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JOHN W. RAWLINGS SCHOOL OF DIVINITY

A Training Manual for Small-Group Evangelization of Youth Unbelievers

Submitted to Dr. Brian Moulton

In fulfillment of the requirements for the completion of

the Doctor of Ministry Degree

Department of Christian Leadership and Church Ministries

by

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Thesis Project Approval Sheet

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THE DOCTOR OF MINISTRY THESIS PROJECT ABSTRACT

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This thesis project is a study on the evangelism toward young adult unbelievers by church members of The Power of the Living God Church of Galveston. This DMin action research project aims to motivate church members to evangelize this critical group of unbelievers. The focus will concentrate on the reasons given by members for non-participation. The questions concerning the lack of participation would be analyzed to assess the behavior of the members and to ultimately determine a path forward for effective participation. The project will utilize interviews and focus groups to ascertain the reasons for the lack of motivation for evangelism toward this targeted group. The answers to the questions concerning the lack of participation will be analyzed to assess the behavior of the church members. This project aims to motivate mature church members to participate in the outreach ministries toward this group of young adults. The thesis project will also include this researcher's study of other sources addressing this area of evangelism for younger unbelievers. This research project will ultimately set forth a path for members to learn and engage in this endeavor toward the evangelization of the youth unbelievers.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Introduction

This thesis project is a study on the evangelism towards young adult unbelievers by church members in the context of The Power of the Living God Church of Galveston.[1] The project covers the historical, geographical, cultural, and the demographic impact within the church. The focus of the project is to motivate mature church members to participate in outreach ministries towards young adults. Included are the project's ministry context, the project's problem statement, purpose statement, and the project's thesis statement. The thesis project will also include this researcher's basic assumptions regarding the research process, and the definitions, delimitations, and limitations to the research project, ending with the thesis statement section.

Ministry Context

The Power of the Living God Church of Galveston is a church which has existed for many decades. The exact year of establishment for the church is difficult to definitively determine, but it has existed since at least 1959. It is noteworthy to mention that the church has continued during many challenging years and is presently an important part of the community in the city.

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[1] This name is a pseudonym to protect actual church identity and not the actual name of church.

History

The history of the church is directly associated with its geographical location, a region which can at any time impact areas of ministry for any of the local churches. The city of Galveston Texas is an island, and in 2008 Hurricane Ike adversely affected the city with catastrophic flooding that resulted in mass evacuations of the citizens of the city. The destruction resulted in some permanent displacements which affected church outreach ministries within the city. The population decreased following the hurricane but has since recovered. The United States Census reports that the population of this city in 2010 was 50,446. The Power of the Living God Church of Galveston was not spared, but instead was also impacted by Hurricane Ike. The church has existed for many years with short-tenured pastors who each served for a limited number of years. The church previously experienced challenges with growth resulting from persistent leadership upheaval, congregational turn-over, and mismanagement. This researcher is the current pastor who began his leadership of Power of the Living God Church in 2011. One of the expressed goals of the pastor and the congregation was one of outreach to the surrounding community, particularly evangelizing young adult unbelievers. Some churches in Galveston have faced challenges in outreach ministries, which affected the ability to reach this group throughout the city. The church started with a small membership and increased in numbers after the first year. After a year and a half, the membership increased with the addition of mostly mature adults. An initial assessment was made concerning the long-range future of the membership as it related to the number of young people in the congregation. The slow growth in the congregation compelled church leaders to formulate plans to increase the numbers within this group. The practices of the congregation's culture and rituals, which are most predictable, are

found in the lack of activity in youth evangelism. The members must focus on improvement in all areas of ministry, particularly evangelism towards this stated group.

Demographics and Geographical Location

The demographic makeup of the church has consisted of more mature adults for many decades, with the smaller percentage of the congregation consisting of young adults. As previously explained, the importance of evangelization of young adult unbelievers by the membership undeniably remains one of the most crucially important facets of ministry in the church. This target group for this evangelism was determined to be those in the surrounding community. The membership percentage was seventy percent mature adults and thirty percent young adults. The age range of young adults considered include the ages from 18 to 22 years of age. This age group is considered Generation Z by some, but age groups have proven to be difficult for experts to define. Some have designated the term *millennials* to define the current generation of young adults. The age range is difficult to pinpoint because of the noted differences shown among the experts. Some experts designate this group as "twenty-somethings," while others use birth-year age ranges. The group is sometimes placed in the range 1984 to 2002, while others consider the years 1977 to 1995.[2]

The church only offered limited opportunities for young adults who were part of the congregation, leading to diminishing numbers for this group. Several area churches in Galveston had problems increasing and maintaining young adults in their congregations. Pastors noted reductions within their congregations, demonstrating a common characteristic in the churches on

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[2] Mark DeVries and Scott Pontier, *Sustainable Young Adult Ministry: Making It Work, Making It Last* (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 2019), 24.

the island. The evangelization of young adult unbelievers was not often practiced by the members of Power of the Living God Church. It is now a commitment which is necessary for the church. Galveston, and its surrounding areas, are the target locations for evangelism to young adult unbelievers. A crucially important consideration is given to the proximity of this island community to its closest neighboring cities and towns located on the nearby mainland. The aim of the membership is a strategically planned, targeted ministry to these young adults.

The Social Characteristics of the Congregation and Its Relationship to this Researcher

The church is comprised of a congregational membership, made of different age groups, including mature adults, young adults, and children. This researcher's relationship with the congregation is that of pastor of the church. The members have been cooperative with their leader for many years, but one drawback is the lack of participation in the outreach ministry of the church. The congregation has overall been a cohesive membership, with few exceptions to that description. The congregation can improve upon the relationship between one another by increasing communication between members during the week when away from church. The congregation has placed a high value on what the ideal Christian should demonstrate. It has been described as a holy lifestyle represented by Christ-like behavior. This lifestyle exhibits humility, love, and compassion for others. These are the beliefs and ideas of what the congregation believe a member should demonstrate. Some of the members would do well to demonstrate more Christian love through the outreach to the young adult unbelievers.

Common Practices in the Culture of the Congregation

The congregation held to practices used within the services each week, including in the time of worship. The mature church members preferred the "older" songs and hymns, and predictably worshipped in a similar format each week. The older congregants were unwilling to move into a more contemporary style worship service. Some of the young adults exhibited restlessness with the service, sometimes viewing it as unchanging or "too dull." Too many churches seem to assume that starting a contemporary worship service holds the secret code.[3] The mature church members usually determined all new ministries in the church, with little to no input from the young adults. Missional outreach has always been important to the members, and through it the importance of membership growth has been emphasized.

Sunday School has been one the most important teaching ministries in the church, as evidenced by an unnamed church member who exclaimed, "I love Sunday School!" This ministry precedes the worship service and message. The members expect a continuation of the weekly format, with a resistance to any extreme changes. Since 2013, according to the church's attendance records, the attendance in the church for Sunday School increased by 40 percent. This ministry within the church is one which has been well attended each Sunday morning. The Sunday School in the church was reviewed by church members, searching for ideas for increasing the attendance. It was determined that this area of church ministry is important to all members, including the young adults. The mature believers were able to influence the young adults within the congregation. Parents, pastors, and Sunday School teachers are important in the dissemination of God's Word in Sunday School. The mature church members recruited more

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[3] DeVries and Pontier, *Sustainable Young Adult Ministry*, 37.

young adults for Sunday School,[4] in effect improving the attendance. This ministry is important to the church and has grown, but the mature members need to work more towards encouraging more young adults to attend.

<p style="text-align:center">Available Resources for the Church's Ministries</p>

When the new pastor assumed leadership in 2011, the church's finances were in a very unhealthy state. The resources were diminished by previous administrations, leaving extreme financial challenges for the new leader. The low budgetary balance reflected the adverse effects of lower finances accumulated by the smaller memberships under the previous leaders. The new pastor prioritized a more fiscally stringent budget and made changes which vastly increased the church's finances. The new leader, along with trustees, also determined varying budgets for each of the ministries which function in the church. The ministries determined for the church were evangelistic outreach, nursing home, financing missions to Africa, and feeding the hungry through the Food Bank. The resources were appropriately distributed towards each of these church ministries. The members could improve personal commitment by giving more to each ministry.

<p style="text-align:center">Resources in Terms of Finances, People, Time, and Influence</p>

In 2007, the church had not experienced much membership growth, resulting in the impact on its budget. Asking church members for financial contributions is sometimes estimated to be a daunting task for the church leader. It is important to note, "Pastors understand that the

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[4] Natalie Frisk, *Raising Disciples: How to Make Faith Matter for Our Kids* (Harrisburg, VA: Herald Press, 2019), 27.

church has a budget…but [what they] do not like is talking with people about personal finances or giving."[5] This hesitation to request financial contributions caused less encouragement in membership giving in the past. The new pastor encouraged the members to contribute to the well-defined ministries in the church. The financing for each ministry was provided by dedicated funding collected from church members each week. The members contributed to separate areas of the church outreach components and became committed to consistency in the contributions. From 1995 to 2010, the church had not experienced much increase in the finances, but a noticeable change occurred after 2011.

In previous years, the members occasionally engaged in outreach, but the lack of strong participation adversely affected the church's ministry impact in the city. In 2013, the members were asked by the new pastor to participate in all facets of church outreach, including the nursing home ministry, but some were reluctant to do so. After 2014, the level of cooperation improved, and membership participation increased. This trend continued until 2017 when another devastating hurricane impacted the city of Galveston and other surrounding cities. Hurricane Harvey impacted large areas of the greater Houston-Galveston region of Texas. This hurricane was an enormously devastating flooding event which affected multiple cities and surrounding towns. Despite the destruction, some of the members were willing to continue the participation in the church's ministries after a few weeks of recovery. In 2018, the participation in ministries in the church declined, signaling the need for renewed commitment from the members. In 2020, the ministries in the church were impacted by the worldwide pandemic. The church members understood that the ministries are limited by COVID-19, but equally recognized the need for

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[5] Tom Berlin, *The Generous Church: A Guide for Pastors* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2016), 19.

continued outreach. The members need a deeper commitment to participation in all facets of the church's ministry.

Conclusion

In the overall context of evangelization of young adult unbelievers by members, the congregation must put more effort in the outreach of the church. This context has demonstrated some of the challenges evidenced by the membership under previous pastors, and the lack of motivation for the ministry to this stated group of unbelievers. The members are informed of the commitment required for devoting personal time and finances to each ministry. The challenge for the leadership in the church is to motivate members to participate in the outreach more fully for the evangelization of young adult unbelievers.

Problem Presented

The problem is that the members of the Power of the Living God Church of Galveston are not evangelizing young adult unbelievers. The importance of addressing this problem cannot be overstated because of its impact on this youth group. The worldview of many young unbelievers is secular humanism, which normally leads toward a life apart from Christ. It is crucially important to share the gospel with those in this group. In addressing the problem, the church members will learn through training how to effectively evangelize this group of young unbelievers.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this DMin action research project is to write a small-group manual teaching small-group leaders to motivate church members to evangelize. The questions concerning the lack of participation would be analyzed in the effort to assess the behavior of the members. The focus would concentrate on the possible bevy of reasons given for non-participation. The goal would ultimately set forth a path for members to learn and engage in this endeavor towards evangelization of young adult unbelievers. The willingness of each potential participant to be trained within the small group should equip everyone with the needed knowledge. Another part of this goal is for the members to grasp the countless spiritual benefits which should be accomplished through their individual efforts. The small group training should benefit from the answers given by the members and non-members in the planned interviews and focus groups. The acquired information should be impactful and effective in the training given to the members within the planned groups. The stated purpose of motivation for evangelism for church members should be achieved through the planned training.

The church members will be trained by small-group leaders to effectively impact young unbelievers. The small-group manual will be utilized for training leaders so they can train members for outreach in neighborhoods and communities. Small-group leaders will be trained to instruct the church members of the group in which they lead. Following their training, the church members in the small group will begin consistently evangelizing youth unbelievers.

Basic Assumptions

This researcher has basic assumptions concerning why the members of Power of the Living God Church are not evangelizing young adult unbelievers. First, some of the reasons for the lack of participation is the aversion to the amount of time required for sharing the gospel, the lack of commitment towards outreach, and the lack of available training for the members. Time is a valued commodity for most people, including Christians. Church members sometimes seem indifferent to the practice of evangelizing. This researcher attributes the perceived indifference to the de-emphasis on evangelism by church members. It is also assumed that members do not fully grasp the crucial importance of sharing the gospel of Christ with young adult unbelievers.

Another assumption is that church members are complacent regarding outreach towards individuals outside of the church and do not evangelize outside of their comfort zones. When describing the lack of outreach and evangelization in some churches, Kevin G. Harney explains, "These churches are closed off to visitors, their community, and the world. They don't reach out or train their members to share Jesus' love."[6]

An additional assumption is that members lack the motivation for the necessary evangelism training required for outreach preparation. This researcher presupposes that if the members of Power of the Living God Church are trained in areas of evangelism, outreach, and ministry aimed towards young adult unbelievers, the members should become more productive in sharing the gospel. Also, an assumption can be made concerning the effectiveness of the training methodology. There is an assumption that the members should be more responsive when encouraged to think more clearly and passionately about the outreach needed for the church.

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[6] Kevin G. Harney, *Organic Outreach for Churches: Infusing Evangelistic Passion in Your Local Congregation* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2018), 23.

Harney explains, "When our hearts are filled with love for God, for our community, and for the church, we are ready to strategize about outreach. We need to use our minds to leverage every ounce of our intellectual ability for the sake of the gospel."[7] The assumption is that training the church members to think more deeply about the mandate of Christ to share the gospel should motivate them to learn to effectively evangelize.

Definitions

Some of the most important definitions to be considered for this project are associated with the relationship between mature church members and young unbelievers. It is important to define demographics for youth as it applies to the target group for evangelism. Demographics is defined as the data relating to the population in a specific group. This project examines specific individuals in the church, with the emphasis on youth groups. The importance of the knowledge of demographics for youth in society and the church cannot be overstated. Jörg Tremmel explains the relevance of this importance when he explains, "In many Western countries, as well as in developing countries elsewhere in the world, we are currently facing large demographic population changes—demographic changes more profound than ever before. Demographic changes go hand in hand with a shift in power between the generations."[8] The target group of young people used for this study are impacted by these demographic changes.

Another definition is for mission as it relates to the mission in which God has spoken of in Scripture. This word is crucially important to this project because of what Christians are

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[7] Harney, *Organic Outreach for Churches*, 59.

[8] Jörg Tremmel, *Youth Quotas and other Efficient Forms of Youth Participation in Ageing Societies*. (Switzerland: Springer International Publishing, 2015), 1.

commanded by God to do. This project discusses the mission of evangelistic outreach to unbelievers, and the definition of mission of God is important. Bruce Riley Ashford clearly describes the biblical definition of mission when he explains, "God is the basis of everything. The theology of mission must be shaped by all of God's actions in history: creation and redemption…The Bible is a book about a mission, and that mission is the mission of the triune God."[9] For this project, the members of the Power of the Living God Church will need to clearly grasp the meaning and importance of the word mission.

A third definition which is indispensably important to this research is culture. Depending on its focus, this word sometimes includes similar, yet distinct definitions. The varying views associated with the definition of this word are worth noting. In his book *The Spiritual Hunger of the Largest Unreached Culture Today*, Luke Greenwood describes the views of Francis Schaeffer relating to culture. Greenwood explains that the author demonstrates truth cannot be defined by anyone, and it now depends on a person's point of view. He writes,

> Schaeffer explains that this happens in stages, like a staircase, through the following spheres of culture consecutively: philosophy, art, music, general culture and then even theology. Captured by artists…passed on through their art and music, these same concepts reach the masses, the general culture.[10]

With this explanation, Greenwood describes Schaeffer's views on how culture is impacted. He additionally describes how personal choices have caused a shift in the culture. Schaeffer writes, "The shift in culture towards individualism and personal choice has changed how we view God

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[9] Bruce Riley Ashford, *Theology and Practice of Mission: God, the Church, and the Nations.* (Nashville, TN: B&H Academic, 2011), Loc 548, Kindle.

[10] Luke Greenwood, *Global Youth Culture: The Spiritual Hunger of the Largest Unreached Culture Today* (Eden Prairie, MN: Steiger International, 2019), 57.

and religion. We define our own belief system and can mix beliefs and ideas to fit our

preferences."[11]

Another area in which culture could be defined is in the field of mental health. The

treatment offered to patients in this area is impacted by the related culture. In the article

"Culture" written in the *Journal of Clinical Psychology*, authors Timothy B. Smith, Melanie

Domenech Rodriguez, and Guillermo Bernal explain how culture impacts mental health. The

authors explain,

> In a broad sense, all mental health treatments are informed by cultural contexts. What
> have been termed 'traditional' Western treatments are inextricably interwoven with
> European/ European American culture, so much so as to render the cultural influences
> nearly invisible…in an increasingly multicultural society, culture cannot remain invisible.
> There are several ways in which cultural centering of mental health interventions can be
> achieved.[12]

The article further addresses the themes which surfaced as having an impact on mental health.

