Charleston Southern University, and the Citadel have agreed to share the survey link and encourage their students to complete the survey during one of their rehearsals. Each student will be given ample time to complete the survey. Because the survey is cloud-based, participants can access it from their devices, such as phones, laptops, or tablets.

With the concerns of Covid-19, many leaders are meeting virtually instead of in-person until the pandemic fears subside. For this reason, the Mount Moriah Baptist Church leaders will share the link with their members and volunteers through text or email. If there are any questions, the leader will have the researcher's information to refer to in the event of concerns.

Once the participant clicks on the link, they will be introduced to a consent form to take the survey or decline. If a person does not wish to participate, they have the option not to answer any of the survey questions.

### **Procedure**

After the researcher received permission from Liberty University's Institutional Review Board to conduct the survey, a letter is sent to Charleston Southern University, College of Charleston, the Citadel, and Mount Moriah Baptist Church. Each participant is sent a link to their email or smartphone, which is accessed through a desktop, laptop, or smartphone. The letter informed the participants about the study and encouraged them to complete the permission form.

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<sup>304</sup> Andrew M. Pettigrew, "The Conduct of Qualitative Research in Organizational Settings," *Wiley Online Library* (John Wiley & Sons, Ltd, July 29, 2012), last modified July 29, 2012, accessed February 3, 2022, <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/j.1467-8683.2012.00925.x>.

A letter was sent to Charleston Southern University, College of Charleston, the Citadel, and Mount Moriah Baptist Church after the researcher received permission from Liberty University's Institutional Review Board to conduct the survey. Each participant received an email or a link that could be accessed from their desktop, laptop, or smartphone. The letter explained the study to the participants and encouraged them to sign the consent form.

### **Recruitment**

This study aims to learn more about the impact of leadership on a collegiate gospel choir and how it affects students in terms of mentoring, discipline, and partnering. The researcher communicated with the leadership of the gospel choir, asking for permission to conduct the survey. Leaders were given all of the information they needed to communicate with participants in order for them to participate in the survey.

The membership of Mount Moriah Baptist Church is recruited in a similar manner to that of a college gospel choir; however, the church pastor or secretary will contact ministry leaders by email and text message to conduct the survey. Participants in both the schools and the church are under no obligation to take the survey.

### **Data Analysis**

According to Creswell, the idea is to purposefully select participants or sites that will best help the researcher understand the problem and the research question.<sup>305</sup> In general, the goal is to make sense of text and imagery data by breaking it down and putting it back together again.<sup>306</sup>

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<sup>305</sup> Creswell and Creswell, *Research Design*, 190.

<sup>306</sup> *Ibid.*, 192.



After all the data has been submitted at a particular time, it will be analyzed. The researcher will observe the data to get a general sense of the information to reflect on its overall meaning or interpretation. The next step is to develop a description and themes, which is done through the coding process. Themes are the ones that appear as significant findings in qualitative studies. Creswell argues that description involves a detailed render of information about people in a setting.<sup>307</sup> Interpreting the findings are visuals, figures, or tables as aides to the discussion.

### **Summary**

This chapter presents the argument that the worship leader within the gospel choir is essential to growing a healthy choir that is academically and spiritually rich. The Christ-centered leader encourages the students to express their creative minds in a certain way that aligns with the leader's viewpoint. The impact of the worship leader in a student's life is a significant influencer to the students they lead. Their presence instituted a behavior that begat other leaders.

Each semester, students join a gospel choir and become part of a family. They develop into a group of students that enjoy sharing and showcasing their talents as well as sharing the love of Jesus Christ with one another in rehearsal, on campus, and in the community. Mentorship is important because it provides another tool for supporting student leaders in becoming the role models they respect. Students in class, dining in cafeterias, wandering about campus, and in the neighborhood are all affected by the worship leader's involvement.

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<sup>307</sup> Creswell and Creswell, *Research Design*, 194.

## **CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS**

### **Introduction**

In this chapter, the data analysis from the survey will be discussed to test the hypotheses that (a) spiritually mentored collegiate gospel choir members contribute to the sense of campus community according to residential students by providing peer leadership, discipleship opportunities, and community partnership; (b) strategies that can be implemented by the leadership of the collegiate gospel choir to enhance the relationship between Charleston Southern University and the Charleston, community included training, events sponsorship, and community event participation; (c) leadership of the collegiate gospel choir can facilitate a deeper understanding of worship for both participants and audience by modeling a worship lifestyle, demonstrating spiritual discipleship, song lyric preparation, and facilitating Bible study opportunities. The findings are the results from the questionnaire sent to each participant.

### **Results**

The low participation of students and church members in the survey indicates the pandemic's impact on students and church members. As a result, participation rates were lower than anticipated during the pandemic. The data, however, does represent a significant part of the population on campus and in the community. Notably, 89 % of students who participated in the survey were undergraduates, while 10% were graduate students.

The qualitative study is centered on three research questions. Each question addresses the effects of having Christ-centered leadership within the collegiate gospel choir and its effects on the student, campus, and community. According to Virginia Braun, Victoria Clarke, Elicia Boulton, Louise Davey, and Charlotte McEvoy, fully qualitative surveys, prioritizing qualitative

research values and using qualitative data to its full potential, have a lot to offer qualitative researchers, especially with online delivery possibilities.<sup>308</sup>

The research employed a Likert-scale questionnaire style for its questions featuring a series of statements or questions that may be rated based on the strength of the response indicated by the respondent.<sup>309</sup> The two groups in this study were selected because of their involvement on a college campus and in the community. The gospel influence on campus is significant because their responsibility to perform on campus allows for their gift to be shown to other students. Mt. Moriah Missionary Baptist Church is one of the most prominent African American churches in Charleston. Their community footprint is significant because of several programs geared towards the community, especially young people. These two groups expressed their answers respective to their group. The survey comments reflected those who have expressed their personal views about the collegiate gospel choir performing at a morning worship experience. According to Stephen Porter, college student surveys have become one of the most popular and widely used data sources.<sup>310</sup> Furthermore, college student surveys are becoming increasingly significant in evaluating college and university programs and regulations.<sup>311</sup>

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<sup>308</sup> Virginia Braun, Victoria Clarke, Elicia Boulton, Louise Davey, and Charlotte McEvoy. "The Online Survey as a 0RW1S34RfeSDcfkexd09rT2Qualitative1RW1S34RfeSDcfkexd09rT2 Research Tool." *International Journal of Social Research Methodology* 24, no. 6 (11, 2021): 641-54,

<sup>309</sup> Kathy Hampson, "Using Likert-Scale Questionnaires with Vulnerable Young People: The Emotional Intelligence of Young People Who Have Offended." In *SAGE Research Methods Cases*. London: SAGE Publication Ltd., 2022. <https://dx.doi.org/10.4135/978144627305014536675>.