The authors explain, "The themes that emerged were the importance of the family, strength

derived from cultural traditions…These themes were used to inform the process…The culturally

adapted therapy produced better outcomes in well-being, health, and substance dependence with

changes maintained over time."[13] These definitions of culture in different contexts demonstrate

the importance of this word to this research. The targeted group for this evangelism is affected in

multiples areas which are influenced by the culture.

A fourth definition which will used in this project is community. The importance of this

word cannot be overstated because of its impact on young unbelievers who are part of different

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[11] Greenwood, *Global Youth Culture*, 66.

[12] Timothy B. Smith, Melanie Domenech Rodriguez, and Guillermo Bernal, "Culture," *Journal of Clinical Psychology* 67, no. 2 (2011): 168.

[13] Ibid., 169.

communities. Familiarity of the communities targeted in this project should facilitate effective

evangelization towards the young unbelievers. Greenwood explains how in all facets, the church

should function as a community. He writes,

> When we strip away the unnecessary "church culture" and live as the community of believers Jesus intended us to be, the church is a miracle, unique and unprecedented in society today. The church should be a community of all ages, all social backgrounds, all ethnic groups, and all walks of life, united by one truth, one spirit and one baptism, living out a love based on grace and forgiveness.[14]

The understanding of the importance of community for each participant is invaluable in the

training of the church members who will evangelize the young unbelievers.

The last two terms, which are interconnected, are evangelism and discipleship. These

terms will be used throughout the project because of their importance to the outreach towards

youth. The work of evangelism is described but the word is not used in Scripture. Jesus

commanded his disciples to go into predetermined locations to preach that Christ had arrived and

the Kingdom of God was at hand (Luke 10:1-23). The goal was to provoke individuals to believe

in the Son of God. Evangelism is one of the most important ministries in the church today. James

Emery White defines this word in describing its function in the church, in writing, "The church's

mission, given by Jesus himself, is to reach out to a deeply fallen world and call it back to

God."[15] This definition is sometimes linked with the practice of discipleship. This seems to be an

indisputable biblical relationship between the two, as White explains, "According to the Bible,

this involves active evangelism with subsequent discipleship, coupled with strategic service to

those in need…and the twin dynamics of evangelism and social concern reflect Christ's ongoing

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[14] Greenwood, *Global Youth Culture*, 131.

[15] James Emery White, *Meet Generation Z: Understanding and Reaching the New Post-Christian World* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2017), 73.

mission."[16] This project will benefit from the application of these definitions by church members who would be motivated for youth evangelism.

Limitations

One of the major limitations to this thesis project is the number of planned participants, which should include local church members and limited church members from another city near Galveston. This area city is located on the mainland and is in proximity to the island. The participants will be limited to families in one other church on the island and one on the mainland. Another limitation is that church members who regularly attend Sunday School and weekly services will be used for a large percentage of the research. Some of the research will include evangelism information produced by other research, which will create limitations to the study. The truthfulness of the respondents will be challenging for the project, and the participants will be carefully selected by the area pastors. There will also be challenges to the study created by the combination of actual interviews and information from previous research. This project will encounter challenges outside the control of this researcher which include participant aversion to interviews, problems with honesty, and participant time designated for the questions. One of the most important limitations to this study would be establishing the rapport with participants who should be interviewed, and the discomfort that could arise out of the interview setting. The research project will have limitations but will mostly benefit from the interviews of the members of the Power of the Living God Church.

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[16] White, *Meet Generation Z*, 88.

Delimitations

One of the delimitations for this thesis project concentrates on training the church members of the Power of the Living God Church to evangelize young unbelievers. This delimitation places the focus on the group being trained for the necessary outreach. This group should be part of controlled research within the church. Another delimitation for the research should focus on young adult church members from two additional area churches. The project will also use controlled interviews of members from the other churches with the expressed purpose to ascertain causes of the lack of evangelism with their local church. Still another important delimitation will be the emphasis for the controlled groups to focus on evangelism no matter when they became Christians. Thomas Bear explains that "all Christians are called to be witnesses no matter how long they have known the Lord. Yet…we should make up our minds to become increasingly proficient at proclaiming the gospel."[17] The controlled groups will be limited to those familiar with at least minimal aspects of evangelism towards the unsaved. One of the most important delimitations should be challenges to the time required for training each church member for evangelism. This training should be arranged according to church member availability. These arrangements will be made with participants in accordance with consideration given to the time afforded to each on some evenings and weekends. All the groups would be reminded of the importance of the study in which they are participating. The goal is the evangelization of young unbelievers. Rod Dempsey and Dave Earley explain the highest purpose of Christians in writing, "At the top level, we find the purpose of all…spiritual development…is

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[17] Thomas Bear, *How to Evangelize: Bringing Back the Gospel* (Dearborn, MI: Thomas W. Bear Publishing, 2017), Loc 209, Kindle.

ultimately to bring as much glory to God as possible with one's life."[18] The importance of this component should encourage participants to maintain focus on the undeniable relevance of evangelism towards this youth group.

Thesis Statement

If the church uses a small group evangelism training manual to teach small group leaders, then the church members should be motivated to evangelize. The motivation would serve to ignite the church members into full participation of this evangelistic ministry aimed towards youth unbelievers. The training manual would facilitate the efforts towards training church members in these evangelism efforts. It would instill confidence in the members to effectively share the gospel to this group.

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[18] Rod Dempsey and Dave Earley, *Leading Healthy Growing Multiplying Small Groups* (Lynchburg, VA: Liberty University Press, 2016), page number.

CHAPTER 2: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter will include a literature review which describes the topics that will be covered. The literature review describes the main topic, followed by the supporting information for each of the main topics and sub-topics. These topics will include importance of evangelism, its relationship to culture, community, and discipleship for youth. The chapter will also discuss the purpose of evangelism towards youth by church members. The final sections will include the theological and theoretical foundations, which will be discussed in completion of the chapter.

Literature Review

Evangelism is an extremely important component in Christian ministry, mostly because of its impact on the Christian engagement in the Great Commission given by Christ. Mark R. Teasdale notes, "Jesus' command in the Great Commission to go into all the world and make disciples reinforces the universality of the call to evangelism."[19] This literature review covers the indispensable importance of evangelism, evangelism and culture, evangelism and community, and evangelism and discipleship for youth for the purpose of evangelism towards youth by church members.

Indispensable Importance of Evangelism

One of the most predominant themes in Christian literature is that of evangelism. This practice in outreach and subsequent discipleship is crucially important as it relates to this topic. In his book *Evangelism for Non-Evangelists: Sharing the Gospel Authentically*, describes

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[19] Mark R. Teasdale, *Evangelism for Non-Evangelists: Sharing the Gospel Authentically* (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 2016), 16.

evangelism this way, "Evangelism is a bias for the good news…it denotes a bias in favor of one thing and against another thing…It declares that there is supremacy to 'good news,' and it rejects all other forms of news as deficient."[20] It is important to note the author's assertion of the supremacy of the gospel. Thomas Bear writes in his book *How to Evangelize: Bringing Back the Gospel* that "the scope of evangelism will broaden in your mind and heart…you possess some excitement for spreading the gospel."[21] The descriptions make it clear that this is one of the most important areas of Christian practice, and a practice which should be emphasized by believers in Christ.

It is important to note that there are several problematic areas associated with evangelism. A noteworthy problem includes the omission of a commitment towards evangelism. A believer may not have much knowledge or experience in evangelism, but if they never come to the place in their life where they make it their lifelong goal to make disciples, they should not expect God to use them in this way. Those believers will not be inclined to learn how to evangelize.[22] Although it was not covered by the writers, some Christians personally resolve this to be an area of weakness in ministry in which they participate. This explanation is a clear indication of the problems which could possibly surface from the lack of an intentional and concerted commitment to sharing the gospel.

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[20] Teasdale, *Evangelism for Non-Evangelists*, 36.

[21] Bear, *How to Evangelize*, Loc 184, Kindle.

[22] Ibid., Loc 177.

Challenges for Evangelism

Pluralism is covered in this literature review and is one of the main challenges to Christian evangelism because of its contradictory teachings of multiplicity. Bryan Stone is a proponent of pluralism, where he argues, "A 'deep' pluralism, by contrast, is able to preserve the importance of evangelistic witness without accepting the terms of competition intrinsic to the kind of religious absolutism that characterizes exclusivist Christian soteriologies and the theologies of evangelism associated with them."[23] Pluralism is problematic by virtue of its contradictory teaching when compared to the accepted teaching of gospel. For various reasons, pluralism is also prevalent in other countries. Annette Evans addresses this issue which exists in another country in explaining, "Compounding the challenges of pluralism in South Africa are two underlying global problems: varying degrees…on the one hand, and the fact that religion is no longer as culturally central as it was until the onset of modernity."[24] Evans explains that only one option exists among others which claim to have the same truth and demanding the "same adherence."[25] Adding to the difficulty of pluralism, the postmodernist cultural context, with its definition of truth as relative to cultural context, has promoted cognitive dissonance."[26] Unsurprisingly, the inconsistency in beliefs should be expected as a result of the contradictory teaching.

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[23] Bryan Stone, *Evangelism after Pluralism: The Ethics of Christian Witness* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2018), 73.

[24] Annette Evans, "Aspects of Child Evangelism and Youth Ministry in South Africa in the Postmodern Context of Globalism, Pluralism and Current Scientific Knowledge," *Scriptura Journals* 114, no. 1 (2015): 3.

[25] Ibid., 2.

[26] Ibid.

This literature review also demonstrates other challenges to evangelism evidenced within Christian churches as explained by other authors. In the article "Evangelism Challenges the Church's Identity," Risto A. Ahonen describes some key issues in the church. The author writes, "Evangelism is a burning issue for the church because it involves questions of Christian identity: the question of what I believe or believe in, and of what I want to commit myself to…The rejection of the term 'conversion' conveys a strange message."[27] Evangelism brings believers to the basis of their faith and, "evangelism is not a separate, limited form of Christian work, but the attempt to communicate the whole gospel to the people of our time. Far from a message simplified into slogans, evangelism is a rich totality which can also be expressed concisely and in a comprehensible and true-to-life way."[28]

Ethical questions related to evangelism are also considered in the literature. The topic of ethics is discussed in the book *Renewing Moral Theology: Christian Ethics as Action, Character and Grace* where Daniel A. Westberg describes what he calls "a richer view of biblical ethics." When Christian ethics was conceived, principally, as obedience to the will of God expressed through law, it followed that the reading of the Bible would concentrate on the Decalogue, the relevance of other Jewish law and the passages in the Gospels and Epistles in the form of commands and norms.[29] Westberg explains that from the work of biblical scholars, such as Richard Hays, Christians are led to pay attention to the moral implications of Scripture in a much more comprehensive way: one can discern principles that should govern his or her decisions; the

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[27] Risto A. Ahonen, "Evangelism Challenges the Church's Identity," *International Review of Mission* 106, no. 2 (2017): 424.

[28] Ibid., 435.

[29] Daniel A. Westberg, *Renewing Moral Theology: Christian Ethics as Action, Character and Grace* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2015), 23.

many stories and accounts of people's actions provide paradigms for conduct (both positive and negative); and the "symbolic world" created by different authors presents Christians with attitudes and frameworks for understanding their relationship to God, to the created order and to each other.[30] All of the descriptions discussed demonstrate the irreplaceable relevance of the relationship of ethics with evangelism. The author explains that Christians should understand, "the importance of 'virtue ethics' and how it, 'has led to more fruitful explorations of biblical perspectives on character formation and moral development."[31] The impact of ethics on evangelism is undeniably an area consistently worthy of consideration. It should also be noted, "The ethics of evangelism, therefore, has nothing to do with whether our attempts to produce conversions are carried out ethically or unethically…our evangelism is our ethics, and ethics is just a way of talking about 'the shape of our faithfulness.'"[32]

Unproductive Evangelism

Another area covered in the literature review concerns the lack of productive results emanating from evangelism. This challenge for churches is addressed by several authors. What are the standards used for a productive church? Is there evaluation equivalency which can be deployed to correctly measure productivity? In his book *Organic Outreach for Churches: Infusing Evangelistic Passion in Your Local Congregation*, Kevin G. Harney explains, "Most congregations can point to at least some form of evangelistic activity going on in their church. The real issue facing the Western church today is that the efforts of very few churches are

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[30] Westberg, *Renewing Moral Theology*, 23.

[31] Ibid.

[32] Stone, *Evangelism after Pluralism*, 16.

actually bearing fruit."[33] Andrew Williams explains that while it is tempting to want to do evangelism in a far-away place, it is true that Christians are called to engage in the local church where they have been planted. He writes, "At a time when many churches in the West lament declining congregations and rising age profiles for their congregations, here was a church that had determined that it would meet its local community, engage with them, and at the same time grow its worshiping congregation."[34] A number of paths are available for creating a productive evangelistic church, but it stands to reason that a variety of methods are necessary for each respective church.

Evangelism and Culture

The literature review addresses culture and the varying impacts on evangelism. One of the most important areas of culture is how it affects everyday life of individuals. White explains that "culture is the world in which we are born and the world that is born in us…Culture is the comprehensive, penetrating context that encompasses life and thought, art and speech, entertainment and sensibility, values and faith."[35] It is important to acknowledge components of the literature which elucidate the responses from non-Christian cultures to evangelism employed by Christians. While many cultures make room for people who adhere to the Christian faith, and some cultures have vestiges of the Christian faith in them (e.g., the celebration of Christmas), one would be hard-pressed to find a culture that encourages people to live according to the

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[33] Kevin G. Harney, *Organic Outreach for Churches: Infusing Evangelistic Passion in Your Local Congregation* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2018), 33.

[34] Andrew Williams, "Re-experiencing Evangelism in the City," *International Review of Mission* 105, no. 1 (2016): 26.

[35] White, *Meet Generation Z*, Loc 986.

teachings of Jesus. The invitation of Jesus to self-denial and suffering alone is enough to make most cultural value systems back away from following him too closely.[36] The authors in this review emphasize the importance of maintaining a clear understanding of the effects of culture on evangelism. In many Middle Eastern cultures, it is considered an insult if one was to show someone else the bottom of their shoe. If Christians are trying to reach people in such cultures, it is helpful to know cultural traits such as this to avoid offending someone needlessly.[37] This is very insightful knowledge to those planning on evangelism towards individuals from this area of the world. How can evangelism be successfully deployed under such potentially dangerous conditions? Can the extreme cultural differences be overcome? In *Evangelism and Popular Culture Reflections and Questions from an International Study Process,* Claudia Währisch-Oblau writes, "'Culture,' of course, is a vague term…we decided to look at what people engage with when they relax and enjoy themselves, and particularly at cultural expressions that seemed popular among young people…Their bias was often based on value judgments - popular culture was described as immoral, consumerist, manipulative or simply dumb."[38] The awareness of culture and its effect on evangelism is an indispensable area of consideration. "It is wise to consider that there are likely some things about the culture that are good to know if a person's goal is to reach some for Christ."[39]

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[36] Teasdale, *Evangelism for Non-Evangelists*, 16.

[37] Bear, *How to Evangelize*, Loc 1059, Kindle.

[38] Claudia Währisch-Oblau, "Evangelism and Popular Culture Reflections and Questions from an International Study Process," *International Review of Mission* 103, no. 2 (2014): 216.

[39] Bear, *How to Evangelize*, Loc 1050, Kindle.

Culture

This literature review further addresses the impact of culture on youth evangelism. In the book *Global Youth Culture: The Spiritual Hunger of the Largest Unreached Culture Today*, Greenwood explains, "We need to realize that there is a cultural gap between the church and the Global Youth Culture. In what seems a contradiction, the church is out of touch with the global culture while at the same time greatly influenced by it, often taking on values and perspectives contrary to the Christian faith."[40] The author clearly declares that Jesus was very aware of the culture around him, particularly with those who were opposed to his teachings. Despite the awareness, Christ did not "bow down to the predominant cultural and religious influence of the time."[41] The enormous size of this global youth group is a statistically crucial component garnering consideration for both present and future ministries. It is reasonable to say that the Global Youth Culture is the largest united culture in history.[42] It is important to maintain a knowledge of culture for those engaging in evangelism. It is wise to consider that there are likely some things about the culture that are good to know if one's goal is to reach some for Christ.[43] Familiarity with the prospective cultures provides useful information for Christians planning evangelism in foreign countries and unknown locations. Bear notes, "Wherever evangelism is planned, methods should be based on how Jesus deployed evangelism."[44]

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[40] Greenwood, *Global Youth Culture*, 89.

[41] Ibid.

[42] Ibid., 48.

[43] Bear, *How to Evangelize*, Loc 1050.

[44] Ibid.

Evangelism and Community

The literature addresses the impact of evangelism in specific communities. In his article

Youth Ministry as an Agency of Youth Development for the Vulnerable Youth of the Cape Flats,

Garth Aziz discusses the development of youth in South African communities during a difficult

period in the country's history. He writes that "this article will address some aspects of youth

development by reflecting on the historical setting of the Cape Flats during South African

apartheid history, and the lived realities of contemporary youth on the Cape Flats, which can be

described as a community in tension."[45] The author astutely recognizes the historical difficulty of

South African apartheid history, and its effect on a specific segment of the community. Aziz also

writes,

> The Cape Flats could be argued to be a community in tension…that a community in
> tension occurs because of various factors or tensions that exist simultaneously that
> threaten the well-being of the citizens of that particular community, yet ironically, those
> tensions are also what hold the community together…It is understandable that young
> people will participate and even embrace in the tensions that exist and hold the
> community together in seeking to identify with and belong in an environment that is
> hostile and rejecting of them as individuals.[46]

The research in this area demonstrates that faith communities facilitate both evangelism and

discipleship even with communities of high tension among its citizens. Malan Nel describes

benefits of these "faith communities." Faith communities need to continuously rediscover the

meaning of being disciples of Christ, the Lord.[47] The local faith community becomes a space to

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[45] Garth Aziz, "Youth Ministry as an Agency of Youth Development for the Vulnerable Youth of the Cape Flats," *Verbum et Ecclesia* 38, no. 1 (August 2017): 1.

[46] Ibid., 3.

[47] Malan Nel, "Imagine-Making Disciples in Youth Ministry…that will Make Disciples," *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies* 71, no. 3 (August 2015): 6.

practice how to live life, learning from Christ within a discipleship community.[48] Kara Powell,

Jake Mulder, and Brad Griffin write that youth believe "warmth" is more than a superficial

community, but is instead "like family." In explaining how youth viewed community within a

church, they explain, "They felt drawn into this growing young faith community not only that

morning but also for weeks and months to come. It wasn't the preaching or teaching. It certainly

wasn't the building or the worship style. It was the life shared among the congregation that drew

them in."[49] Williams describes a young person at The District Church in Washington, DC who

mentioned, "The internet can't help you move to your new apartment. Only a close community

will do that."[50] In *Re-experiencing Evangelism in the City*, Williams explains that "the Wayside

Chapel, a church community of the Uniting Church in Australia…is famous for dealing with the

least and the lost…This community runs a number of programs to reach out to those in need.

Their mantra includes phrases like 'Love over hate' and 'creating a community without a 'them

and us.'"[51] Greenwood highlights the views of the global youth culture concerning community in

writing that, "This global culture brings huge changes in how we see ourselves, our

communities, and the world. It changes our world from being a series of separate local

communities to being one large and mobile mass."[52] This view focuses on a consolidated group

comprising one whole versus separate groups.

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[48] Nel, "Imagine-Making Disciples in Youth Ministry," 10.

[49] Kara Powell, Jake Mulder, and Brad Griffin, *Growing Young: Six Essential Strategies to Help Young People Discover and Love Your Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2016), Loc 144, Kindle.

[50] Ibid., Loc 149.

[51] Andrew Williams, "Re-experiencing Evangelism in the City*" International Review of Mission* 105, no. 1 (2016): 25.

[52] Greenwood, *Global Youth Culture*, 48.

Evangelism and Discipleship for Youth

This literature review covers the areas focused on youth evangelism and discipleship.

Youth are considered the successive group involved in future evangelistic activity. The

information explicated from what the authors disseminated addresses youth evangelism and

discipleship. In the book *Foundations of Children's Evangelism: How to Lead Kids to Christ*,

Dick Gruber explains that:

> Evangelism should be directed towards children…Children need to be evangelized. Boys
> and girls without Jesus Christ are spiritually dead, outside God's kingdom, and lost as far
> as their position is concerned. If they have reached the age of understanding and
> accountability (which is much earlier than most people think), and are not saved, they
> will, if they die, be lost forever.[53]

Challenges for Youth Evangelism and Discipleship

Other major areas discussed in the literature review were some of the views which greatly

influence youth around the world. The worldviews to which youth adhere are crucial, but not

views exempting them from the need of evangelism and discipleship. Greenwood writes, "This

global culture is largely influenced by one predominant worldview: secular humanism…But God

is on a mission and His heart is broken for this lost generation."[54] Consumerism carries with it a

significant impact on youth as a driving force on their culture. Greenwood notes, "Consumerism

is one of the main driving forces behind this global culture. Growing up bombarded by the

entertainment industry, flooded by waves of new pleasure-seeking experiences, superficial

solutions, and fast food…"[55] The literature also points out that more people presently consider

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[53] Dick Gruber, *Foundations of Children's Evangelism: How to Lead Kids to Christ* (Springfield, [state]: Logion Press, 2017), 52.

[54] Greenwood, *Global Youth Culture*, 19.

[55] Ibid., 48.

that they are not associated with any religion or faith. These individuals in this group are

described as "nones." An increasing number of people have chosen not to affiliate with the

Christian faith or any religion. These so-called nones (those who choose 'none' on surveys

asking them to identify their religion or faith tradition) are, since the early 2010s, the fastest

growing "religious" group in the United States.[56] The lack of religious connection provides an

opportunity for evangelism for this group because of their absence of commitment. The literature

does not address this aspect of this group. The western hemisphere is described as post-Christian.

This is another condition contributing to the increase in the number of people in this group.

White explains that "specifically, for the West, this means we live in a world that is post-

Christian. And it also explains why we now talk about the rise of the nones. So who are the

nones? The short answer is that they are the religiously unaffiliated…They simply say, 'I'm

nothing.'"[57] This group presents a ripe opportunity for evangelism because of this response.

Where there is emptiness of the soul, there is the possibility of occupancy by God's Spirit.

Beneficial Information for Youth Evangelism and Discipleship

In the literature, Nel discusses the differences between evangelism and disciple-making.

The practices are equally important in the overall scope of ministry, but some differences exist.

Nel writes,

> We must understand the subtle distinction between evangelism and disciple-making.
> There is a difference. But: when disciple-making does not include evangelism and vice
> versa we get the situation we are in at present. Like congregations include youth so does

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[56] Teasdale, *Evangelism for Non-Evangelists*, 31.

[57] White, *Meet Generation Z*, 21.

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disciple-making include the sharing of the good news of Jesus the Christ. The decisions we are looking for in evangelism should be for a commitment to a life of discipleship."[58]

Recognition of the distinction between evangelism and disciple-making is important, but the literature does not define which is the most important. It also does not address the situations in which those who come to Christ no longer keep in touch with the Christians who led them to salvation. Moser and Nel explain, "The evangelical church in North America is facing a crisis in its failure to retain young people. Research has shown that young people are dropping out of the church and they are not only leaving but also failing to return once they are older…that has created a division between evangelism and discipleship."[59] Natalie Frisk explains, "With the best of intentions, the average Christian family now subcontracts the discipling of children and teens to children's and youth pastors…discipleship that gets a spark of new teaching at church or youth group continues to be cultivated and digested at home."[60] Steve Gladen and John Ortberg share important sentiments concerning discipleship in writing, "'They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching.' That means they devoted themselves to growing in Christ and maturity."[61] This literature review has demonstrated the expansive views from a large group of authors on evangelism and discipleship.

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[58] Nel, "Imagine," 3.

[59] Kenneth A. Moser and Malan Nel, ""The Connection Between Youth Ministry's Division of Evangelism and Discipleship, and the Lack of Retention of Youth in North American Churches," *Verbum et Ecclesia* 5 (November 2019): 5.

[60] Frisk, *Raising Disciples*, 56–57.

[61] Steve Gladen and John Ortberg, *Leading Small Groups with Purpose: Everything You Need to Lead a Healthy Group* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2012), 27.

As elucidated in this literature review, the indispensable importance of evangelism, evangelism and culture, evangelism and community, and evangelism and discipleship for youth are all reflected in multi-faceted perspectives addressing the different areas.

Theological Foundations

The theological foundations supported by Scripture concerning the ministry to young people and those committed to evangelizing this group can be found throughout the Bible. It is crucially important to understand God's fundamental purposes for mankind since Creation, and the beginning words of Scripture serve as an indication of the Creator's plans for mankind. Genesis 1: 27-28.[62] describe how God made man in his image, commanded him to populate the earth, and allowed him to rule over His creation in the earth. Following man's disobedience and the Fall (Gen. 3), man has required redemption by God through the Savior, Jesus Christ. Many millennia before Christ, God used different individuals to conduct His plan towards an ultimate path to redemption. After Jesus completed his work through his death, burial, and resurrection, he returned to the Father in Heaven. Before returning, Christ left a command for all subsequent disciples to share the gospel with unbelievers. Evangelism is a key component in sharing the gospel of Christ to the unsaved. In emphasizing its importance, Millard J. Erickson writes, "The one topic emphasized in both accounts of Jesus' last words to his disciples is evangelism. In Matthew 28:19 he instructs them…go and make disciples of all nations…In Acts 1: 8 he says…and you will be my witnesses…The call to evangelize is a command."[63] Evangelism is the

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[62] Unless otherwise noted, all biblical passages referenced are in the New American Standard Bible (Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 1995).

[63] Millard J. Erickson, *Christian Theology* (Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 2014), 972.

ministry in which the members of the Power of the Living God Church should engage, with the focus on young unbelievers.

Both the Old and New Testaments demonstrate how important young people are to God. God called and used young people throughout the Bible. The subsequent sections will demonstrate how God used young people for his purposes and show the extreme importance of evangelism to this group.

Joseph

Over many millennia, God has used selected individuals to conduct His sovereign plans at specific times in the history of man, and Joseph was one of the most important examples of this biblical truth. He was specifically chosen by God to ultimately bring deliverance to the Egyptians and his family who were God's chosen people. Joseph was a young man who was seventeen years old (Gen 37:2) when he began his journey to be used by God. Jacob loved Joseph more than his other sons, which was a distinction that caused extreme difficulty for Joseph in his relationship with his brothers. In Genesis 37:24-28, Joseph was thrown into a pit by his angry brothers, taken out of the pit and sold by them to Ishmaelite traders, and taken to Egypt by the traders. God favored Joseph in Egypt as he served the captain of the Pharaoh's guard, Potiphar, who thought highly of Joseph and allowed him to serve in his house. This example demonstrates the possibility for a young person who displays integrity to receive God's grace in many facets of life today. Allen P. Ross explains, "Joseph prospered in prison by God's favor…Joseph had prospered under God in Potiphar's house and was put in charge…the Lord

was with Joseph."[64] Following a false accusation by Potiphar's wife, Joseph was imprisoned for

thirteen years. He was released after interpreting the dreams of the Pharaoh and subsequently

made second in command to the ruler of Egypt (Gen 41). This biblical narrative illustrates the

faithfulness of God to those who are faithful to Him despite difficult circumstances. God

divinely blessed Joseph throughout all his ordeals and used him to greatly assist his family in

their time of great need. D. A. Carson describes Joseph's immeasurable importance to God's

plan for his people in Egypt when he writes, "He was the one sent to save life, and he had to

secure his brothers' survival in Egypt…Divine blessing on Egypt was immediately apparent

through Joseph supplying the Egyptians with grain during the famine."[65] In Genesis 28, God

made a direct promise of blessings to Jacob and advanced it through his beloved son Joseph.

Joseph helped to save the lives of countless individuals in Egypt and surrounding areas and was

instrumental in facilitating God's plan for the survival of His chosen people. Joseph served the

remainder of his years in his position of authority in Egypt and charged his family to make a

commitment to transport his bones out of Egypt after his death. This chosen servant of God is

one of the most important in biblical history and was referenced in the New Testament. Joseph is

listed along with other heroes of faith in Hebrews 11:22, which reads, "By faith Joseph, when he

was dying, made mention of the exodus of the sons of Israel, and gave orders concerning his

bones." Joseph is a noteworthy example of how God used a young person for His sovereign

purpose of salvation for His people. This account in Scripture is a demonstration of God's use of

young people in carrying out His purposes. Power of the Living God Church members should

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[64] Allen P. Ross, *The Bible Knowledge Commentary* (Colorado Springs, CO: Moody Publishers, 1983), 90.

[65] D. A. Carson, *New Bible Commentary* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2013), np.

share the gospel and encourage young people by using the example of the integrity and faith of Joseph. The combination of the example of Joseph and evangelism towards the youth should serve as a beneficially effective ministry for the church.

Samuel

Samuel was a servant of God who filled the three offices of judge, prophet, and priest. Before his birth, he was promised by his mother Hannah to be dedicated to God all his life. 1 Samuel 1-2 describes how after he was weaned from his mother, Samuel was taken to Shiloh and left with Eli the priest to faithfully serve the rest of his life. It is clear from these verses that God will use young people who are dedicated to Him no matter the age. Samuel was taught the ways of God by the priest and eventually became a particularly important prophet of God. Carson explains, "Samuel's future role was not that of head of a priestly family. Instead, he was to be the great prophet of his generation."[66] The church should strongly encourage young unbelievers to first obey the call to salvation, followed by faithfulness to the guidance of godly believers. The account additionally offers a warning to anyone engaging in wicked behavior as evidenced by Eli's sons in 1 Samuel 2:17. God was faithful to Samuel, and he faithfully served God from his youth and throughout his entire life. Samuel also served Saul, Israel's first king. After God told Samuel that Saul would be replaced because of his sin against Him, Samuel anointed David as the next king of Israel in 1 Samuel 16:13. God's Spirit left Saul and he was subsequently terrorized by an evil spirit. Kenneth L. Barker explains, "David's reception of the Spirit of God describes David's anointing as ruler of Israel to replace Saul...Saul's loss of the Spirit and his

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[66] Carson, *New Bible Commentary*, np.

replacement with an 'evil spirit' sent by God, describes David's arrival in the court of Saul."[67] In 1 Samuel 25:1, Samuel died after completing a full life dedicated to God. The story of Samuel serves as a prime example of how a person can be used by God from youth and throughout his or her life. It additionally demonstrates the importance of evangelism focused on bringing young unbelievers to a saving faith in Jesus Christ.

Daniel and the Three Hebrew Boys used by God

The book of Daniel is one of the most important biblical books in Scripture because of its relevance concerning future events. Daniel and his three friends who were young and without obvious flaws, were specifically selected for that reason. Daniel 1: 3-4 reads, "Then the king told Ashpenaz…to bring in some of the sons of Israel…who were good-looking, suitable for instruction in every *kind of* expertise, endowed with understanding and discerning knowledge, and who had ability to serve in the king's court." The king of Babylon knew the value of these young men, but God had greater plans for them. The four young men were Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, but renamed to Belteshazzar, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. The young men refused to eat the king's meat, but instead ate vegetables and were healthier than the other boys. These young men were all dedicated to obeying God and not displeasing Him. In Daniel chapter 3, Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, commanded everyone to bow to his image when they heard music playing. But Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego refused to comply. The furious king had them thrown into a fiery furnace, but God delivered all three. Barker writes, "Nebuchadnezzar commanded the three to come out of the furnace; so they

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[67] Kenneth L. Barker, *Expositor's Bible Commentary – Abridged Edition: Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2017), np.

climbed out…Their God had indeed been able to deliver them."[68] Daniel was also delivered by

God from the lion's den. Daniel spoke and ensured the king that God had sent his angel to shut

the lions' mouths and his voice brought great joy to Darius. Not a scratch was found on Daniel

because God had protected him from the mouths of lions. Daniel was ultimately elevated by king

Darius after his deliverance from the lions. These four young men were valued by God and

Scripture demonstrates the importance in which He placed on them. These examples have made

it clear that God has a purpose for the youth and wants them to be saved and used for ministry.

Josiah

One of the clearest examples demonstrating God's use of young people for His purposes

is found in the biblical account of King Josiah (2 Kings 22-23). Josiah was only eight years old

when he began serving and is described as one of Judah's best kings. The Bible states, "Before

him there was no king like him who turned to the LORD with all his heart, all his soul, and all his

might, in conformity to all the Law of Moses; nor did any like him arise after him" (2 Kgs

23:25). Scripture records the posture of this king in the eyes of God as evidenced by the benefits

in which the children of God acquired resulting from the things in which he did. Thomas L.

Constable describes the stature of this king when he explains,

> Josiah was one of Judah's best kings. Peace, prosperity, and reform characterized his
> reign. Josiah was only a lad of eight...when he was crowned king, and reigned over Judah
> 31 years (640-609 B.C.)…Like Asa and Hezekiah before him, Josiah did what was right
> in the sight of the Lord and followed the good ways of his ancestor David. He did not
> deviate from this course at any time during his reign.[69]

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[68] Barker, *Expositor's Bible*, page number.