<sup>310</sup> Stephen R. Porter, "Do College Student Surveys Have Any Validity?, Association for Institutional Research (NJ1), 2010," Association for Institutional Research (NJ1), 2010. [eric.ed.gov, 0 0. https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED520485#:~:text=Given%20the%20limitations%20of%20institutional,and%20university%20programs%20and%20policies](https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED520485#:~:text=Given%20the%20limitations%20of%20institutional,and%20university%20programs%20and%20policies).

<sup>311</sup> Porter, "College Students."

## Research Question One

In what ways can spiritually mentored collegiate gospel choir members contribute to the sense of community according to residential students? The gospel choir is essential on a college campus because it influences students, faculty, and staff due to their singing on campus and in the community. In the study, partnership, mentorship, and discipleship were choices that were important to students. Though mentoring is essential for students, it was second to discipleship.

The study groups were asked their perspective on mentoring, discipleship, and partnership. 42% of students believe that discipleship is important to the growth and development of students. 65% of Mt. Moriah members believe that discipleship is necessary for students interacting within the community. 32% of the students expressed mentoring as important. 17% of Mt. Moriah believed that partnership was crucial when collaborating with students. Partnering with the community, 25% of the students believed it was necessary. However, only 8% of Mt. Moriah saw the partnership as important.

Mary Mwangi states that students spoke of their transformative experiences through discipleship.<sup>312</sup> The students repeatedly referred to their small group leader as their mentor.<sup>313</sup> Mwangi contends that the leader walked with the students as they learned about discipleship and making changes in the way they lived their lives.<sup>314</sup> Students who attend rehearsals need to connect with a worship leader who encourages them to experience God first, individually, in a choir or group, on campus, and in the community. The biblical text confirms that “For as in one

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<sup>312</sup> Mary Wanjiru Mwangi, "Perspective Transformation through Small Group Discipleship among Undergraduate University Students in Nairobi, Kenya." *Christian Education Journal* 15, no. 3 (12, 2018): 340-60, <http://ezproxy.liberty.edu/login?qurl=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.proquest.com%2Fscholarly-journals%2Fperspective-transformation-through-small-group%2Fdocview%2F2154920460%2Fse-2%3Faccountid%3D12085>.

<sup>313</sup> Ibid.

<sup>314</sup> Ibid.

body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another.”<sup>315</sup> Spiritually mentored collegiate gospel choir members contribute to the sense of community through authentic relationships, intentional communication, and being an example for others to follow.

### *Develop Authentic Relationships*

When a choir is connected, it produces a Christ-centered atmosphere where spiritual relationships are developed. Connecting with students builds a sense of community. 50% of the students surveyed strongly agreed that they joined the gospel choir to be with other students who shared their interests. The gospel choir's success is the result of a collaboration of students who recognize and respect the genre of gospel music, which allows each student to express their love for Jesus Christ. Dan Reiland believes that chemistry plays an active part in helping people connect and that it is the beginning of all authentic influence.<sup>316</sup> During every rehearsal, the leadership has an opportunity to encourage the students to witness a Christian who demonstrates the love of Christ in everything they do in rehearsal and on campus. A spiritual leader, according to Reiland, must live a life worth repeating or reproducing.<sup>317</sup> One of the students in the survey commented that “the Gospel choir is a place to give God your undivided attention and connect with others.”<sup>318</sup> Authenticity requires healthy relationships. To have an authentic relationship, one must have a genuine desire for the value of other individuals. Students become more attached to one another and the community around them when they feel safe. When they feel

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<sup>315</sup> Rom. 12:4-5.

<sup>316</sup> Dan Reiland, *Amplified Leadership* (Lake Mary, FL: Charisma House, 2011), 10.

<sup>317</sup> *Ibid.*, xxv.

<sup>318</sup> All survey responses were anonymous; the names of those surveyed are not identified.

connected, they are less likely to harm themselves or others, and they are more likely to succeed academically, socially, and psychologically. Students in the survey see the gospel choir as a safe place to share their talent and express their love for Christ.

The relational nature as people, combined with our spiritual fellowship as God's people, provides the necessary foundation for living as an authentic community of faith.<sup>319</sup> These same truths must also serve as the foundation for forming community in our student ministries.<sup>320</sup> No one can control or manipulate others, let alone teens, to develop genuine community, no matter how many social skills and leadership gifts they have. Biblical unity is a spiritual one, produced and established on a spiritual foundation rather than on the basis of external factors.<sup>321</sup> True community is defined by a shared faith in Christ, joint submission to His Lordship and leadership, and authentic fellowship in His Spirit.<sup>322</sup> In the biblical text of Matthew 9:36, Jesus demonstrated how personal investment could be used to leverage relationships to make disciples. Jesus' aim was filled with love, kindness, mercy, and grace for others. He felt compassion for them because he recognized their desperate situation and the need for sacrificial love and spiritual leadership.<sup>323</sup>

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<sup>319</sup> Scott R. Pace and Ed Newton. *Student Ministry by the Book: Biblical Foundations for Student Ministry*, edited by Heath A. Thomas, B&H Publishing Group, 2019. *ProQuest Ebook Central*, <http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/liberty/detail.action?docID=5973213>.

<sup>320</sup> Ibid.

<sup>321</sup> Pace and Newton, "Student."

<sup>322</sup> Ibid.

<sup>323</sup> Ibid.

### *Be Intentional in Communication*

The leader is essential for the gospel choir's fundamental sound and the behavior of students who perform on campus and in the community. As a worship leader, motivating the team is essential. When the team feels safe in the atmosphere of the worship leader, they will serve with gladness because they see that the leader communicates to ensure them of their relevance. Michael Lindsay says that leaders need to know how to wield their authority in a way that motivates them.<sup>324</sup> For a worship leader, that authority is their heart to Christ. John Tyner says that building a healthy relationship is to love, like one another, trust, honesty, fellowship, and mutual understanding.<sup>325</sup> Communicating is managing and motivating the base of the team. Whenever questions come into the team's minds, there has been an area that the leader has not articulated well, which plants a seed of confusion because of the lack of communication.

A leader must evaluate himself to be effective in the lives of his or her students. Leaders should be aware of the traits that irritate or perplex them personally. According to Ken Nichols, the first step toward a new self-image is to be brutally honest about personal flaws and weaknesses.<sup>326</sup> Because students can see through dishonesty in a person's character, it is essential to be transparent and show them the authentic leader. Genuineness is the most important aspect of authentic leadership, so each leader is unique. In this uniqueness lies that creative leader opportunity to minister to each student in love. Ministry is a call to service for a genuine Christian leader, not a position.

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<sup>324</sup> Michael Lindsay, *View from the Top: An Inside Look at How People in Power See and Shape the World* (NY: Wiley. 2014), 63.

<sup>325</sup> John Tyner, "Working Together to Bring Vision to Life" (Video Lecture, Liberty University. 2015).

<sup>326</sup> Ken Nichols, *Masterpiece: Seeing yourself as God's work of art changes everything*, (Lynchburg, VA: Liberty University Press), 20.

Establishing an intentional line of communication will discourage and, in some cases, eliminate any unhealthy climates of confusion within the team. Moses went to the mountain to pray to get direction from God to give to the people. The leader must also commit to following the pattern of communication with God and the people to keep the foundation of the worship experience Christ-centered. According to J. Oswald Sanders, God's leader will be defined by his ability to inspire others to serve and sacrifice.<sup>327</sup> It is the responsibility and duty of the worship leader to reflect the orderliness of God in all that is done for Him.<sup>328</sup> Sharing and caring entails shifting one's focus from one's perspective to that of another.<sup>329</sup> Being vulnerable can be scary, especially when scars are easily inflicted by students who are or have been through emotional trauma.

### *Be The Example*

When students join the gospel choir, they are looking for a person who can reflect order and spirituality. The fundamental aspect of the authentic gospel, according to Tim Sharp, is spirituality.<sup>330</sup> According to data, students 51% strongly agree that the gospel choir is vital to the spiritual health and development of the university. To develop is to mentor. Mentoring helps students learn in a safe atmosphere while being mentored by an experienced worship leader. It creates an optimal learning environment that is crucial to the student's development. The example that students experience is the daily interactions with the leader.

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<sup>327</sup> J. Oswald Sanders, *Spiritual Leadership: Principles of Excellence for Every Believer* (Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 2017), 86.

<sup>328</sup> Ibid.

<sup>329</sup> Timothy W. Herrmann and Kirsten D. Riedel, *A Calling to Care: Nurturing College Students Toward Wholeness* (Abilene Christian University Press, 2018), 37.

<sup>330</sup> Timothy Sharp, *Mentoring in the Ensemble Arts: Helping Others Find Their Voice* (Gia Publications, 2013), 19.



In analyzing the impact of Christ-centered leadership, 57% of students surveyed strongly agree that it is important to have an individual who works with the gospel choir understand the students they lead. Sharp says that mentoring provides young adults with career-enhancing functions, such as teaching, facilitating exposure and visibility, and offering challenging work or protection, which help the younger person establish a role in the organization.<sup>331</sup> Michael Lindsay says that leaders need to know how to wield their authority in a way that motivates people.<sup>332</sup> However, a low percentage of students do not believe that a leader needs to be Christ-centered to be necessary. Even though this study does not focus on this response, some factors may raise some concerns. The Gospel is the good news that God is redeeming our broken lives through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. For a gospel choir member who does not believe in spiritually led leadership, their perspective of leadership and governing are not grounded in faith in God, but rather in performance and accolades from others. In the biblical text, Paul expresses to the people, “For am I now seeking the approval of man, or of God? Or am I trying to please man? If I were still trying to please man, I would not be a servant of Christ.” Being part of any religious organization which believes in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, faith has to be the rock of their belief. The biblical text says, “And without faith, it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.”<sup>333</sup> “

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<sup>331</sup> Sharp, *Mentoring*, 27.

<sup>332</sup> Michael Lindsay, *View from the Top: An Inside Look at How People in Power See and Shape the World* (NY: Wiley, 2017), 63.

<sup>333</sup> Heb. 11:16.

The righteous live by faith, is conveyed in the book of Romans, “For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, the righteous shall live by faith.”<sup>334</sup> On the other hand, the love of Christ in a student may be precisely what a young person needs to shift their perspective toward Christ.

When students are confronted with a distressing scenario or require assistance with a problem, they will communicate with someone they can trust to provide accurate information to help them feel better about the situation. When this relationship is established, it creates an important bond between the leadership and the student.

### **Research Question Two**

What strategies can be implemented by the leadership of the collegiate gospel choir to enhance the relationship between Charleston Southern University and the Charleston community? This can be achieved by involving the community through choir-sponsored activities and community service.

#### *Partnering with the Community*

The gospel choir is more than singers but a ministry that expresses the love of Christ to all who listen. The responses from collegiate students suggest that singing gospel music is a way of communicating the love of Christ at the school and during community events. Students stated in the survey that they joined the gospel choir to connect with other students who shared similar interests. This information is significant because the students want to be with other students who enjoy singing gospel music and fellowshiping. Most students consider the gospel choir to be their second family. According to research, 64% of students who sing in the gospel choir

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<sup>334</sup> Rom. 1:17.

previously sang in a church or community choir. It speaks a lot about their commitment to continuing to use their talent at the collegiate level.

As the students perform, they exhibit their talents through the avenues of gospel music, allowing the gospel choir to share their gifts and expose the community to Charleston Southern University. Not only should the choir perform in church, but also at prisons, assisted living communities, social events, private parties, and grade schools. T. Shakespeare and A. Whieldon highlighted that events that included singing as part of the community experience regarded singing as a key aspect of the event, with the community appreciating the opportunity to sing.<sup>335</sup> Organizers saw it as an opportunity to sing together.<sup>336</sup> For many, it represented a chance to feel good and express happiness with others.<sup>337</sup> When focused on singing, it allowed participants to use it as a resource and interpret it however they wished.<sup>338</sup> Some saw it as a fun, low-key opportunity to sing; others saw it as a crucial component to the maintenance of their well-being.<sup>339</sup>

Members of the community church, Mt. Moriah Missionary Baptist Church who participated in the study, stated, "I look forward to hearing the collegiate gospel choir any time they visit the church." It is exciting to know that the college gospel choir is coming to the church. Another member stated, "Their participation positively impacts the students' spiritual growth,

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<sup>335</sup> Tom Shakespeare and Alice Whieldon, "Sing Your Heart Out: Community Singing as Part of Mental Health Recovery." *Medical Humanities* 44, no. 3 (09, 2018): 153, <http://ezproxy.liberty.edu/login?qurl=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.proquest.com%2Fscholarly-journals%2Fsing-your-heart-out-community-singing-as-part%2Fdocview%2F2098377500%2Fse-2%3Faccountid%3D12085>.

<sup>336</sup> Ibid.

<sup>337</sup> Ibid.

<sup>338</sup> Ibid.

<sup>339</sup> Ibid.

church spiritual diversity, and community growth and experience.” This person focused on the spiritual and mental impact it has on the students’ well-being. Some of the members witnessed their young person who left to enroll in college, only to return singing as a member of the collegiate gospel choir. In the survey, a participant stated, “I enjoy a gospel choir at our church on many occasions and am very proud to see a student that grew up in Mt. Moriah as a member – it tells me we are doing something right.”<sup>340</sup> Another participant stated that “as an HBCU Alumnus, the gospel choir of my colleges played a huge role in keeping me focused.”<sup>341</sup> This statement indicates a person who may have been easily distracted, but their participation in the gospel choir kept them focused on their academics. These statements confirm the impact of the collegiate gospel choir on the community. Their contribution encourages the congregation and an opportunity to showcase the college that the students represent to potential high school seniors or transfers. The choir is the byproduct of leadership. Leaders should engage with the student through encouragement, teaching, positive reinforcement, which encourages an optimistic perspective within the choir. Matthew McCraw argues that the role of the leader is instrumental in creating a healthy culture.<sup>342</sup>

### *Choir Sponsored Events*

To deepen the school-community relationship, the gospel choir can host events that highlight student talents, attend collegiate activities with local college gospel events, and create

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<sup>340</sup> All survey responses were anonymous; the names of those surveyed are not identified.