[69] Thomas L. Constable, *The Bible Knowledge Commentary Old Testament: An Exposition of the Scriptures by Dallas Seminary Faculty* (Colorado Springs, CO: David C. Cook, 1983), 581.

The significant reforms made by Josiah greatly impacted the people of Judah and Israel. All these changes were crucially important for the children God, but the reforms did not assuage God's wrath against His people. Constable describes the sequence of events for the king in explaining, "Josiah's purge weeded out even the informal practitioners (mediums and spiritists; cf. 21:6) of rites God had condemned…These were destroyed as well as all other idols throughout Judah and Jerusalem…Even Josiah's reformation, as great as it was, could not dispel the accumulated wrath of God against Judah for her years of rebellion, especially under Manasseh's leadership."[70]

King Josiah is known for the reforms in which he enacted for the children of God in Judah. He removed objects connected with the worship of false gods. He removed altars and idols erected by kings Ahaz, Manasseh, and Amon. Constable explains, "Josiah then removed everything connected with the worship of false gods that his ancestors had set up in Judah and Jerusalem…Josiah destroyed those pagan places of worship from Geba on Judah's northern frontier to Beersheba on its southern border. He also destroyed the shrines (high places)."[71] The fervor for God's righteousness displayed by this king is instructive in a modern context for today's church. Every believer is commanded to go and share the gospel with unbelievers (Matt 28: 19-20).

Young people should use the example of this young king as a demonstration of the importance of doing what is pleasing to God. The church members should also understand how God can greatly utilize individuals despite their youthful age. God clearly demonstrated His

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[70] Constable, *The Bible Knowledge Commentary Old Testament*, 584.

[71] Ibid., 582-583.

willingness to call His servants regardless of age as evidenced by His use of this young king. This is important to young adult church members who sometimes assumptively presume personal inadequacy. This demonstration of God using this young king should serve as motivation for all church members to evangelize young unbelievers.

Jeremiah

Jeremiah was God's prophet chosen for service before his birth and given specific directives for his prophetic purposes. The prophet is an example of how God selected young people, sometimes before coming into the world. Hetty Lattleman describes the beginning of Jeremiah's service in writing, "He was specifically chosen by God, even before his birth, to be a prophet to the nations (1:5). The word of God was so compelling that Jeremiah could not keep it inside, even if he wanted to (20:9)."[72] The book bearing the prophet's name in the Old Testament is one of the major prophetic books and belongs to a group consisting of writing prophets in the Bible. These biblical books share several common characteristics. Lattleman explains, "Within the Old Testament, the book of Jeremiah belongs to the group of 'writing prophets,' together with Isaiah, Ezekiel and the twelve Minor Prophets. These books have several characteristics in common, though not everyone has all of them."[73] The common characteristics were important concerning the purposes in which God assigned to each of the individual prophets to carry out His sovereign plans. Lattleman specifically describes the characteristics in writing,

> A prophet was first a messenger of God…The true prophet had insight into the Lord's plans and his task was to communicate these to his people. The writing prophets were primarily preachers…Jeremiah preaches at the gate of the temple. Their message was

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[72] Hetty Lattleman, *Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries*, vol. 21, *Jeremiah and Lamentations* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2013), 20.

[73] Ibid.

intended to be heard. Prophets summoned the people to repent of their sins of idolatry and social injustice.[74]

Jeremiah was the son of Hilkiah and from the city of Anathoth (Jer. 1: 1). Additional information on the prophet is found in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary Old Testament*. In this book, Charles H. Dyer explains,

> Jeremiah was born a priest, but began functioning as a prophet when he received the word of the Lord. A prophet was one through whom God spoke directly to His people. God's call of Jeremiah came in the 13th year of the reign of Josiah…Jeremiah continued as God's spokesman down to the fifth month of the 11th year of Zedekiah. That date was July-August 586 B.C., Thus Jeremiah's ministry lasted at least 41 years.[75]

The biblical account of this prophet demonstrates how God uses young people to execute His purpose in the world. The young people in the church today could be encouraged by the example of how God used this young man from an early age to carry out His purposes. The prophet initially responded to God's call by mentioning that he was a child, to which God assured the prophet that He would speak through him. Dyer writes,

> He also objected that he was only a child (*naʿar*). This word was used of infants (Exod 2:6; 1 Sam 4:21) and of young men (Gen 14:24). Jeremiah's age is not given, but possibly he was in his late teens or early twenties at this time. By using the term "child" Jeremiah was emphasizing his lack of experience. He felt ill-prepared to be God's ambassador to the nations.[76]

It is crucially important to note that God touched the mouth of the prophet (Jer. 1:9) in a demonstration indicating that God would speak through Jeremiah. The example of this prophet clearly demonstrated God's use of young people for the purposes in which He ordained. God declared that Jeremiah would be a prophet to the nations (Jer. 1:5) which showed that his

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[74] Lattleman, *Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries*, 20.

[75] Charles H. Dyer, "Jeremiah", *The Bible Knowledge Commentary Old Testament: An Exposition of the Scriptures by Dallas Seminary Faculty* (Colorado Springs, CO: David C. Cook, 1985), 1129.

[76] Ibid., 1130.

ministry would extend beyond Judah. In the *Bible Background Commentary*, John H. Walton,

Victor H. Matthews, and Mark W. Chavalas explain, "The term translated 'nations,' when used

in the plural, usually signifies foreign nations. Thus, there were no limits to the scope of

Jeremiah's prophetic ministry. His messages were not only to Judah, but also to the

nations…potential allies, as well as those who would be enemies."[77] It is important to note that

the book of Jeremiah is one which remains extremely important for both past and future

prophetic events.

Jeremiah is one of the most important prophetic books in Scripture as evidenced by

references made in the New Testament. In Matthew 2:17-18, the Bible reads, "Then what was

said through the prophet Jeremiah was fulfilled: 'A voice is heard in Ramah, weeping and great

mourning, Rachel weeping for her children and refusing to be comforted, because they are no

more." Louis Barbieri, Jr. elucidates these two verses when he explains,

> This event too was said to be the fulfillment of a prophecy by Jeremiah. This statement
> (Jer. 31:15) referred initially to the weeping of the nation because of the death of children
> at the time of the Babylonian Captivity (586 B.C). Rachel's tomb was near
> Bethlehem…That is why she was seen weeping over these children's deaths.[78]

The quotation of Jeremiah in the New Testament demonstrates the importance of this Old

Testament prophetic book. Jeremiah clearly wrote of the New Covenant which would be fulfilled

in the future.

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[77] John H. Walton, Victor H. Matthews, and Mark W. Chavalas, *Bible Background Commentary* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2013), page number(s).

[78] Louis Barbieri, Jr., "Matthew", *The Bible Knowledge Commentary New Testament: An Exposition of the Scriptures by Dallas Seminary Faculty* (Colorado Springs, CO: David C. Cook, 1983), 23.

The relevance of this New Covenant cannot be overstated in its importance to present day

evangelism. Christians today are enabled to adequately share the gospel because of the fulfilled

promise of God of salvation in Jesus Christ. Lattleman explains,

> The fulfilment of the promise of the new covenant reaches far beyond Jeremiah's days…In various passages of the New Testament, we see the fulfilment in Jesus Christ…Jesus inaugurates the new covenant by shedding his blood for the sins of the world. In the New Testament, salvation is extended to all nations.[79]

These theological foundations have demonstrated how God used young people for His

purposes. God loves the youth, and this theological framework has shown how He used Joseph,

Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in His plans. God also used King Josiah and the

prophet Jeremiah for carrying out His purposes. These examples have shown that God has a

purpose for the youth. He wants them to be saved and used for ministry. Consequently, the

importance of evangelism for young unbelievers can be clearly demonstrated in Scripture.

Theoretical Foundations

The theoretical foundations will demonstrate important components which can be

deployed in facilitating ways to understand how to motivate church members to evangelize

young adult unbelievers. Parts of this thesis project focuses on the goal of examining and

assessing the effectiveness of how the theological framework works out if fully utilized. This

theoretical foundation will explain the usefulness of the methods used in accordance with

scriptural examples by Power of the Living God church members. Utilizing the discussions in

Scripture of young individuals who were used by God, church members should accurately

determine that God highly values young people and strongly promotes evangelism. The members

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[79] Barbieri, *The Bible Knowledge Commentary*, 60.

could effectively utilize the biblical examples to encourage youth who have erroneously thought

that they are forgotten and, in turn, be motivated to evangelize these young unbelievers. Harney

explains the need for focused evangelism for the church and the relationship of this component

of ministry with leaders in the church. He writes, "Every church has an outreach temperature. If

a congregation wants to make evangelism an enduring central focus, it will strategically seek to

raise the temperature of each leader and every ministry."[80] The leaders of the youth evangelism

ministries within the church must understand the charge by God to share the gospel to everyone.

Importance of God's Love for the Youth

The Power of the Living God church members should understand God's love for sinners

while equally recognizing possible challenges to the ministry. The members will be greatly aided

by working out the evangelism ministry in a structured and meaningful sequence. Church

members should begin by engaging in a predetermined area of outreach in the vicinity of the

church. This will be the area whereby evangelism will be employed to young unbelievers. This

initial outreach should alleviate the possible reluctance of some members displaying anxiousness

concerning the impending ministry. Another important step is for the church members to

acknowledge God's affinity for youth. Equally important is the fact that youth should be a target

group for church members when going out to evangelize. The reality of God's love for them

should affect important considerations for the planning and development of the outreach.

The outreach of the church members to the young is important, and evangelism should be

employed with the knowledge of God's love for the group. God makes it clear that His love for

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[80] Harney, *Organic Outreach for Churches*, 6.

everyone was exhibited in the gift of salvation through Jesus Christ. Scripture describes God's

love in John 3:16 and Romans 5:8. Romans 5:8 reads, "But God demonstrates His own love

toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us." John A. Witmer explains,

"God's love contrasts with human love in both nature and degree, because God demonstrates

("keeps on showing") His own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us

(hyper, "in our place")…He died in the place of the powerless ("feeble," v. 6), the ungodly (v. 6;

4:5), sinners (5:8), and even His enemies! (v. 10)."[81] Once church members grasp the depth of

this love of God for all people, they should be able to evangelize young unbelievers. God's love

is of the highest importance for all individuals no matter the spiritual state.

Other aspects which should be considered are the attitudes of young people hearing the

gospel message. Michael McGarry describes the troubling impact of these attitudes on youth,

including youth workers and young unbelievers. He writes, "As this secular drift continues, the

trickle-down effect on teenagers will grow increasingly prominent, as will the need for youth

workers who are equipped as both disciple-makers and evangelists."[82] The church members

should understand that although difficulties may arise in the ministry, each should focus on the

knowledge that God loves this group.

Importance of Evangelism to those Uncommitted to Christ and the Church

It is important to understand that the negative attitudes toward evangelism impact all

groups no matter the age. McGarry explains, "No longer are Christians evangelizing men and

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[81] John A. Witmer, "Romans", *The Bible Knowledge Commentary New Testament: An Exposition of the Scriptures by Dallas Seminary Faculty* (Colorado Springs, CO: David C. Cook, 1983), 457.

[82] Michael McGarry, *A Biblical Theology of Youth Ministry* (Nashville, TN: Randall House Academic, 2019), 83.

women who are warm towards the church but remain uncommitted to Christ; instead, they are evangelizing a truly post-Christian people who have deliberately chosen to not be affiliated with the Church."[83] This explanation is alarming when considering the possible roadblocks to effective evangelism toward groups of all ages. There is an observable rejection of the gospel resulting from indifference, disinterest, or outright contempt for all religious subjects. The church members should recognize that the ministry of evangelism can move forward despite resistance from young or older unbelievers.

Young People Used by God

The church is called to evangelize unbelievers and should keep in mind that God used many young people for His purposes throughout the Bible. The theological framework guides the process of the outreach for the church as it relates to how youth workers can be utilized in the evangelism to young unbelievers. If the church first focuses on outreach to surrounding neighborhoods, it should be able to expand the ministry into other regions. The limited area will allow those involved in the ministry to reach more young unbelievers. Greg Stier describes the need to cultivate young people to be more like Christ and help them develop a passion for lost souls. He writes, "If we really want teenagers to be like Jesus, then we must cultivate in them a driving passion to reach the lost…this passion in believing students not only brings lost souls into the kingdom but leads to discipleship acceleration in their own hearts and lives."[84] The

[83] McGarry, *A Biblical Theology of Youth Ministry*, 82.

[84] Greg Stier, *Youth Ministry in the 21st Century*: *Youth, Family, and Culture* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Publishing, 2017), 5.

church members who are experienced should teach youth workers to exhibit a passion for evangelism.

The Necessary Focus for Youth Evangelism

The focus for the youth who are serving is to demonstrate integrity and faithfulness to the overall goal of the ministry: to be examples to young unbelievers. These youth workers should be instructed to remain vigilant and aware of challenges which may arise from those in their age group. It is important for church members to remember that youth ministry has changed in today's church, and some of those changes impact the way ministry is employed. Stier explains, "The modern youth ministry model has largely abandoned the focus of Jesus and delivers, instead, a series of competing programs. We have exchanged mission for meetings. We have separated evangelism and discipleship. We have turned outreach into a program instead of a lifestyle."[85] These changes sometimes create a difficult environment for training youth workers for evangelism. The church should address all these issues in the preliminary planning stages of the outreach to avoid unforeseen pitfalls in the ministry.

The Planning by the Church to Motivate for Evangelism

The members of Power of the Living God Church should assess why they are not diligently employing evangelism for young unbelievers. They may require motivation for this extremely important ministry but should be convinced that it is worthwhile. If the members apply the principles concerning how God used young people discussed in the theological

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[85] Stier, *Youth Ministry in the 21st Century*, 4.

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framework, then the evangelism to young unbelievers could be immeasurably successful. The theoretical foundations have focused on the goal of examining and assessing the effectiveness of how the theological framework would work out if fully utilized and has demonstrated that it can be used successfully for the church's outreach ministry of evangelism. Powell, Mulder, and Griffin discuss the importance of including young people in the planning of church worship and events. The authors explain, "young people are actively welcomed into planning for worship and special events. When it comes to special services, such as Easter, the first question is usually, 'What will the young people do?' They serve in all areas of the church, from children's ministry to the weekly food pantry outreach, alongside adults."[86] This clearly describes how the church could benefit from the willing cooperation of the youth in many areas of the church's ministries. The authors summarize, "Prioritizing teenagers and young adults has made the difference between ailing and thriving—not only for young people but also for the whole congregation."[87] An ongoing awareness of the need to evangelize by young and older believers should serve as motivation to embark on this all-important command (Matt. 28:19-20) by Jesus Christ to all believers.

Conclusion

God's desire is the salvation of all men. 1 Timothy 2:3-4 reads, "This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who wants all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth." Jesus went about telling the good news about God's kingdom to those

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[86] Powell, Mulder, and Griffin, *Growing Young*, 174.

[87] Ibid.

who heard His message. The apostles continued the message after the Ascension and spread throughout varying regions. Paul carried the gospel message on his missionary journeys and regions near and far. McGarry explains, "Jesus understood His own mission to be one of accomplishing and announcing the good news of the Kingdom of God (Luke 4:18). Gospel proclamation is the central ministry of the Apostles throughout the New Testament."[88] The importance of the gospel to young people cannot be overstated because of their importance to the current and future church. Youth in the church will be asked to carry on evangelism in succession of the Christians currently engaging in that area of ministry. It is important to understand the need for participation by young believers in evangelism in today's church. It is feasible to "admit the gospel is essential for fruitful ministry to teenagers."[89]

When church members are reminded of the pressing need for evangelizing all individuals, they should be compelled to evangelize the youth. McGarry further explains, "Youth workers must continue to preach the gospel for both evangelism and teaching, reflecting both the narrow and the broader gospel so teenagers would grow a faith."[90] The ministry to the targeted group of young unbelievers is undeniably of the highest importance to all Christians in general, and particularly, all church members.

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[88] McGarry, *A Biblical Theology of Youth Ministry*, 118.

[89] Ibid., 115-116.

[90] Ibid., 118.