<sup>341</sup> Ibid.

<sup>342</sup> McCraw, Matthew Curtis. "Intentionally Creating Healthy Organizational Culture in the Local Church: A Multiple Case Study." Order No. 3746779, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2015. In PROQUESTMS ProQuest Central; ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global; Social Science Premium Collection, <http://ezproxy.liberty.edu/login?qurl=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.proquest.com%2Fdissertations-theses%2Fintentionally-creating-healthy-organizational%2Fdocview%2F1757273874%2Fse-2%3Faccountid%3D12085>.

events on campus that bring the community together around the arts of gospel music. Even though just 8% of the community views collaboration as important, there is still a potential to collaborate since 25% of students appreciate the possibility of joining forces. The value of performance opportunities that promote both socializing and community outreach and the function of ensemble participation in building and maintaining understandings of self-worth and self-esteem are all argued by Dawn Joseph and Jane Southcott.<sup>343</sup> While the students are developing friendships with one another, they also allow the community to witness the choir's harmony from a sociological perspective. According to Ronald Allen and Gordon Borrer, music is one of the most excellent ways to impart the biblical truth to the listeners since it presents practical ways to reach an unbelieving culture with the gospel message.<sup>344</sup> Music is a powerful tool in and of itself since it delivers a message to the listeners, motivating them to listen to the message being communicated. When a choir is out in the community, it is spreading the good news of Jesus Christ. In other words, it is a mission trip. Ronald Allen and Gordon Borrer suggest that mission is the result of God's initiative, rooted in His purposes to restore and heal creation. Mission means sending, and it is the central biblical theme describing the purpose of God's action in human history.<sup>345</sup> Many see a mission trip as going into a foreign country to share Christ. Sponsored community events can serve as a mission tool to showcase each student's gift and declare the good news. Vyacheslav Tsvirinko concludes that the believer is called to proclaim the good news of salvation, of forgiveness of sin, of life in abundance, and of liberation

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<sup>343</sup> Joseph, Dawn and Jane Southcott. "Older People in a Community Gospel Choir: Musical Engagement and Social Connection." *Qualitative Report* 22, no. 12 (2017): 3209.

<sup>344</sup> Ronald B. Allen and Gordon Borrer, *Worship: Rediscovering the Missing Jewel* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2000), 163.

<sup>345</sup> Lois Barrett and Darrell L. Guder, *Missional Church: A Vision for the Sending of the Church in North America* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2009), 4.

for all poor and oppressed.<sup>346</sup> He continues that believers are challenged to witness and evangelize so that we are a living demonstration of the love, righteousness, and justice that God intends for the whole world.<sup>347</sup> In essence, the mission begins when the believer walks outside the doors. As a result, the gospel choir should sponsor activities that encourage the community to encounter Christ through the ministry of gospel music.

### *Volunteering in the Community*

Students are tasked with volunteering to be part of the gospel choir each semester. Some students join the choir as an extracurricular activity that can sometimes be challenging because of the academic responsibilities. Nevertheless, they commit to the choir's ministry, ensuring that their gifts are being used. As students are committed to rehearsing each week, the choir must spend time within the community to volunteer their service. When students volunteer in the community, they are fulfilling a biblical viewpoint, "Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; if service, in our serving; the one who teaches, in his teaching; the one who exhorts, in his exhortation; the one who contributes, in generosity; the one who leads, with zeal; the one who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness."<sup>348</sup> Volunteering in the community is showing brotherly love – it is an opportunity for others to see Christ in the flesh through each student. Hebrews records, "let brotherly love continue. Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for thereby; some have entertained angels unawares. Remember those who are in prison, as though in prison with them,

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<sup>346</sup> Vyacheslav Tsvirinko, *Context, and Contextuality: The Mission of Migrant Churches with a Focus on the Pacific Coast Slavic Baptist Association* (Langham Creative Projects, 2018), 50.

<sup>347</sup> Tsvirinko, "Context," 50.

<sup>348</sup> Rom. 12:6-8.

and those who are mistreated, since you also are in the body.”<sup>349</sup> Apostle Paul is letting the believer know that it is important to share the love of Christ with the church and strangers. Both of whom need to witness the Agape love of Jesus.

According to Terrell Strayhorn, focusing attention on formalized support programs tends to obscure more subtle, nontraditional methods for support, such as voluntary participation in cultural activities like campus gospel choirs, which have grown in popularity on college campuses since the first one was founded at Howard University in the late 1960s.<sup>350</sup> Participants seemed to negotiate their sense of belonging at a college through their involvement in the gospel choir.<sup>351</sup>

As the students participate in activities on campus, it increases the visibility of witnessing Christ through the good news of Gospel Music. In Genesis 1:26, the biblical text states that we are created in God’s image. While this unique characteristic includes moral, intellectual, and governing capacities, the imago Dei is primarily a relational capacity.<sup>352</sup> All people are designed to dwell in personal fellowship with God, which distinguishes the believer from the rest of creation.<sup>353</sup>

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<sup>349</sup> Heb. 13:1-3.

<sup>350</sup> Terrell L.Strayhorn, "Singing in a Foreign Land: An Exploratory Study of Gospel Choir Participation Among African American Undergraduates at a Predominantly White Institution." *Journal of College Student Development* 52, no. 2 (2011): 137-153. doi:10.1353/csd.2011.0030

<sup>351</sup> Ibid.

<sup>352</sup> Pace, *Student Ministry*, 36.

<sup>353</sup> Ibid.

### Research Question Three

In what ways can the leadership of the collegiate gospel choir facilitate a deeper understanding of worship for both participants and audiences? A leader, from a secular perspective, has a great responsibility to shape the future of the people who are submitting to authority. Training, managing, teaching, and mentoring are a few obligations of being a leader in any position of authority. As a worship leader, the characteristics are similar, yet the divine vocation for this Kingdom assignment as a worship leader has significant divine responsibilities. In the study, 51% of students saw that the gospel choir plays a part in the spiritual campus. They understand that as they perform about Christ, they are sending a message of hope to the student body. Leadership must appreciate the importance of constantly learning about their role and its impact on choir members, students, professors, staff, and the community they serve. Understanding the importance of leading a gospel choir is modeling a Christ-like lifestyle, clearly communicating Christ, and knowing the mission.