CHAPTER 3

Methodology

The members of Power of the Living God Church are believers in Jesus Christ who sincerely desire to see the unsaved come to Christ. Many of the members participate in local church activities including Sunday School, Bible teaching, benevolent ministries, and other church ministries. The area in which the members fall short is in outreach to young unbelievers. Addressing this area of ministry is crucial to both current and future outreach in which Christians participate. DeVries and Pontier write, "There's little doubt that the American church's ministry to young adults has reached an all-time low. The next generation is in a mass exodus from the church."[91] Christians are reminded of the commands in which Jesus left for His disciples before His ascension into Heaven. The Great Commission (Matt 28:19-20) is clear when Christ says, "Go, therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to follow all that I commanded you; and behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age." The members are aware of the importance of this scriptural passage for Christians. This awareness should serve as motivation to members in efforts towards evangelizing young unbelievers. Dempsey and Earley explained the importance of this passage in defining it as "spiritual multiplication." The authors additionally explain that this commission is not yet fulfilled by Christians when they write, "Jesus expanded and deepened the command by applying it to *spiritual* multiplication. He wanted His disciples to reach the world through multiplying their lives by training disciples who would then develop

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[91] DeVries and Pontier, *Sustainable Young Adult Ministry*, 9.

more disciples. This command, or commission, is still waiting to be fulfilled."[92] If the church members are convinced to employ this command given by Christ, it should serve as motivation to evangelize young unbelievers. This thesis project will study methods which can serve to encourage the members to engage in this outreach to the targeted group. This chapter will describe the methods which should give clear descriptions on how to accomplish this goal for the church members. The intervention design explained in this chapter will address the problem described in the previous chapters. The implementation of the intervention design will be employed for motivation of church members towards evangelization of young unbelievers.

Purpose for the Ministry

The stated problem in this thesis project is that the members of the Power of the Living God Church of Galveston are not evangelizing young adult unbelievers. One of the most important components for believers in Jesus Christ in the church today is sharing the gospel to the unsaved, particularly young unbelievers. This pressing mandate given to Christians cannot be overstated in its importance for future generations of unbelievers. The challenges to sharing the gospel to today's unbelieving world can seem to be a daunting, insurmountable task, but it is crucially important to be conducted by believers. Within these challenges, it is vital to understand why some church members are not motivated towards outreach ministry. This thesis project specifies ministry towards a target group with which the church members should engage more effectively.

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[92] Dempsey and Earley, *Leading Healthy, Growing, Multiplying, Small Groups*, 18.

The lack of motivation demonstrated by some members is possibly indicative of unawareness of the spiritual state of young unbelievers. Harney mentions some possible causes for the lack of passion for outreach to the unsaved. He clearly explains that many churches have some, but not enough, passion for sharing the gospel when he writes, "Many churches have a pulse and there is life, but it's faint. There is love for God and for people, but it is waning…your passion for outreach is gone. Your church lacks a desperate love for God that will drive you into the world with his good news…You send money overseas, but you don't engage the mission field right next door."[93] This explanation demonstrates probable causes for the lack of motivation among church members for this targeted outreach ministry. Once the problems are ascertained, the solution can be effectively employed in achieving the stated goal. One of the most important tasks is conveying to members that this outreach is extremely beneficial in ministry to the unsaved and each should understand the overriding importance of focusing on this group. The most important benefit is sharing the gospel with someone who ultimately comes to Jesus Christ for salvation. Other benefits include making more disciples of Christ who can be trained to share the gospel with more of the unsaved. The participants committed to this outreach ministry will engage in the necessary training and teach new believers how to share the gospel to others. A full commitment from each participating member is required for the goal towards a successful ministry. As believers in Jesus Christ, members are urged to recognize the urgency of the ministry outreach of this project.

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[93] Harney, *Organic Outreach for Churches*, 23.

Reasons for Outreach

As previously noted, the overriding reason for this project is the motivation of church member evangelization to young unbelievers. This project has this specified group as the target for the outreach. Each participant will understand that the overwhelming importance of outreach geared towards unbelievers is the basis of the command of Christ (Matt 28:18-20). Bear explains that Jesus told His disciples to witness to unbelievers, but Christians should understand that this effort is sometimes unintentional. He writes, "It is possible to be a witness without being purposeful about it…we could be walking down the street singing a song of praise to God while unaware that an unbeliever is watching and listening…we could have been witnessing unto Christ even though we were not aware that we were doing so."[94] Indirect communication through alternate methods is a plausible form of sharing the gospel. When believers are committed to reaching those who are unbelievers, the urgency will extend to participants of evangelism towards all groups of the unsaved. The focus of the members will aim towards the target group of the young unbelievers when fully convinced of the need for this outreach.

It is the Mission in which Christ Commanded for Believers

Full acceptance of the mandate given by Christ should serve as a motivating starting point for participants in this outreach ministry. It is important to acknowledge possible trepidation of those desiring to serve, which can be accomplished by having plans in place to assuage the fear. It is equally important for each participant to fully grasp the emphasis in which God places on outreach to unbelievers. Those serving are reminded that Scripture clearly

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[94] Bear, *How to Evangelize*, Loc 171.

demonstrates examples of how messages were sent by God in both Old and New Testaments. In the Old Testament Jonah was commanded to go and preach to the Ninevites, a group consisting of bitter enemies of Israel (Jonah 1:1-2; 3:1-2). Throughout the New Testament, the book of Acts clearly demonstrates how the gospel mandate was conducted by the apostles. Before ascending back into Heaven, Jesus commanded His disciples to witness to unbelievers after empowerment by the Holy Spirit in saying, "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth" (Acts 1:8). Participating members are reminded that full reliance on the power of God is a necessary component for effective outreach. Greenwood makes an important reference to reliance on God's power when he writes,

> The first thing we need to do to see God's calling happen in our lives is surrender. This is huge in our "selfie" culture. It means to take a radical stand against the flow of the culture. And that is exactly what is needed if we're to reach this generation for Jesus. There is no perfect strategy or great formula. We need God's power. And to see God's power we have to surrender.[95]

Participating members are reminded of how much the Great Commission applies to the current mandated ministry for each of them. It is incumbent on each to devote the time towards the preparation for the outreach to this targeted group. Full commitment to the ministry by participating church members is necessary for effective outreach towards young adult unbelievers.

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[95] Greenwood, *Global Youth Culture*, Loc. 373.

Understanding Potential Problems for the Ministry

Several potential problems which could affect the ministry should be considered by all

stakeholders. Some of the questions posed to participants in the interviews demonstrated the

need to increase the confidence level in participating church members. It is crucially important

that participants are fully aware of potential impediments which could impact full commitment

towards this outreach evangelism. Fear of rejection displayed by young unbelievers is an

important area in which the training will comprehensibly address. Bear explains his personal

experience with rejection when he writes, "Immediately after my conversion, I could not wait to

tell all my friends the gospel. I was sure they would all want to be saved. I was shocked when

they rejected it."[96] The participating members are reminded that rejection is not only possible but

likely. Rejection is often the fastest path to discouragement for Christians who engage in

outreach to the unsaved. It is also important for members to understand that the reasons for

rejection of the gospel is caused by the spiritual blindness of unbelievers. Bear further addresses

the reason for the rejection in explaining spiritual blindness described in Scripture. He writes,

> Why did they reject it? I know now that it was because their hearts were darkened. "For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile, and their foolish hearts were darkened" (Romans 1:21). Because God enlightened my heart, the gospel was suddenly glorious to me. But my friends were still unable to see the glory of the gospel because their hearts remained darkened.[97]

The problems experienced with rejection are expected and should be recognized as existential

realities which often affect the ministry of sharing the gospel. Any possible hesitancy will be

tempered by the anticipated positive outcome of the outreach to the unsaved. The spiritual

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[96] Bear, *How to Evangelize*, Loc 223.

[97] Ibid.

condition of the target group of unbelievers demonstrates the pressing need for Christ in their lives. This project intentionally addresses this difficult area involving rejection by unbelievers. This greatly benefits those participating in the ministry by providing information which assists those engaging in the outreach. The participating church members should understand the necessity of full commitment toward this outreach.

Necessary Tasks

The main task in this project is addressing why church members are not motivated to evangelize unbelieving young adults. The information from the interviews and focus group questions from participants were used in assigning the tasks for each ministry group. Participants were divided into two main groups which included Senior and Middle-aged Adults, and Young Adults. The participants were divided into two groups. One group with five, and the other with eight members. Each group was given specific assignments. The assigned tasks focus on ministry outreach which addresses the respective age groups. The factors which were considered included the participants identification with young adult unbelievers. Senior and middle-aged adults were familiar with unsaved grandchildren and able to minister to this young age group. The research demonstrated that this ministry group was most stable and more apt to faithfully serve in the outreach. This group can objectively share the gospel from a vantage point of prior experience. Young adults were able to credibly address issues which were encountered by those closer to their own age group.

It is important for participants to understand the need for consistent and effective ministry towards the targeted group. If the outreach ministry is employed in a way which overworks any of the stakeholders, it can produce an undesired negative outcome. Burnout is a potential present and actual threat to participants. Harney explains,

> Some churches' monitor shows that their heart is beating two or three times faster than a healthy heart. Because these churches love God and want to be faithful to his love for lost people, they launch outreach program after outreach program and initiative after initiative. Church members grow tired and exhausted, as the congregation jumps into the latest evangelistic fads.[98]

Each member will be encouraged to avoid this pitfall by developing consistent engagement in this outreach ministry. The members will make a concerted effort to avoid this possible burnout when engaging in the stated ministry. The avoidance of these potential ministry problems will be part of the training for stakeholders. When further describing potential problems, Harney explains the problems faced in some churches in writing, "While the motives are right, the practice of outreach is so forced that it fails to bear much fruit. Churches like this often experience frustration…They invest lots of money and time, and they genuinely love God, but lost people rarely come to know and embrace Jesus."[99] These problems can derail this ministry with deleterious effects. The participants will work together in groups when engaging in this outreach ministry to offset problematic areas identified within the work. Members must be convinced that the ministry described in this project is worthwhile and beneficial for unsaved youth. It is plausible to believe that members will embrace the outreach more fully after

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[98] Harney, *Organic Outreach for Churches*, 24.

[99] Ibid.

understanding the purpose of this work and its impact on this specific group of unbelievers. It is also reasonable to believe that this understanding will ignite a willingness to serve, which is the purpose and goal for the ministry in this thesis project.

Location of Activities

The activities for the groups to meet will be in the fellowship hall located at the church building. Since the pandemic in 2020, the meetings are a hybrid of Zoom and in-person meetings. Continued planning with the ministry groups are scheduled approximately every four months.

Solutions for Ministry Problems

It is without exception that participants understand that problems involving outreach are unsurprising and require applicable solutions. It is also acknowledged that unexpected problems can be rectified when necessary. Participant responses were indispensably important in establishing the methods used towards the successful outcome of the project. Examples of the rejection of God are found throughout the Bible and the following sections describe some of those examples.

The problem of rejection is directly addressed in Scripture in both Testaments. The members will be reminded that God spoke to Samuel concerning rejection by individuals. In the book of Samuel, the Bible explains, "The Lord said to Samuel, 'Listen to the voice of the people in regard to all that they say to you, for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected Me from being king over them" (1 Sam 8:7). The New Testament describes what Jesus told His

disciples concerning rejection in explaining, "He who rejects Me and does not receive My sayings, has one who judges him; the word I spoke is what will judge him at the last day" (John 12:48). It is important for church members to realize that rejection of God and His Word is not a new undertaking for those currently sharing the gospel. Bear explains, "It is possible for a Christian to be afraid that they will simply fail to explain the gospel correctly…This fear can be especially useful…It is to our advantage that we lack confidence in our own ability to articulate the gospel in order that we seek God's power to do so. This pleases Him and makes provision for His power and glory to be displayed to us in our weakness."[100] The questions associated with rejection of the gospel, which may arise, are usually related to the causes of the resistance to God's call to salvation. Why is this type of ministry outreach rejected? Why do unbelievers scoff and ridicule those sharing the gospel when it is spoken to them? The unsaved sometimes point to hypocrisy of Christians as one of the major problems that they see in the faith tradition, which can discredit the Christian witness. Some of the questions answered in the interviews and focus groups offer some answers for this problem. It is imperative that participants in this ministry exhibit a genuine involvement towards the solution of the problem. White explains,

> In writing about the teaching of Jesus, John Stott noted that "if the church realistically accepted his standards and values…and lived by them, it would be the alternative society he always intended it to be and would offer to the world an authentic Christian counterculture." Those two ideas—church and counterculture—lie at the heart of reaching a post-Christian generation. The challenge is, first, to understand the ideas and, second, to engage them.[101]

Participating members will be encouraged to display genuine concern for the group targeted for the outreach. This group of young unbelievers are sometimes neglected by believers who

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[100] Bear, *How to Evangelize*, Loc 1659.

[101] White, *Meet Generation Z*, 69.

participate in the ministry of sharing the gospel. Why is the ministry necessary? The following sections addresses this question.

It Targets an often-neglected Group

The targeted group for the ministry consists of individuals who have been neglected in many areas of outreach. There is a multiplicity of reasons for this omission by well-meaning believers who desire to reach the youth. It is crucially important for the participants to understand the pressing need for the unsaved to come to Christ. Many youth ministries in the church today are not operating at maximum effectiveness. The reasons for these problems with ministry to young unbelievers varies within different ministries, but Stier offers possible causes for the problems. He explains that Jesus taught a small group who spread the gospel and through them, He changed the world. He writes, "The question arises that, if this is the case, then why aren't youth ministries seeing the same results? I believe the answer lies not in complexity but in simplicity."[102] Participants are reminded that the gospel contains a simple message of salvation through Jesus Christ. Each is encouraged to focus on the evangelism in sharing the gospel of Christ. Stier further explains, "The modern youth ministry model has largely abandoned the focus of Jesus . . . we have exchanged mission for meetings. We have separated evangelism and discipleship. We have turned outreach into a program instead of a lifestyle."[103]

What are necessary methods needed to motivate church members to evangelize young unbelievers? Some church programs are ineffective in sharing the gospel to the unsaved. The

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[102] Stier, *Youth Ministry in the 21st Century*, 4.

[103] Ibid.

focus of evangelism must be established and specifically employed towards the targeted group. It also must demonstrate a genuine passion for the group. Stier describes the goal of genuine ministry when he explains, "Again, the goal here is not more evangelistic programs but nurturing teenagers to live and give the gospel in word and deed in their spheres of influence. When reaching non-Christians with the gospel becomes a primary passion of their hearts, transformation is triggered on a whole host of spiritual development levels."[104] How can church members be motivated for this type of genuine evangelization of this group of young unbelievers? Training in multiple facets of evangelism towards the youth is a way to motivate church members. The following sections describe some of the ways in which this can be accomplished.

The Need for Training

The training needed for the church members cannot be overstated considering the need for the evangelization of this group of young unbelievers. The solutions to the stated problem can be employed when the necessary training takes place for unmotivated church members. Part of the training will include teaching small-group leaders to motivate these members to evangelization of this targeted group. The questions concerning the lack of participation will be analyzed in the effort to assess the behavior of the members. The focus would concentrate on the possible bevy of reasons given for non-participation. Bear explains,

> There are millions of people who falsely think they are Christians simply because they repeated a "sinner's prayer"…They remain dead in their trespasses and sins. Yet, they falsely believe they are Christians…man told them they would be saved if they repeated a

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[104] Stier, *Youth Ministry in the 21st Century*, 5.

"sinner's prayer" or walked down an aisle. God makes no such promise. His promise is "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved" (Acts 16:31).[105]

The goal would ultimately set forth a path for church members to engage in this endeavor towards evangelization of the youth unbelievers.

Approach Used to Identify Research Project Participants at the Ministry Site

A key component of this project is how the selection was made of those taking part in the ministry. The ministry groups were selected by age. This grouping by age facilitated the objectives of this research because of the familiarity of the generational characteristics. The groups for participating members were formed in increments of ten years. The formed groups are eighteen to twenty-eight, thirty to thirty-nine, and forty and above. The project participants for this research were chosen by utilizing an invitation sent to those who will contribute to the project in the most beneficial way. This was one of the most challenging, yet crucial, stages in the entire thesis project. The process was one like the process used in selections in many areas in non-religious social processes. The process is sometimes described as "vetting," which is an examination of both past and current background information on potential persons selected for designated positions. Some examples include persons selected for judicial, legislative, or non-governmental appointments. The participants taking part in this project were selected by the responses demonstrated in the invitation submitted to everyone. The participants selected demonstrated an authentic desire to advance the outreach ministry towards unsaved youth described in this thesis project and expressed genuine intentions to engage in the effort towards a

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[105] Bear, *How to Evangelize*, Loc 1488.

solution. Each was reminded of the stated thesis problem of the lack of motivation exhibited by some members and the need for an immediate change in this area.

It was a necessary and indispensably crucial step to identify genuine concern to engage in a solution to the problem as opposed to unhelpful motives. Any person demonstrating or expressing a critical attitude was excluded from participation. Those who agreed to take part in the project expressed potentially helpful solutions to the thesis problem which was explained in detail to them. The responses from the interviews and focus groups were used as a clear indication of how each stakeholder would approach an effective solution.

How Participant Engagement in the Project was Achieved

It was important to understand how potential participants can be motivated for evangelism outreach towards the target group of young unbelievers. An important question which was addressed is how to convince church members to participate in the outreach. Was it possible to motivate potential ministry participants? What was the extent of any of their reasons for hesitation? Is there fear of communicating with other people, especially young unbelievers? Another question concerned how to address the expected possible trepidation ignited by this endeavor. How can the fear be assuaged? Will training be offered to participants? These pertinent questions will be answered in the effort to convince members to fully engage in the outreach. Discussions during the interviews and focus groups of stakeholders provided invaluable information which addressed the questions. All the concerns will be addressed in the following sections.