#### *Exhibit Christlikeness*

Each leader has to see the value in each other to develop a relationship that fosters a mentor-mentee approach. A mentor is continually pouring into their mentee to ensure that they model the same behavior when they have the opportunity to lead others. Sanders believes that each leader should constantly pray that Christlikeness would be absorbed more quickly into their own personality.<sup>354</sup> Leaders should demonstrate the love of Christ in all situations by how they

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<sup>354</sup> Sanders, *Spiritual*, 41.



handle situations. Leaders must learn to carry Christ with them always, as a constant companion.<sup>355</sup>

It is essential to implement God's heart in everything we accomplish as a leader. Morning prayer should focus on the greatness of who He is and the marvelous things Christ is doing. Patrick Lencioni claims that leaders should serve with a heart of humility and love.<sup>356</sup> The biblical text declares, "But he gives more grace. Therefore, it says, 'God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble.'"<sup>357</sup> Humility is an important character. Even Christ recognizes the importance of humility Scripture declares, "Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hands of God so that at the proper time, he may exalt you." For the worship leader, that authority is their heart to Christ. Tyner says that building a healthy relationship is to love, like one another, trust, honesty, fellowship, and mutual understanding.<sup>358</sup>

### *Develop a Teaching Environment*

Communicating is managing and motivating the base of the team. Whenever questions come into the minds of the team, there has been an area that has not been articulated from the leader, which plants a seed of confusion because of the lack of communication from the worship leader. Establishing an intentional line of communication will discourage and, in some cases, eliminate any unhealthy climates of confusion within the team. Moses went to the mountain to pray to get clear direction from God to give to the people. Any implementation or directive needs

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<sup>355</sup> Marcus Dods, *How to Become Like Christ, and Other Papers*, (1st ed. Vol. 6;6., New York: T. Whittaker), 18.

<sup>356</sup> Patrick Lencioni, *The Ideal Team Player: How to Recognize and Cultivate The Three Essential Virtues*. (Germany: Wiley, 2016), 50.

<sup>357</sup> Jm. 4:6.

<sup>358</sup> Michael Lindsay, *View from the Top: An Inside Look at How People in Power See and Shape the World*, (NY: Wiley, 2017), 63.

clarity. The biblical text says, “Write the vision; make it plain on tablets, so he may run who reads it.”<sup>359</sup> The worship leader must also commit to following the pattern of communication with God and the people to keep the foundation of the worship experience Christ-centered. Graham Johnston noted that it is very important to present the message of Christ with freshness, relevance, and meaning to a generation of listeners who do not know what they are missing.<sup>360</sup>

Leadership training is vital to a gospel choir. There is a leadership turnover in the gospel choir every four years because of students graduating. So, it is necessary to develop a consistent training regiment each school year.

### ***Training***

Leadership development prepares the people to function in ministry and equips them to be effective. Though students who serve in leadership will change, the deposit they leave influences the next group of students. Because standards and best practices constantly change, Reiland believes that training must be current.<sup>361</sup> Living in an ever-changing world is typical to most young adults. Training should be engaging and periodically changing the delivery methods to keep the teaching relevant. Bringing a guest to training on campus or traveling off-campus is a great way to move the leaders from a place of familiarity. Reiland cautions to have a balanced training opportunity:

The bible is always relevant, but I have observed too many equipping sessions that devoted hours and hours to studying the Bible and left little or no time for actual ministry training. God’s Word will not return voice, but it may not address the specific skills your

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<sup>359</sup> Hab 2:2.

<sup>360</sup> Graham M. Johnston, *Preaching to a Postmodern World: A Guide to Reaching Twenty-first Century Listeners*, (Baker Books, 2001), 21.

<sup>361</sup> Reiland, *Amplified Leadership*, 113.

team will need to be effective in a particular area of ministry. One of the most practical things a leader can do is offer hands-on training as part of the equipping process.<sup>362</sup>

The worship leader's symmetry is to have a balanced, non-biased ministry teaching experience. Scripture records, “A false balance is an abomination to the Lord, but a just weight is his delight.”<sup>363</sup> Though this passage refers to Solomon's period when dishonesty was practiced using scales, it also refers to manipulating the Bible to make it one-sided in a message for personal gain.

### ***Knowing the Mission***

Leaders and choir should be conscious of the choir's mission in order to work together harmoniously. The mission represents a general or overall perspective to an action. A mission statement is a broad, regularly occurring declaration about whom the leadership wants to acquire and what the choir hopes to achieve. Essentially a philosophic statement that undergirds the heart of the ministry.<sup>364</sup> The mission is a matter of principle, and something can be done in failure and success.<sup>365</sup> As the mission is understood, it gives meaning to life; it brings clarity of where the ministry is positioned and where each person fits within the confines of the mission. The mission is personal and not impersonal – it is not just principle-centered; it is God-centered. Each word that is penned in the mission statement should be a reflexing of the passion of love for an assignment that echoes the values of the ministry.

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<sup>362</sup> Ibid., 114.

<sup>363</sup> Prov. 11:1.

<sup>364</sup> George Barna, *The Power of Vision* (Grand Rapids: MI: Baker Books), 2009. 31.

<sup>365</sup> Matt Perman, *What's best next: how the gospel transforms the way you get things done* (Grand Rapids: MI: Zondervan, 2014), 67.

## Summary

According to this research, Christ-centered leadership within the collegiate gospel choir improves relationships among students, campus, and community. Research question one reveals that to have spiritually mentored collegiate gospel choir members contributing to a sense of community is to develop an authentic relationship with the students, be intentional in communication and be the example for other students to follow. Answers to research question two introduce strategies that can be implemented to improve the relationship between Charleston Southern University and the Charleston community. This is done by partnering with community opportunities, choir-sponsored events, and volunteering in the community. Question three asks in what ways the leadership of the collegiate gospel choir can facilitate a deeper understanding of worship for both participant and audience. This is accomplished through exhibiting Christlikeness and developing a teachable environment.

## **CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION**

### **Introduction**

The focus of this section is to summarize the findings of this qualitative investigation by highlighting the major themes. This chapter will discuss the shared experiences from selected colleges and participants of a local church in North Charleston, South Carolina. This research will show the result of having a collegiate gospel choir being spiritually mentored, the implementation of strategies to enhance the relationship between Charleston Southern University and the Charleston community, and how the leadership of the collegiate gospel choir can facilitate a deeper understanding of worship for both participants and audience. This chapter will also discuss the significance and benefits of the study and its limitations, along with recommendations for further research.

### **Summary of Findings**

A Christ-centered leader has a significant influence that benefits the students, campus community, and the public. There was consistency with the students and members from Mt. Moriah Baptist Church. Three themes emerge from the findings: community partnership, mentorship, and discipleship.