Intervention Design

The major aim of this project is to motivate church members for evangelism outreach. The intervention plan will address the problem and begin with addressing questions directly related to the stated problem. Bear explains that Christians should maintain a desire to see the unsaved come to Christ when rescued from the darkness of sin. He writes,

> We want to see people rescued from the kingdom of darkness and transferred into the Kingdom of Jesus. We want to see God change dead people into those who worship Him in spirit and in truth…We cannot know for sure if they have come to know Him…we must patiently continue watering the seed and encourage them to believe God's message of redemption.[106]

This project has utilized participant information to establish individual groups who participated in the project and subsequently determined locations for the needed interviews. These interviews took place utilizing the virtual format with some exceptions accounting for in-person interaction. The facilitator conducted the interviews for each of the targeted groups and the intervention plan established relationships which brings about confidence and trust. This established trust, which greatly assisted in helping each group work together.

Materials Produced to Facilitate the Research

The proposed methods which are used by this researcher are personal interviews and focus groups through the virtual format. After presenting the problem in the form of questions to participants, the facilitator conducted personal interviews. This process was followed by a focus group. After collection of the information from the virtual interviews of participants, the next phase used results of the interviews in forming the focus group. The group was then brought

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[106] Bear, *How to Evangelize*, Loc 1478.

together using the virtual format for an in-depth discussion of proposed solutions for the presented problem.

As the project continues, the resources which are to be used by this researcher will include a tape recorder and documents associated with evangelism outreach. The specific tools which this researcher used to gather data and measure the effects of the intervention included interviews and a focus group. The purpose of this process was to obtain beneficial information from each stakeholder no matter the area in which they participate. Ernest T. Stringer explains, "the experience and perspective of stakeholders—those mainly affected by or having an influence on the issue investigated…Participants, especially primary stakeholders, are therefore consciously engaged in the process of describing the nature of the problem and gathering information."[107] Participants will be given the opportunity to reveal details of their personal experiences which contribute to the project. Each participant will have the freedom to honestly speak concerning the questions which are addressed.

How Change was Measured

The change is mostly measured by the differences observed among the unmotivated church members compared to those willing to serve in the outreach. The ministry directed towards the targeted group by church members will provide measurable evidence of the level of effectiveness of the outreach. Records will be kept for the individual ministry groups with the goal of determining the most effective way to employ the ministry to this targeted group. Harney describes the importance of ministry to the unsaved by Christians. He writes,

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[107] Ernest T. Stringer, *Action Research* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2014), 101.

When our hearts are beating with love for God, the world, and the church, we will naturally want to see people enter a life-transforming relationship with Jesus. The Bible is clear: this can happen only when people hear the message of the gospel and by God's grace are led to understand their need to repent of sin, receive Jesus, and begin a whole new life.[108]

The baseline for measuring change is the use of the previous outreach evangelism in the church. How effective has it been in the past? Were unbelievers impacted by the ministry employed by church members in the past? These past measurements will be used as a baseline for this ministry.

Implementation of the Intervention Design

The implementation of intervention design started with confirmation of permission from each participant. After IRB approval of this project on June 4, 2021, this researcher gathered relevant information relating to the research and impending questions. The process started with identifying all individuals who will participate in the development of the solution to the problem stated for this thesis project. The problem and goal of arriving at the solution was clearly explained to each participant. A determination of the formats was established during the early phases of this thesis project. The stakeholders consisted of two main groups. The first of the two groups included the church members who should be motivated to evangelize young unbelievers, with the second group consisting of young unbelievers. Individuals taking part are entitled to reassurance of the higher level of privacy and discretion exhibited by this researcher. The demonstration of transparency from this researcher towards each group cannot be overstated. After describing the plan to the participants, each was asked to explain their individual

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[108] Harney, *Organic Outreach for Churches*, 175.

perception of the stated problem. This implementation of the intervention design also utilized the

first phase of the research processes as described by Stringer which includes looking, thinking,

and acting. He writes, "The first phase would begin with this researcher gathering information

which informs of the experiences and perspectives of the different stakeholders"[109] This specific

part of the process included meeting with the stakeholders who were interviewed for the project.

The information collected from each was invaluable in the search of the solution to the lack of

motivation for this outreach ministry. It included questions concerning the reasons for the lack of

evangelism, why this is the case, and how it can be rectified. This process has enabled this

researcher to ascertain necessary and useful information from each of the participants. The

information gathered was utilized in the efforts leading to the initial assessment of the stated

problem from the perspective of individual stakeholders.

It is important to note that this thesis project has opened the possibility for the

development of effective solutions to the stated problem when utilizing the information collected

from the participants. This part of the process allowed participants the ability to offer unaltered

input towards a solution to the stated problem. Each participant was given the opportunity to

contribute useful information unaffected by the views and perspectives of the facilitator. This

part of the process also allowed stakeholder engagement which assisted in the development of a

beneficial solution to the stated problem.

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[109] Stringer, *Action Research*, 101.

Interviews of Participants

The actual intervention design started with interviews of both groups of the stakeholders. This part of the process obtained unbiased information from the participating church members. The questions asked would seek to obtain answers based on the most honest responses possible. One key question asks about the seeming complacency in the church's outreach. Do the stakeholders believe that mission and outreach has changed? George G. Hunter explains how the church has currently altered its passionate desire for mission and outreach. He writes that "very slowly, the priority shifted from retaining our mobile people and reaching other people, to caring for our settled people and preserving the tradition and institution. The descendants of the people…have not been in serious mission for decades."[110] The church members answered these questions and offered ideas during interviews arranged by the facilitator, and these ideas were utilized as part of the plan. The involvement of this group increased the level of comfort needed for honesty and integrity in answers and recommendations. The individual interviews were scheduled at the convenience of the church members, preferably on Saturday evenings and Sunday evenings. The specific times were arranged by agreements made between the facilitator and members.

The other intervention design included the non-church members with the focus on the combined ideas of this group and the facilitator, which were presented. Stringer explains, "By working collaboratively, participants develop collective visions of their situation that provide the basis for effective action. At its best, this type of activity is liberating, enabling people to master

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[110] George G. Hunter III, *Radical Outreach: The Recovery of Apostolic Ministry and Evangelism* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2003), 98.

their world as they see it in a different way—a tangible process of enlightenment."[111] This part of the project worked extremely well as a cooperative effort between young unbelievers and the facilitator.

Schedule Details

This researcher started the project three weeks after approval by the Liberty University Internal Review Board (IRB) on June 4, 2021. Participants were sent invitations from this facilitator after June 20, 2021. The ensuing four weeks were spent gathering information from the prospective participants. The group of those serving is approximately between fifteen and twenty-one persons for the projects. Participants who agreed to all conditions of taking part in the ministry were informed of the responsibilities in which they were undertaking. The duration of the first phase of the ministry was employed from November 2021 to February 2022. The research for this project continued from March 2022 until May 2022. The subsequent small-group training will be described in later sections. The groups will meet via Zoom to ensure that all participants are properly trained for this outreach ministry.

Data Collecting Tools

The two proposed methods used by this researcher included personal interviews and focus groups through the virtual format. Following the initial period of presenting the problem in the context of questions to participants, the facilitator then deployed personal interviews. On June 26, 2021, the facilitator further collected the information from the virtual interviews of

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[111] Stringer, *Action Research*, 102.

participants, and then utilized the results of the interviews in forming the focus group. On July 22, 2021, the focus group brought participants together utilizing the Zoom format. This group was brought together via the virtual format for an in-depth discussion of the important solutions for the presented problem. The answers given by participants were extremely useful in forming pertinent solutions to the stated problem of the lack of motivation by some church members. The participants were informed that the interviews and focus groups were recorded. Each was informed when the recording was started and when it was stopped at the end of each session.

Interviews

Everyone involved in the interviews and focus groups was assured of the confidential protection of their respective interview sessions. The agreements were signed by the participants and confirmed by this researcher. Initial interview questions carry essential importance in addressing the purpose set forth in achieving the main goal of evangelization towards this main group discussed. Follow-up interviews used to obtain additional information will be conducted later in the project. The interviews were conducted within specific groups. All questions were expressly created with the goal of achieving the most effective outreach ministry to the targeted group of young unbelievers. The participants were asked questions related to those asked in the first interviews and are listed in the following sections. The questions are separated by the groups and are those posed to each group. The first set of questions were "Interview Questions for Church Members" and are listed below:

Interview Questions

- In a brief statement, what is your understanding of evangelism within the church?

- Have you been a part of any area of evangelism in all your years as a Christian?

- Where have you served in the past? Were you part of another membership?

- If you were part of the evangelism ministry, what were your responsibilities?

- What are the reasons you wanted to serve in this area of ministry?

- Do you have a desire to serve in this church's evangelism ministry?

- Do you believe that you could be fully committed to this area of ministry?

- What do you think is the importance of evangelism in the church?

- In your opinion, do you believe that there is a lack of evangelism focusing on young people who are unbelievers?

- What do you think are the reasons for the lack of evangelism to this group?

- Do you believe that all church members have a responsibility to evangelize young adult unbelievers?

- Do you think that church members lack the motivation for evangelization towards this group?

- What changes do you think would motivate members to evangelize this group of young unbelievers?

- Is there something that you would like to add that would help motivate church members to evangelize this group of youth?

- Is there anything else that you would like to add to your answers?

The answers given by members provided a broad spectrum of crucially relevant ideas for the employment of evangelism towards the targeted group of young unbelievers.

The second group of interviews were conducted within specific groups. They were "Interview Questions for Non-Church Members," and are the following:

- In a brief statement, what is your understanding of evangelism?

- Have you been a part of any area of evangelism in all your years as a Christian?

- If you were part of the evangelism ministry in a church, what were your responsibilities?

- What are the reasons you wanted to serve in this area of ministry?

- Do you presently have a desire to serve in evangelism ministry?

- Do you believe that this is a critical area of ministry? If so, why?

- What do you think is the importance of evangelism in the church?

- In your opinion, do you believe that there is a lack of evangelism focusing on young people who are unbelievers?

- What do you think are the reasons for the lack of evangelism to this group?

- Do you believe that Christians have a responsibility to evangelize young adult unbelievers?

- Do you think that some Christians lack the motivation for evangelization towards this group?

- What changes do you think would motivate Christians to evangelize this group of young unbelievers?

- Is there anything else that you would like to add to your answers?

Focus Group

The final group of interviews were conducted for the combined focus group. They were "Focus Group Questions for combined Church and Non-Church Members," which are the following:

- Do you believe that there is a lack of evangelism towards young adult unbelievers?

- What do you think would be required to motivate church members to evangelize this group?

- What do you believe that Power of the Living God Church can do to increase participation in this area of ministry?

- What do you think are the reasons for the lack of evangelism within the church?

- Have you been a part of any area of evangelism in all your years as a Christian?

- Where have you served in the past? Was it in a different church or were you part of another membership?

- If you were part of the evangelism ministry, what were your responsibilities?

- What are the reasons you wanted to serve in this area of ministry?

- Do you have a desire to serve in this church's evangelism ministry?

- Do you believe that you could be fully committed to this area of ministry?

- What do you think is the importance of evangelism in the church?

- In your opinion, do you believe that there is a lack of evangelism focusing on young people who are unbelievers?

- What do you think are the reasons for the lack of evangelism to this group?

- Do you believe that all church members have a responsibility to evangelize young adult unbelievers?

- Do you think that church members lack the motivation for evangelization towards this group?

- What changes do you think would motivate members to evangelize this group of young unbelievers?

- Is there something that you would like to add that would help motivate church members to evangelize this group of youth?

- What are suggestions that you can offer which contribute to motivating church members to evangelize young adult unbelievers?

Conclusion

The intervention design and implementation has directly addressed the stated problem of this research project with the goal of motivating church members to evangelize young unbelievers. As the project continued and all ideas concerning the solutions to the stated problem are brought together, the facilitator and all participants came together to formulate the plan which addressed effective solutions to the stated problem. The ideas developed by both individual groups have been shown to be extremely beneficial towards creating solutions for the presented problem. If the plan is fully developed and employed by the church members, it should work effectively when applied towards the target group. An essential truth reminds all participants of the importance of this outreach ministry.

Evangelism is an area of ministry directly associated with the Great Commission (Matt. 28:19-20) left by Jesus and should never be considered as an optional work of Christians. The mandate of Jesus to share the gospel compels believers to reach out to unbelievers. When church members evangelize young unbelievers, they are doing God's will. Evangelism should cause unsaved youth to change directions from sin and come to Christ.

CHAPTER 4

Results

Data Collected

The problem defined in this project is that the Power of the Living God Church of Galveston members are not evangelizing young adult unbelievers. This project has demonstrated that this problem should be solved by those who are part of this church. The comprehensive information obtained from areas of study in this project has led to beneficial measurable changes for all participants. The important purpose of the research project should motivate the members to assess the data collected from the research and subsequently engage in effective outreach to the target group. As a result of the data gathered from the interviews and the focus groups used in this project, the results in the conclusion will demonstrate the reasons why the members are not motivated to evangelize. It is crucial to recognize the importance of sharing the gospel with young adult unbelievers without doubt or trepidation. Fear of how the young unbelievers will respond to members disseminating the gospel message is a concern of some participants.

The results gathered demonstrated the inescapable need to respectfully entreat all unsaved individuals, particularly young unbelievers. DeVries and Pontier explain how youth are sometimes treated in churches today. In describing some of the attitudes towards youth, the authors write that "in ten years or so, when they enter the world of adulthood, will the church hold them back and keep them waiting in the wings? Or will the church find a way to share leadership?...Most churches today simply keep the young adults in a holding pattern—often unintentionally."[112] It is important to note that the impact of the attitudes described on youth

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[112] DeVries and Pontier, *Sustainable Young Adult Ministry*, page number(s).

groups in today's church will continue to be problematic for the foreseeable future if not

rectified. It can be demonstrated that in youth ministry, many of today's churches use a model

described as "gambling." DeVries explains,

> Most churches have chosen to do youth ministry with a model best described as gambling…The leaders of the church cross their fingers and believe, with all their hearts, that this time the cards will fall in their favor…But few people get rich gambling…But wealth—and sustainable youth ministry—come not from gambling but predictably from a strategic, sacrificial, and annoyingly inconvenient investment of time and resources.[113]

The results obtained for this project demonstrated a distinctive disconnect evidenced

between older and younger participants. The differences were demonstrated in the perspectives

of each respective group. The data collected from all participants demonstrated the need for

evangelism outreach toward the young unbelievers. The stated problem clearly mentions the

crucially incalculable need for church members to be motivated for this ministry mandated by

Christ. The participant interviews and focus groups facilitated directions for the process of

developing the necessary motivation for the members. The following sections address the results

obtained from the data gathered within the research and describe the effects of the proposed

solutions.

What were the Results of Addressing the Problem?

The stated problem of this project is that the members of the Power of the Living God

Church of Galveston are not evangelizing young adult unbelievers. Subsequently, the aim of this

research is to motivate the members to fully participate in this outreach ministry in the church.

Relevant questions should be addressed as this project moves forward toward the stated goal.

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[113] Mark DeVries, *Sustainable Youth Ministry: Why Most Youth Ministry Doesn't Last and What Your Church can do About It* (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 2008), 10.

Was the goal of the motivation towards the members achieved? Which components of the research proved most beneficial? Did church members fully accept the need for commitment to this outreach to the unsaved? What are the most effective methods in this ministry? The results obtained in the intervention plan have demonstrated a definitive path for effective outreach ministry.

Evaluation of the results is one of the most important facets of this project. Stringer explains, "Evaluation is the systematic collection, analysis, and interpretation of information about the activities, characteristics, and outcomes of actual programs in order to make judgements about specific aspects of the program, improve the program's effectiveness, and make decisions about the program's future."[114] The evaluation of the information obtained from the participants of the project is used towards the solution of the stated problem. The data gathered should demonstrate the importance of addressing the stated problem to participating members with solutions assessed from the results contained in the study.

Common Components found in Data Results

Some common components were evident from the interviews, focus groups, and practical area community outreach in which participants engaged. The focus of the project was addressed within the research with the main goal of motivating non-participating church members for evangelism. The data gathered indicated that the predominant problem observed by church members was the resistance of the unsaved to most evangelistic outreach. This was a possible impediment no matter the age of the unbeliever. Some church members demonstrated

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[114] Stringer, *Action Research*, 70.

presumptuous ideas of instant rejection from the targeted group. This idea has also been observed among church leaders who have had trouble in this area. Hunter describes the difficulty by some church leaders who have experienced problems in reaching what is described as the "unchurched unconventional people." Some have not been completely aware of what compels the unsaved to salvation. He explains, "Most church leaders have not discovered that reaching 'unconventional' people is the catalyst to reaching unchurched 'conventional' people…church leaders have never known how much good radical outreach does for the souls of those who reach out and for the whole church."[115]

The findings in the data indicated the need for believers to understand the significant differences between unbelievers of today and those in the past. The proliferation of information found in social media platforms and other sources has increased the difficulty for sharing the gospel. The results also demonstrated that unbelievers exhibit skepticism towards any "religious" discussions. These potential impediments to this ministry outreach were evident from the assessments of early results from the data. Some participants demonstrated a lack of confidence in what was most needed to effectively evangelize the targeted group. The data demonstrated that all believers must first be convinced of the pressing need for the ministry to this group before engaging in any conversation involving the gospel. This information is extremely important and should be relevant to all church leaders and members.

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[115] Hunter, *Radical Outreach*, 44.

Expectations within the Results

The results obtained from this research demonstrate crucially important solutions to the problem stated in this project. It is necessary to understand the meaning of the study undertaken through its implementation and results. The results have explained some of the reasons given by participants for not evangelizing the target group of this project. Some of those reasons have included indifference, fear, apathy, and disinterest. The data has demonstrated that some of the church members lack the time and the encouragement necessary for outreach. The data has indicated the reasons for the lack of evangelism for church members and move toward the solution to the problem. The church members demonstrated a strong willingness to fully participate in the outreach at the outset of the research project. Also shown in the data was the idea of inadequacy within some participants. The expectations for this research project are focused on motivating church members to evangelize young unbelievers. What are the components of the data which stood out? The following sections discuss the findings of the data results.

Were Intervention Plan Expected Results Met?

This research creates one unavoidably important question which needed to be addressed within this project. Did the intervention plan yield the expected results? The answers to this question can only be discovered in the data obtained throughout this project. The collected data indicates that the stated goal of motivating church members for evangelism towards young unbelievers is achievable. What was shown in the data pertaining to a solution which would successfully address the lack of motivation? How much effort was required to convince these

members to participate in this outreach? Were the members convinced of the viability of the

ministry? More importantly, were they fully convinced that the ministry is indeed mandated by

Jesus? It is crucial that church members understand the need for utilizing effective ministry

techniques which appeal to young unbelievers. The data results revealed awareness by church

members of the need to modify methods when needed. White explains the importance of

recognizing the need for adjustment of ministry methods towards what he describes as a "post-

Christian unchurched culture." He writes,

> The church must rethink evangelism…The church must view evangelism as both a
> process and an event. Because we are not dealing with an unchurched culture…but
> instead with a post-Christian unchurched culture…we must pay fresh attention to the
> process that leads people to the event of salvation. The goal is not simply knowing how
> to articulate the means of coming to Christ…but knowing how to facilitate and enable the
> person to progress.[116]

The data gathered from the interviews and focus groups demonstrated that members were mostly

unaware of the spiritual status would benefit from the extensive training proposed by church

leaders.

<p style="text-align:center">What was Shown in the Data Pertaining to Solutions to the Problem?</p>

The data gathered for this project showed that church members could be motivated to

evangelize young unbelievers when they realized the components needed for this outreach

ministry. This data revealed that each participating member required an overall burden for

sharing the gospel with all unbelievers. A commitment to this call was undeniably mandatory for

each person who agreed to take part in this outreach.

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[116] White, *Meet Generation Z*, 109.

A recurring answer was common in answering the question concerning how to rectify the problem of the lack of motivation by participating members. The question is: "What changes do you think would motivate members to evangelize this group of young unbelievers?" The theme here was almost unanimous among all participants. The overriding answer was for older church members to truly listen to young people and to not dismiss them as an irrelevant or unimportant part of the membership. The answers were given by church members in all age ranges. How can truly listening to young people facilitate the solution to the problem of the lack of motivation in the members? What can be done to move forward in the outreach? Different answers were observed in older and younger church members when asked about how best to rectify the problem in this outreach ministry. The younger members focused on the idea of older members not listening to what was important to them; older believers mentioned the idea that younger members were "self-absorbed" and spoiled by their upbringing.

Below are several graphs taken from the data which display some of the causes for the lack of motivation. Each of the following graphs illustrate the different findings for the respective age groups. The categories include Fear of Rejection, Burnout, the Ability to Properly Articulate the Gospel, and Skeptical Unbelievers-Christian Hypocrisy. Figure 1 shows the results of the data from the first two groups combined which includes eighteen to forty-year-old participants.
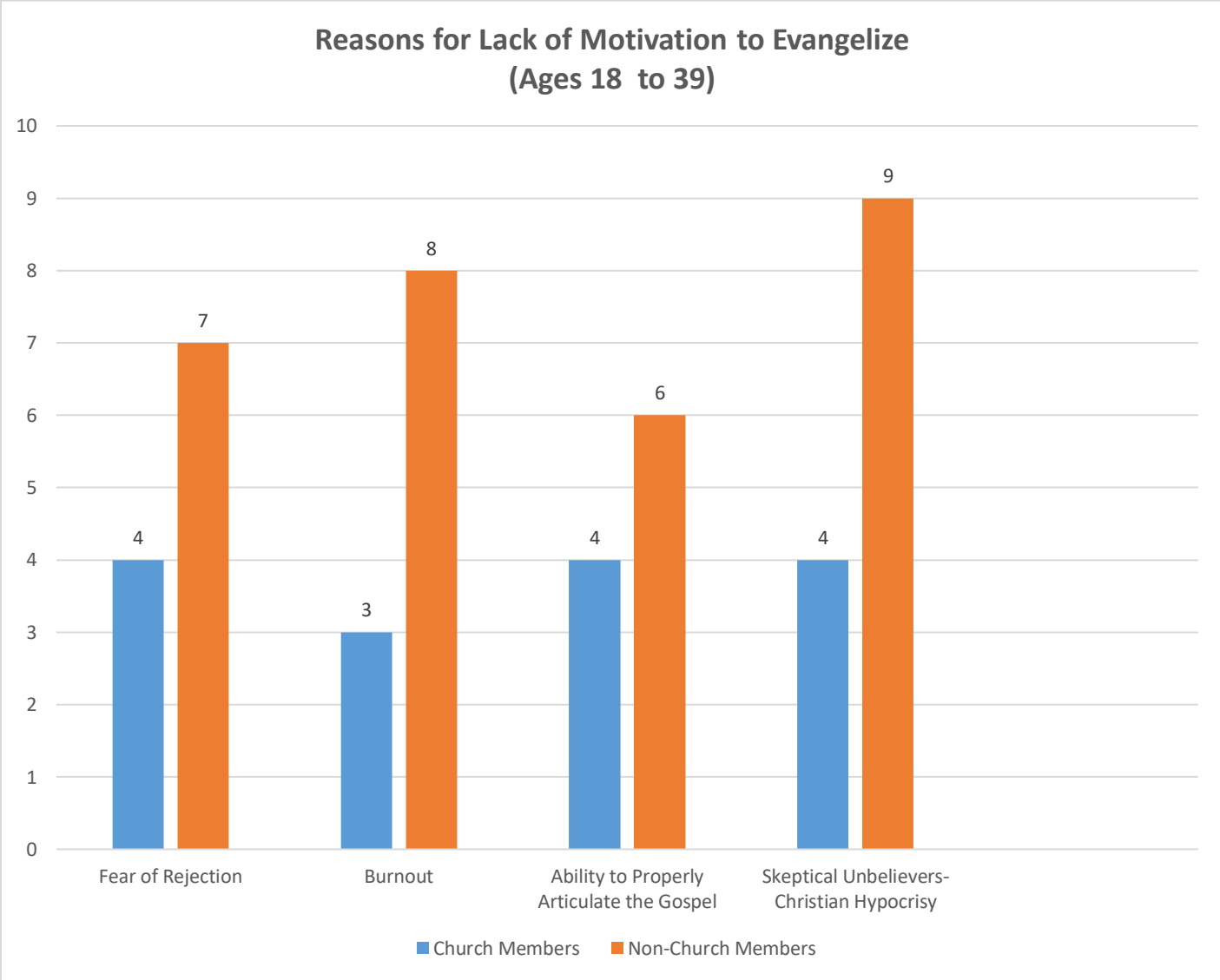
Figure 1. Reasons for Lack of Motivation to Evangelize (Ages 18 to 39).

The data collected indicated the effect of each of these components on the members participating in the outreach ministry to young unbelievers. As both charts illustrate, the project uses pertinent information from both members and non-members to arrive at the solution for motivation of the participants.

The main goal of this project is to motivate church members to evangelize. As discussed earlier in this project, the four problematic areas shown are contributors to this ministry problem

experienced by the church members. Fear of rejection displayed by young unbelievers has a profound effect on the members who lack motivation for evangelism. Recognizing this problem is the key to getting beyond this fear. Jesus was rejected by God's chosen people as described in the New Testament. In the book of John, the Bible reads, "He came to His own, and his own did not receive Him. But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name" (John 1:11-12). This verse should be used as encouragement to the members who are impacted by rejection when sharing the gospel. This can serve to motivate members to move beyond all trepidation in this area. Bear describes his conversation with a Muslim man speaking to him about sin and judgment. He explains,

> I summed up by stating that, due to these things, everyone on earth deserves to go to hell forever. The man scowled and said, "That's stupid!" Now this may seem like a failed attempt to evangelize but at least this man understood this part of the message, even though he did not accept it that moment.[117]

This description is a clear example of potential difficulty experienced when sharing the gospel to those who display contempt for what is said. The data collected for this project demonstrated that church members could be more motivated to serve in this outreach ministry when realizing that rejection is a common response of unbelievers.

Ministry burnout was another problem which caused the lack of motivation for church members. As previously explained, leaders must avoid overworking any members willing to participate in the evangelism ministry. Figure 2 shows the results of the data from the last group which includes participants older than forty years of age.

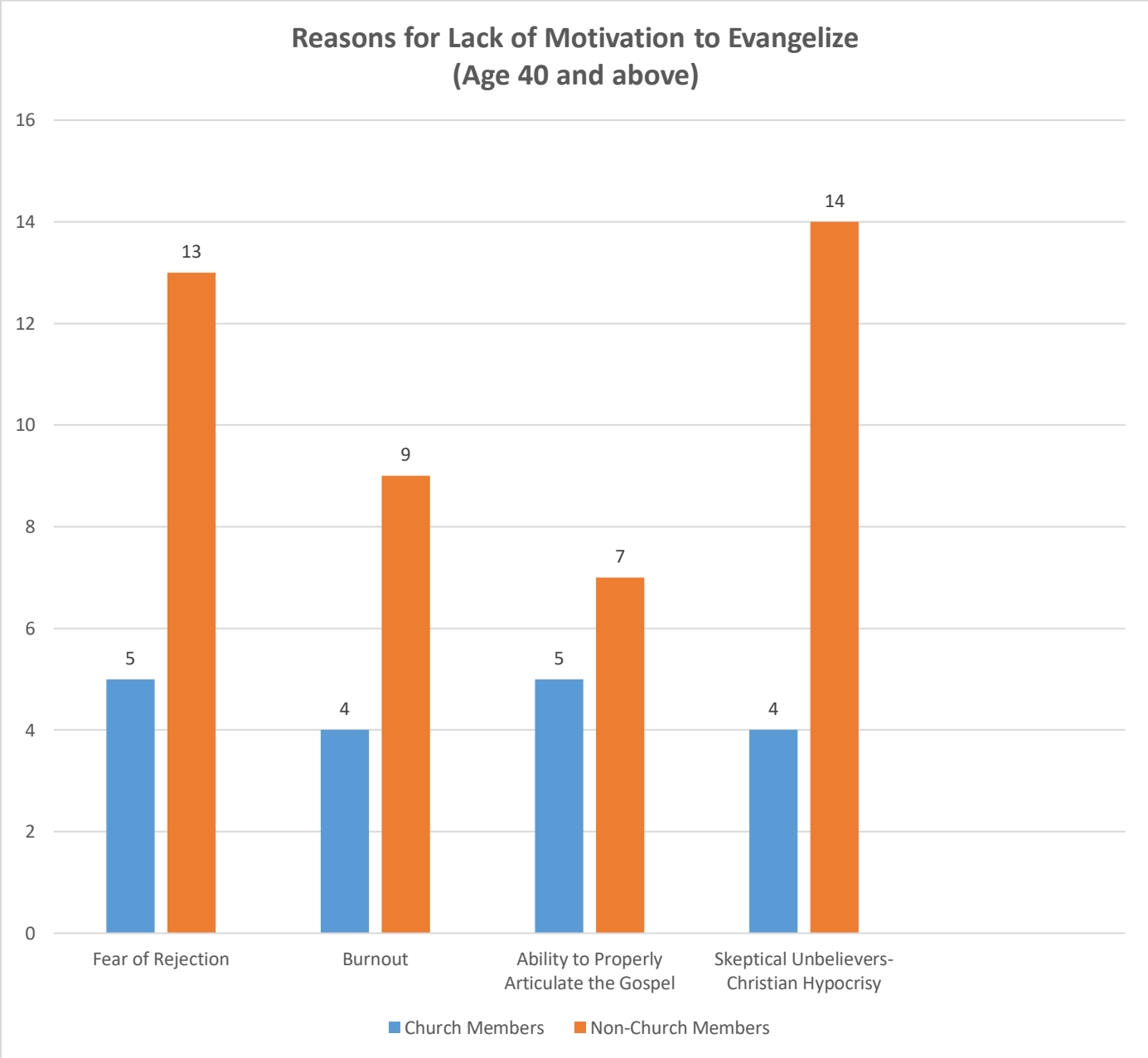[117] Bear, *How to Evangelize*, Loc 1017.

Figure 2. Reasons for Lack of Motivation to Evangelize (Age 40 and above).

What methods would Successfully Address the Lack of Motivation?

The collected data arrived at the causes for the lack of motivation toward evangelism of

the targeted group. As previously stated, some reasons for this problem include the lack of

confidence in the member's level of faith, the fear of rejection from unbelievers, and inadequacy in properly articulating the gospel. Church members must understand that it is God who saves the unbeliever, and that any trepidation is unfounded. These problematic impediments can be alleviated by faith in what God has said in his Word. In Acts 16 the Bible reads, "But Paul called with a loud voice, saying, 'Do yourself no harm, for we are all here.' Then he called for a light, ran in, and fell down trembling before Paul and Silas…'Sirs, what must I do to be saved?'…So, they said, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household" (Acts 16:28-31). The knowledge that Jesus is the only Savior and believers are His messengers should instill confidence in those sharing the gospel to the unsaved. The motivation to serve in the outreach ministry should be increased in church members who maintain their confidence in Jesus Christ and not human abilities. Faith in God's ability is motivation to those who serve in all facets of outreach ministry. This outreach to young unbelievers is no different than in the other areas.

How much effort was Required to Convince these Members to Participate in this Outreach?

The effort required to convince church members to participate in this ministry was based on the reasons given for non-participation by church members. Some reasons for the lack of motivation found in the data shows church members were persuaded when getting beyond the roadblocks previously noted.

Were Members Convinced of the Viability of the Ministry?

How viable is this ministry to young adult unbelievers? Is it worthwhile for participation by church members as outreach to the unsaved? The purpose of this project is to share the gospel with unsaved young people who need Christ in their lives. The goal of motivation of church members for the outreach could only be reached by cooperation from the participants.

Were Members fully Convinced that the Ministry is Mandated by Jesus?

Jesus left an indisputable commandment for His followers before His ascension. Are the members convinced of the mandate, or is this just an optional suggestion? Harney explains that the church should move forward in this mandate of Christ. He writes,

> As the Holy Spirit is leading our church forward in the work of the Great Commission, we should see more and more people naturally and regularly sharing the simple story of the gospel…Churches that engage in organic outreach prepare men and women, young and old, new Christians, and longtime saints, to live as ambassadors of Jesus.[118]

Once convinced of this mandate by Christ, the participants displayed a willingness to take part in the outreach. Did the intervention plans produce any unexpected results? There were no significant unexpected results in the project. The implementation demonstrated a successful employment of the outreach ministry.