#### *Partnering within the Community*

When the college gospel choir sings or participates in off-campus activities, it raises awareness of the institution and allows the community to witness the choir's musical performance and discipline. Members of Mt. Moriah Baptist Church expressed, "It is inspiring to

see the young people praise and worship God.”<sup>366</sup> This individual experience the sight and sound of the collegiate gospel choir and was inspired to hear the heart of the students giving God praise and worship in their way. Many in the survey echoed that it is essential to the community of young and old to hear the young generation doing something positive to encourage others of Jesus Christ. Emmanuel Stokes comments that the gospel choir provides space for students to commune socially, express faith, and gain cultural knowledge.<sup>367</sup>

The Mt. Moriah Baptist Church invites a college each month of the academic year to participate in the worship experience at both worship services. Committees of the young adult ministry and kitchen staff would prepare for the gospel choir with a light breakfast between services. After the second service, the students would be escorted to the church’s family life center, where the students would walk in the gym area, and immediately the joy of smelling the food while walking into the building and the happy faces from both the students and the church staff are priceless. Valeriy Alikin asserts that as a rule, whenever early Christians met as a community, they shared a meal.<sup>368</sup> There is nothing like fellowship and food after a worship service.

The significance of this interaction is that it allows each student who may be away from home to connect with a church while a student at the school. It also allowed the youth of the church who may be seeking for a college to attend the opportunity to connect with a college student and be inspired by the encounter to consider enrolling in the institution once they

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<sup>366</sup> All survey responses were anonymous; the names of those surveyed are not identified.

<sup>367</sup> Emmanuel Stokes, ‘You’re in the Right Place at the Right Time’: Double Consciousness, Cultural Memory, and Cultural Representation in College Gospel Choirs,” 2013. <https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=ddu&AN=7D3C28434F2D4628&site=ehost-live>.

<sup>368</sup> Valeriy A. Alikin, *The Earliest History of the Christian Gathering: Origin, Development and Content of the Christian Gathering in the First to Third Centuries*, (BRILL, 2010), 1.

graduate. A member of Mt. Moriah stated, “It is important to the community because it motivates the younger generations and encourages older generations to support the young adults in their endeavors.”<sup>369</sup> According to Rachel McNae and Bronwen Cowie, the benefits of partnering require openness and ongoing dialogue, which can possibly transform students learning experience.<sup>370</sup>

Coming together to hear the sounds of gospel music from the future generation of physicians, attorneys, entrepreneurs, soldiers, pastors, and even a president benefits students, congregation, volunteers, and the community. The gospel is a dramatic story, and worship leaders can enhance worship by making the drama visible.<sup>371</sup> As the members of the congregation experience the sound of youth in their church, it encourages each person in a particular way. Joyce Zimmerman comments that worship is not a stagnant ceremony but a living community of men and women, children and youth adults who turn themselves toward God through uniting themselves with Christ in his own turning toward his Father in heaven.<sup>372</sup>

### *Mentorship*

Mentorship is the study's second finding. Mentoring has a significant impact on students and the Mt. Moriah community. By definition, mentoring is an integral part of one's professional development as well as a community contribution. Carlos McCray and Bruce Cooper propose

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<sup>369</sup> All survey responses were anonymous; the names of those surveyed are not identified.

<sup>370</sup> Rachel McNae, and Bronwen Cowie, *Realising Innovative Partnerships in Educational Research: Theories and Methodologies for Collaboration*, edited by Peters, Michael A., Bronwen Cowie, Rachel McNae, Rachel McNae and Bronwen Cowie, Vol. 1;1. Leiden;Boston; Brill | Sense, 2017. doi:10.1007/978-94-6351-062-2.

<sup>371</sup> Michael J. Walters, *Can't Wait for Sunday: Leading Your Congregation in Authentic Worship*, (UnitedStates: Wesleyan Publishing House, 2006), 74.

<sup>372</sup> Joyce Ann Zimmerman, *Worship with Gladness: Understanding Worship from the Heart*, William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2014.

that mentoring relationships benefit both the individuals involved and the community in the longterm.<sup>373</sup> Mentoring is a fluid process that goes through stages. Any relationship is not perfect but should be flexible enough for growth and development. McCray and Cooper concede that when it comes to building a relationship, both the mentor and the mentee should strive to strengthen their bond constantly.<sup>374</sup> In several scriptures, the biblical text depicts that relationships are primary because it is how God established and preserved His commandments. Mentoring is a way of raising mature Christian disciples within the body of Christ. Several scripture references argue this: "Two are better than one because they have a good reward for their toil. For if they fall, one will lift up his fellow. But woe to him who is alone when he falls and has not another to lift him up."<sup>375</sup> Iron sharpens iron, and one man sharpens another."<sup>376</sup>

Mentoring, according to Andrew Miller, should be simple since big social concerns can be addressed by focusing on the needs of a single person.<sup>377</sup> Direct because it allows an adult to provide direct assistance to a young person in order to make a positive influence in their lives.<sup>378</sup> Mentoring is a low-cost alternative to pricey government programs and public-sector labor; thus, it should be affordable.<sup>379</sup> Mentoring should be compassionate because being referred to be a

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<sup>373</sup> Carlos R. McCray and Bruce Cooper, *Mentoring with Meaning: How Educators Can Be More Professional and Effective* (Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2015), 1.

<sup>374</sup> Ibid., 10.

<sup>375</sup> Eccl. 4:9-10.

<sup>376</sup> Prov. 27:17.

<sup>377</sup> Andrew Miller, *Mentoring Students, and Young People: A Handbook of Effective Practice* (Taylor & Francis Group, 2002), 7.

<sup>378</sup> Ibid.

<sup>379</sup> Ibid.



mentor is a prestigious title with a lengthy tradition.<sup>380</sup> It is legitimate because it is acknowledged as a proper role for unattached adults to play in the lives of children and adolescents, and it is flexible because it can be employed for a variety of purposes and appeals<sup>381</sup>.

### *Discipleship*

This research confirmed that discipleship is the primary focus of community and collegiate students. The biblical reference depicts Jesus saying, “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit...”<sup>382</sup> A disciple is anyone who has accepted Christ's love and wants others to join the family of believers. The gospel choir has a unique situation because of their gift to sing the good news of Christ. The spread of the Gospel of Christ C.S.B Holman and Robby Gallaty claim that to spread Christ's love; instruction must encourage each learner to grasp the fundamentals of being a disciple of Christ.<sup>383</sup> When people are surrounded by men and women who challenge one other to love and obey Jesus daily, their spiritual experiences grow exponentially more passionate and meaningful. As the students and community make disciples for Christ, it is essential to teach everything that Christ commands in obedience to His Word.

While the country is currently in a pandemic at the time of this writing, it is essential to encourage the leaders to develop creative ways to share with the people. In some way, every disciple is a student who has learned and commits to memory what he learns on the path of discipleship, whether through seeing, reading, or hearing.

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<sup>380</sup> Miller, *Mentoring*, 7.

<sup>381</sup> Ibid.