Reasons for Lack of Motivation Given by Participants

When the results were gathered for this project, the interviews and focus group questions which were answered by participants showed some general themes. The question focused on the lack of motivation by church members for evangelism to young unbelievers. Five importantly

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[118] Harney, *Organic Outreach for Churches*, 176.

relevant questions were asked of the participants in the interviews and focus groups: Do you

believe that there is a lack of evangelism focusing on young people who are unbelievers; What

do you think are the reasons for the lack of evangelism to this group; Do you believe that all

church members have a responsibility to evangelize young adult unbelievers; Do you think that

church members lack the motivation for evangelization towards this group; What changes do you

think would motivate members to evangelize this group of young unbelievers? Figure 3 indicates

the recommendations which arose from these questions. The information illustrated is extremely

useful when incorporated into the process of determining the reasons for the lack of motivation

by the church members for evangelism towards this group of young unbelievers. It is helpful to

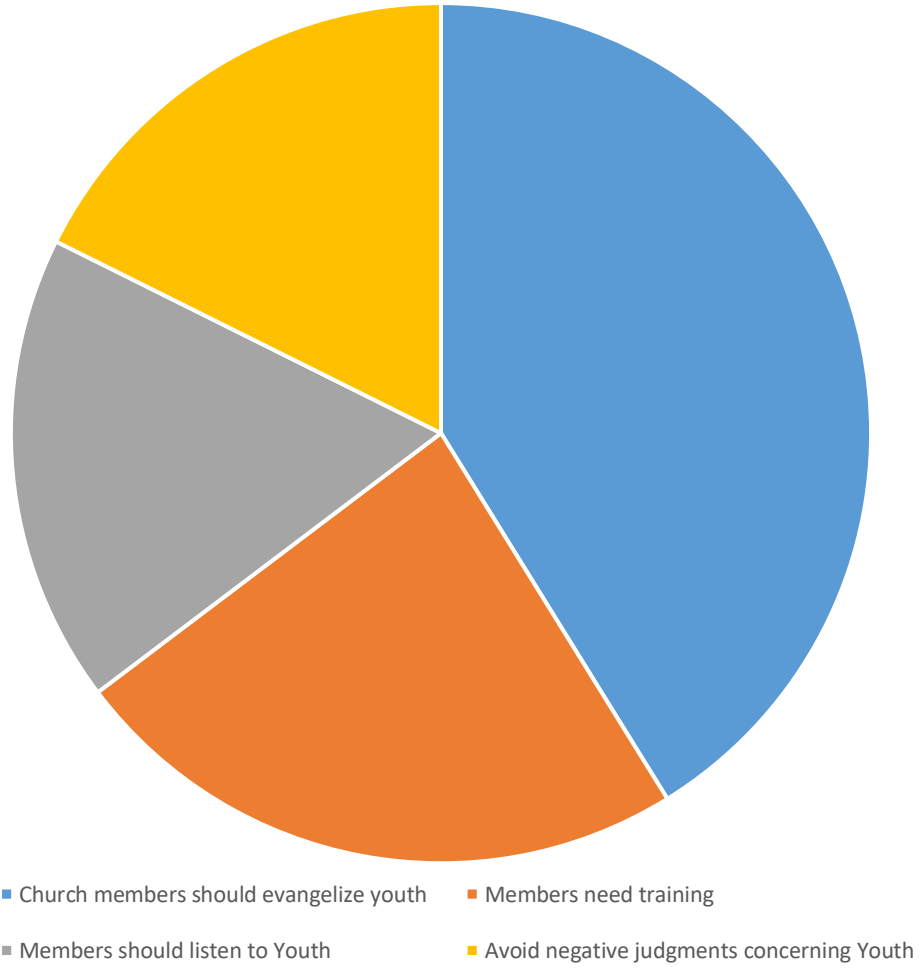the church members because of the insight derived from varying participants.

Figure 3. Recommendations for Motivation of Church Members for Evangelizing Unsaved Youth.

CHAPTER 5

Conclusion

In conclusion of the research for this thesis project, the problem has been the lack of motivation of the members of Power of the Living God Church to evangelize young unbelievers. The purpose is to motivate these members for this evangelism through small group training from leaders experienced in this outreach ministry. The results of the interviews and focus groups have demonstrated the clear reasons why the church members should actively engage in evangelizing this target group of unbelievers. These results have also demonstrated the continuously pressing need for this evangelism. This research will continue to clearly address the importance of this study within this conclusion. There are important questions which should be asked and answered concerning this research project. What is the relevance of the study? The study should demonstrate the importance of evangelism towards the unsaved, particularly young unbelievers. The unequivocal command to share the gospel which Jesus left (Matt. 28:19-20) for His disciples should serve as motivation to all believers, particularly the church members impacted by this project. What is the efficacy of the study? How effective are the methods described in this project? If the solution is successfully applied to the stated problem, it is expected that members should be motivated to evangelize this targeted group.

All participating church members must remain cognizant of the indisputable need for the power of God in all areas of this outreach ministry. Greenwood describes the crucial importance of this recognition of God's power as the source of all ministries. He explains, "He is the source of hope, identity, vision, inspiration, and power. How precious it is to stand before the almighty

God, Creator of the universe, who invites us to be part of His plan and mission!"[119] This explanation makes clear the importance of complete reliance on God's power for engaging evangelism for the youth. The responses obtained in the interviews and focus groups serve as a guide to establishing an effective outreach ministry towards the targeted group.

Using Interviews and Focus Groups for Commitment to Long-term Evangelism

The results of the interviews and focus groups with the participants indicated the importance of addressing the stated problem of the lack of evangelism towards young unbelievers. Tim Sensing explains the purpose of the interview when he writes, "The main purpose of the interview is to obtain a special kind of information. The researcher wants to find out what is 'in and on someone else's mind.'"[120] This research should be replicated in evangelism aimed at older adults. Additionally, legitimate questions can be posed concerning the responses of the different groups. Are older adult believers different than young believers in their responses to the interview questions? It was expected that this research would address the answers with the in-depth study of this project. The answers should increase commitment by the church members to long-term evangelism towards young unbelievers.

Where should this Research Project go from here?

What direction should be undertaken in response to the answers given by participants? All answers collected are indispensably crucial towards resolution of the stated problem for this

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[119] Greenwood, *Global Youth Culture*, 75.

[120] Tim Sensing, *Qualitative Research* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2011), 104.

project. The answers covered a broad range of reasons for the lack of motivation for evangelism towards this targeted group. The varying reasons given by participants demonstrated the need for solutions which encompass versatility to those serving in this ministry. Answers did not lock in on a definitive or singular answer. Some reasons given for the lack of motivation to evangelize mentioned age-related biases displayed by some church members. Some of the church members younger than thirty years of age mentioned a general impression of disrespect which they perceived was displayed by older members. This research has shown many avenues by which all participants will benefit. One of the main benefits shown in this project is that each of the different age groups will employ a more effective ministry when coming together to evangelize the targeted group. This research project has demonstrated the importance of utilizing a singular focus in evangelism. It has also shown the indispensable need for employing evangelism among all Christians no matter the age. Harney explains how Jesus held His disciples accountable in spreading the gospel. He writes,

> As we look at the life and ministry of Jesus, we find that he too put significant effort into holding his disciples accountable in this area. In the Gospel of Matthew, we read, "Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness…Then he said to his disciples, 'The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few.'"[121]

All ministry participants should keep these words of Christ in mind when determinations are made towards an undaunted commitment to this outreach.

This research is an ongoing project which will continue towards the achievement of the evangelism towards this target group of young unbelievers. The focus on this ministry by church members should serve as encouragement for each to be compelled to passionately share the

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[121] Harney, *Organic Outreach for Churches*, 123.

gospel with all unbelievers. Moving forward in the project will require commitment from each of

the members to the required training for more effective evangelism. The training is also an

avenue for the determination of how each individual church member can serve in the most

appropriate area of the outreach.

<p style="text-align:center">How Research in this Project is Compared to Previous Studies</p>

This research project has shown that evangelism is an area of ministry which ranks as the

most important facet in the life of a person. There is nothing more important to an individual's

future. The focus of this project is evangelism towards unsaved young adults and the ministry

focus on this targeted group. Some relevant studies have described the importance of this focus

and participation of Christians in this indispensable ministry. This project has discussed the lack

of motivation by some church members and the methods for rectifying this problem.

The sources found in the Literature Review section cover a broad spectrum of what can

be employed to correct the problem of this lack of motivation and the use of effective methods

for this ministry. Dempsey and Earley reminded believers of the command which Christ left for

His disciples before His ascension back into Heaven. The authors explained that Jesus also

mentioned other components of the outreach. They write that "you've probably heard many

times that the command is to make disciples, but you may not have learned the powerful way

Jesus conveyed the command. We carry out the command by going to where the people are,

baptizing people when they surrender to Christ and then we teach them the ways of Christ."[122]

The most effective evangelism outreach is when believers adhere to directions given by Christ. It

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[122] Dempsey and Earley, *Leading Healthy, Growing, Multiplying, Small Groups*, Loc. 73.

is expected that church members committed to what Jesus commanded will be motivated

towards evangelism for the targeted group. As this project has demonstrated, participants with

reservations concerning evangelism can be encouraged by examples of other believers who

displayed hesitancy for this type of ministry. It is evident that the realization of rejection can be

beneficial to participants who understand that others have shared experiences. Bear explains that

fear faced by believers can be expected because of possible rejection from the unsaved. He

writes, "If you tell people that you are a Christian who wants to talk with them about Jesus and

the way to heaven, many of them will tell you they are not interested and walk away. Fearing

this, some believers withhold their intentions hoping to warm people up before turning the

conversation to the gospel."[123] Once church members advance beyond the fear of the rejection,

the outreach should be accomplished at an effective level. It is crucially important that members

participating in the evangelism outreach understand the importance of honest dialogue when

sharing the gospel with unbelievers. This type of openness is needful despite the potential

negative response of the unbeliever. Bear also describes how Jesus, and his apostles, never hid

His purpose in spreading the gospel to the unsaved. He explains,

> Jesus and his apostles never attempted to hide their purpose for initiating
> conversations…if you tell people that you are a Christian who wants to talk with them
> about Jesus and the way to heaven, many of them will tell you they are not interested and
> terminate the conversation. But if you attempt to hide your purpose, the conversation may
> never get around to the gospel.[124]

One facet in evangelism not often mentioned is the awareness of combining the ministry

with discipleship. Harney describes the characteristics of a healthy church when he explains, "A

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[123] Bear, *How to Evangelize*, Loc 801.

[124] Ibid.

healthy church is a church living with a profound awareness that evangelism (reaching the lost) and discipleship (growing the found) always go hand in hand."[125] The church members who are not motivated to evangelize will benefit from understanding that sharing the gospel goes together with discipleship. Part of the training for members who are not motivated to evangelize will include them learning of the emphasis which Jesus placed on making disciples. The church members who were not motivated at the beginning of this project were compelled to share the gospel more readily by the project's completion. Harney adds that a church must be committed the truth of the Word of God. He explains, "A congregation that is wholeheartedly devoted to following the teachings of Scripture will inevitably be propelled beyond what they want in order to become what God is calling them to be."[126] Church members will be motivated to evangelize the young adult unbelievers when fully committed to God's Word.

<center>No Hesitation in Evangelizing</center>

An important facet of evangelism is that it should be employed without hesitation. The Bible commands believers to share the gospel to the unsaved with boldness. Members who are unmotivated will benefit from understanding that it is Christ who saves and not men. This understanding should instill confidence in the members who are somewhat timid in evangelism. Bear mentions that believers should not wait to evangelize. He explains,

> If you read every good book ever written on this subject, including the most important one, the Bible, you will not be able to learn how to evangelize without actually doing the work of evangelism…Nobody begins evangelizing as an "expert"…simply start doing it. Don't wait until you are an expert, or you will never do it![127]

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[125] Harney, *Organic Outreach for Churches*, 145.

[126] Ibid., 31.

[127] Bear, *How to Evangelize*, Loc 1322.

Church members who are unmotivated to evangelize the young unbelievers will be compelled to share the gospel more readily when considering this explanation. Participants in this outreach ministry will greatly benefit if a commitment is made to evangelize the targeted group without hesitation. As pointed out in Chapter 3, fear is one of the main impediments for the participants in this ministry. This impediment can cause hesitation in many facets of ministry, and in this case, the outreach by church members to the targeted group. The Bible reminds believers that He gives the opposite characteristic of fear. The Bible reads, "For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind" (2 Tim. 1:7). As this project continues to move forward, the members should keep the Word of God in mind in all facets while participating in the ministry.

<div align="center">Communicating the Gospel to Today's Youth</div>

It comes as no surprise that many of today's young unbelievers are spiritually lacking in their knowledge of Christ. This makes communicating the gospel to this group more challenging to the church members who need to be motivated to share with this group. White explains, "Perhaps the most defining mark of members of Generation Z, in terms of their spiritual lives, is their spiritual illiteracy…the defining mark of the post-Christian world. They do not know what the Bible says. They do not know the basics of Christian belief or theology…there is a profound spiritual emptiness."[128] This information is extremely useful for church members participating in outreach. It is beneficial to know characteristics of the target group for the ministry.

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[128] White, *Meet Generation Z*, 131.

Worthwhile Ministry to Young Unbelievers

This project's goal to motivate church members to evangelize unsaved youth is

potentially impactful for the entire church. DeVries describes how youth ministry can bring

about change for the young adult and the church. He explains, "In a wide variety of contexts,

across a wide variety of denominations, there are youth ministries that have learned to catalyze

change, not only in young people's lives but in their churches as well."[129] Each ministry

participant should understand that their outreach evangelism is extremely worthwhile to the

young unbelievers.

What This Researcher Learned by Implementing the Project

Several beneficial components were clear during the deployment of this project. The data

collected clearly demonstrated that evangelism to the specified group should be a priority in

churches. The project also showed that all age groups should evangelize the unsaved, and in

general young adult unbelievers. This project increased this researcher's understanding about the

thinking of young people about spiritual matters altogether. The implementation of this project

created fresh ideas for future ministry in the church. The implementation of the project illustrated

that older church members were in some cases unaware of the need for this ministry specifically

aimed at this targeted group.

One of the most surprisingly beneficial components evidenced by the implementation of

this project was the transparency demonstrated by the participants during the interviews and

focus groups. The honesty was facilitated by the level of comfort exhibited by participants in

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[129] DeVries, *Sustainable Youth Ministry*, 75.

submitting the answers. This showed high regard for the purpose of the project and its goal. Each participant displayed a genuine desire to do what pleases God. Dempsey and Earley write that "the reason to develop as a disciple and the reason to develop other disciples is ultimately to bring as much glory to God as possible with one's life…The sum of all theology is to live your life in such a way that it would ultimately bring glory to God. Getting saved, growing spiritually, serving and producing fruit…brings glory to God."[130]

What was Learned from this Project which Merits Future Research?

This project clearly demonstrated the need for evangelism towards the targeted group of young unbelievers. Extremely useful information was collected in this project which assisted in developing a plan towards a successful ministry of the outreach evangelism towards the young adult unbelievers. As this project moves forward into this evangelism ministry in the future, the results gathered have been indispensable in the application towards the stated goal. There were many extremely relevant components demonstrated in this project. The merits of this research extend beyond the focus of this research project. This outreach evangelism ministry can have application in several other areas of ministry in the church. Some of the other areas include discipleship training and evangelism to all age groups. This project has focused on a targeted group of young unbelievers, but the methodology can be utilized in several other areas of ministry. Church members can greatly benefit when they are made aware of the possible impediments to evangelism. These potential problems were mentioned earlier in this project. The

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[130] Dempsey and Earley, *Leading Healthy, Growing, Multiplying, Small Groups*, Loc. 32.

importance of the data findings in this project merits future research. This is research that should continue.

Conclusion

The conclusion of this research project demonstrated the goal of motivating church members to evangelize young unbelievers. The project utilized interviews and focus groups and gathered data to form the solutions to the stated problem. The researcher and all participants came together to formulate the plan which addressed effective solutions. The ideas were presented by the stakeholders and the facilitator in the development of beneficial solutions for the presented problem. The data for the research showed that the main obstacles were fear of rejection, burnout, lack of ability to properly articulate the gospel, and skeptical unbelievers and Christian hypocrisy. When the solutions are employed by the church members, evangelism should work effectively when ministering to the target group. Evangelism is an area of ministry directly associated with the Great Commission (Matt. 28:19-20) left by Jesus and should never be considered as an optional work of Christians. Jesus left the mandate to share the gospel, and when church members evangelize young unbelievers, they are doing God's will. Evangelism should cause unsaved youth to change directions from sin and come to Christ.

Appendix A:

IRB Approval

June 4, 2021

Stanley James
Brian Moulton

Re: IRB Application - IRB-FY20-21-860 A Training Manual for Small-Group Evangelization of Youth Unbelievers

Dear Stanley James and Brian Moulton,

The Liberty University Institutional Review Board (IRB) has reviewed your application in accordance with the Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP) and Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulations and finds your study does not classify as human subjects research. This means you may begin your research with the data safeguarding methods mentioned in your IRB application.

Decision: No Human Subjects Research

Explanation: Your study is not considered human subjects research for the following reason: Your project will consist of quality improvement activities, which are not "designed to develop or contribute to generalizable knowledge" according to 45 CFR 46. 102(l).

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

Also, although you are welcome to use our recruitment and consent templates, you are not required to do so. If you choose to use our documents, please replace the word *research* with the word *project* throughout both documents.

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

Sincerely,

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

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