<sup>382</sup> Matt., 28:19.

<sup>383</sup> C.S.B Holman and Robby Gallaty, *CSB Disciple's Study Bible* (B&H Publishing Group, 2017), 100.

Jesus ministered to four distinct groups of people: The masses who followed, those who would identify themselves as disciples, the twelve disciples, and His inner circle.<sup>384</sup> The masses represent individuals familiar with Jesus' work; the twelve disciples and inner circle indicate those who were able to touch Him because they understood the cost of following Him. The biblical text declares, “Then Jesus told his disciples, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.”<sup>385</sup> To be a disciple of Christ means leaving familiarity behind to pursue the heart of love, accepting responsibility for learning His way of thinking or perspective, and being close enough to obtain wisdom and healing. These are a few areas that a student in a collegiate gospel choir should be aware of as part of their discipleship development.

### **Significance**

According to the findings of this study, collegiate gospel choir students and the community are interested in discipleship and mentorship and its impact on the local church congregation and the institution. The importance of spiritually competent leadership is that they recognize the difficulty of being qualified to lead a generation whose belief system may differ from their own. Given the world's diversity, gospel choir leaders must be believers who have accepted the responsibility of leading a Christian organization. Let us consider a few perspectives.

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<sup>384</sup> Holman and Galtay, *CSB Disciple's Study Bible*, 106.

<sup>385</sup> Matt. 16:24.

### *Prepared to Lead Students*

There will be times when leadership must go above and beyond the call of duty to ensure that the organization is prepared for the next assignment. The results are beneficial because it gives relevance to a leader's characteristic and how their influence can affect change. To affect change requires knowing and understanding the responsibility to serve and not only the title to have a position to delegate. Many want the title but not the responsibility but are not prepared. Sanders claims that a Christian who is hesitant to get up early, work late, and put in more effort in diligent study and in faithful work will not change a generation.<sup>386</sup> Being the first to arrive and the last to leave is the cost of leading. Stephen Miller believes that leaders should be living sacrifices, whose lives should be overflowing with the righteousness that comes from walking in trust and obedience.<sup>387</sup>

### *Establishing a Sense of Belonging*

As the leader is actively involved in the affairs of the collegiate gospel choir helps students establish a sense of belonging on campus. Research tells that students are very concerned about the community. When students gather, they participate in their conversations with other students. It is this dialog that builds community within the gospel choir. Paul Pettit says community refers to people who share something in common.<sup>388</sup> As students interact, they are building their sense of community within the foundation of a Christ-centered atmosphere. Pettit implies that Scripture focuses on humans experiencing community with God and one

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<sup>386</sup> Sanders, *Spiritual Leadership*, 144.

<sup>387</sup> Stephen Miller, *Worship Leaders: We Are Not Rock Stars* (Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 2013), 28.

<sup>388</sup> Paul Pettit, *Foundations of Spiritual Formation: A Community Approach to Becoming Like Christ* (Rapids, MI, 2008), 72.

another.<sup>389</sup> The original community, according to Genesis, where Adams and Eve. In essence, Pettit comments that God created humans as a community for the community.<sup>390</sup>

### **Limitations**

In this research, limitations were not prevalent until the data was collected. The schools chosen for this study were predominately white institutions (PWI). No historically black college or university (HBCU) participated in this study. Most of the students in the gospel choir are predominately African American. It has been the experiences of Karen Burke that students from diverse socio-economic backgrounds, cultures, and levels of musical ability have served to underscore the effectiveness of gospel music as an educational tool.<sup>391</sup>

Secondly, the spiritual walk of each student is different because of their individual background. Understanding the complexities of men and women regarding spirituality in a gospel choir can be difficult because of the dynamics when identifying cultural indifference. Karen Burke claims that the culture on the campus of a historically black institution can be different on the campus of a predominantly white institution which exists at a crossroads of culture in which old meets young; Black meets White and traditional meets contemporary.<sup>392</sup>

Thirdly, students who attend a predominantly white institution have stated that there are barriers for an African American student. Russell Thacker and Sydney Freeman state:

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<sup>389</sup> Pettit, *Formation*, 74.

<sup>390</sup> *Ibid.*, 75.

<sup>391</sup> Karen Burke, "Making Room for Gospel Music in Post-Secondary Institutions: A Canadian Perspective." *The Canadian Music Educator* 63, no. 1 (2021): 14-9, <http://ezproxy.liberty.edu/login?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.proquest.com%2Fscholarly-journals%2Fmaking-room-gospel-music-post-secondary%2Fdocview%2F2582443324%2Fse-2%3Faccountid%3D12085>

<sup>392</sup> Karen Burke, "The Gospel Choir: Community in Motion," YorkSpace Home, August 17, 2015, <https://yorkspace.library.yorku.ca/xmlui/handle/10315/34207>, 41.

Lack of access to professional networks for particular racial groups, a lack of appropriate role models, segregated networks of professionals, a lack of mentors for individuals of specific racial and ethnic groups, the lack of a postgraduate or terminal degree, the lack of fluency in a foreign language, and work in academic departments or settings in which individuals are unwilling to reorganize their work or priorities around issues of cultural diversity.<sup>393</sup>

Diversity on college campuses has been a conversation that has changed many of the practices of institutions. Myron Pope and Cynthia Moore contend that for many African American students, going to college, especially to a Predominantly White Institution, can be a culture shock and that institutions of higher education must establish and support programs that are conducive to the full development of these and all students.

### **Recommendations**

Further research should consider the effects of African American gospel choir students attending a predominantly white institution that does not musically support gospel music on campus. Karen West, Waldon Hagan, and Krite Norwood state that there is a need among African Americans attending Predominantly White Institutions to seek and rely on spirituality for support and as a coping mechanism, and the fact that spirituality is a developmental construct..<sup>394</sup>

Secondly, there should be an additional study of how a gospel music course may be offered as a credited course and how it might address campus diversity issues. Many students responded in the study that they desire the gospel choir to be a credited course. Having a gospel choir as a credited course opens the door for all students looking for a course to satisfy a program requirement. Students who would normally not join the gospel choir will have a first-hand experience of the music. Patrice Turner observed that many music educators wish to incorporate

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<sup>393</sup> Russell S. Thacker, and Sydney Freeman, "When I Show Up": Black Provosts at Predominantly White Institutions." *Harvard educational review*. 91, no. 2 (2021): 157.

<sup>394</sup> Ibid.

the style into their courses but are unfamiliar with it.<sup>395</sup> There is a lack of qualified professors to teach this genre of music because it is not taught at the graduate level. The gospel choir, for many students, is an outlet to experience the joy of singing gospel music with their peers. Turner comments that one of the most rewarding experiences occurred while a student at Ohio State University was when she enrolled in the gospel and spiritual choral ensemble.<sup>396</sup> Schools that invested in their gospel choirs through their music departments designed a course to teach gospel music and present African American contributions to students as part of comprehensive music education. Young found that gospel choirs that the school of music established were formed for the purpose of teaching gospel music and sharing the contributions of African Americans to music as part of comprehensive music education.<sup>397</sup>

Thirdly, a study of the retention of gospel music students at an institution. When students join a campus club or group, they can express themselves in ways that they would not have been able to if they had not joined. Joining a gospel choir is a way for members to remain on campus and graduate. Because students come from different social-economic backgrounds and spiritual beliefs, it is essential that they have the opportunity to express their talents. Julie Park believes that many students grow up in segregated environments; college may be the first time that they have the opportunity to live, learn, and work in a racially diverse environment.<sup>398</sup> Park acknowledges that positive cross-racial interaction and interracial friendship are key racial

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<sup>395</sup> Patrice E. Turner, "Getting Gospel Going." *Music Educators Journal* 95, no. 2 (12, 2008): 62-8, <http://ezproxy.liberty.edu/login?qurl=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.proquest.com%2Fscholarly-journals%2Fgetting-gospel-going%2Fdocview%2F1105397%2Fse-2%3Faccountid%3D12085>.

<sup>396</sup> Ibid.

<sup>397</sup> Young, "Purpose of Gospel Choir," 677.

<sup>398</sup> Julie J. Park, "Clubs and the Campus Racial Climate: Student Organizations and Interracial Friendship in College," *Journal of College Student Development* 55, no. 7 (2014): 641-660. doi:10.1353/csd.2014.0076.

indicators of a healthy campus.<sup>399</sup> When students are not engaging with one another, it is unlikely that they will reap the benefits of engaging in a diverse student body.<sup>400</sup> There should be an intentional effort from the institution to ensure all students can enjoy their culture on campus.

### Summary

The college gospel choir is essential for students because of its effects on mentoring, disciplining, and community partnership. Erickson and Phillips conclude that religious organizations provide an amiable, intimate, and non-age-graded environment that is particularly conducive to developing meaningful and influential adolescent-adult relationships.<sup>401</sup> Danielle McCall and Jason Castles mention that being a part of a community is vital to each student because it gives each a place to develop their identity.<sup>402</sup> A gospel choir is a place where students can learn to interact at various levels. For decades, educators and psychologists have investigated the concept of belonging.<sup>403</sup> A primary human desire is to feel connected to others.<sup>404</sup> Feeling part of a community is important to growth at any point in a student's academic career.<sup>405</sup> Students' perceived social support on campus precedes the feeling or sensation of connectedness, which is

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<sup>399</sup> Park, "Club," 55.

<sup>400</sup> Ibid.

<sup>401</sup> Lance D. Erickson and James W. Phillips, "The Effect of Religious-Based Mentoring on Educational Attainment: More than just a Spiritual High?" *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 51, no. 3 (2012): 568-587.

<sup>402</sup> Danielle J. McCall, and Jason Castles, "A Place for Me? African American Transfer Student Involvement on the Campus of a Predominantly White Institution in the Midwest.," *Journal of Black Studies* 51, no. 6 (September 2020): 587-610. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0021934720926501>.

<sup>403</sup> Ibid.

<sup>404</sup> Ibid.

<sup>405</sup> Ibid.

the experience of mattering or feeling cared about, accepted, respected, valued by, and essential to the gospel choir or peers on campus.<sup>406</sup>

The research reveals that students require mentoring because interaction with other students and mentors is beneficial as each student's character develops. It allows students to think differently than they would if they did not have a friend or mentor to encourage them. Partnership with the community with events or participating in singing is a way to build community relationship which encourages students and the community who may attend events. When capable leaders are in place, many campus challenges are resolved. Their influence significantly impacts the gospel choir's performance and outlook. The equilibrium of education and a Christ-centered leadership perspective will foster a future generation of leaders who will experience collegiate gospel choir more than just entertainment at a church service or community event but as an opportunity to inspire each student and public with the spirit of love and compassion through Jesus Christ.

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<sup>406</sup> McCall and Castles, "A Place," 587.



## APPENDIX 1

### SURVEY QUESTIONS TO COLLEGE STUDENTS

What is your classification?

Undergraduate

Postgraduate

I sang in a church or community choir prior to joining the collegiate gospel choir.

Yes and No

I am a music major student?

Yes and No

Participation in the gospel choir has expanded my social outlook with other students on campus?

Yes and No

The gospel choir is a credited course?

Yes and No

My participation in the gospel choir has given me the tools to be a better person within the community (e.g., churches or events where the gospel choir will sing).

Strongly Agree – Strongly Disagree

I joined the choir for spiritual growth.

Strongly Agree – Strongly Disagree

I joined the gospel choir because it was a credit course.

Yes and No

I joined the gospel choir to be with other like-minded students.

Strongly Agree – Strongly Disagree

Having Christ-centered leadership is important to the choir.

Strongly Agree – Strongly Disagree

My spiritual walk with God has improved since joining the gospel choir.

Strongly Agree – Strongly Disagree

My life has been changed for the better since being part of the gospel choir.

Strongly Agree – Strongly Disagree

Senior leadership (professor/student executive board) is actively involved in the growth of each student.

Strongly Agree – Strongly Disagree

What dynamic of leadership is important to you?

Leadership from a student

Leadership from a professor

Leadership from both

As a member of the gospel choir, what is important to you?

Discipleship

Mentorship

Partnership

Other \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX 2

### SURVEY QUESTIONS TO MT. MORIAH

What is your age group?

- a. 18-24
- b. 25-34
- c. 35-44
- d. 45-54
- e. 55-64
- f. 65+

As a congregant of Mt. Mount Moriah Baptist Church, have you experienced or viewed the gospel choir during morning worship?

Yes and No

Is the collegiate gospel choir important to the community?

Yes and No

Should gospel choir be a credited course for students?

Yes and No

The church membership enjoys hearing the collegiate gospel choir singing at the church.

Strongly Agree – Strongly Disagree

The gospel choir's participation in the worship experience encourages grade school students and congregation.

Strongly Agree – Strongly Disagree

The younger generation of the church appreciates experiencing the collegiate gospel attending morning worship or whenever they perform in the community.

Strongly Agree – Strongly Disagree

The collegiate gospel choir attendance is a tool to recruit potential students.

Strongly Agree – Strongly Disagree

When the gospel choir participates in community activities (e.g., morning church services or community events), it raises awareness of the college or university they represent.

Strongly Agree – Strongly Disagree

The interaction between the gospel choir members and the congregation is critical in developing a community-building relationship.

Strongly Agree – Strongly Disagree

I am satisfied with the presentation of the gospel choir when they visit the church.

Strongly Agree – Strongly Disagree

As a church member, what is most important to you for a collegiate gospel choir?

- g. Discipleship
- h. Mentorship
- i. Partnership Development
- j. Other \_\_\_\_\_

Comments \_\_\_\_\_

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