

LIBERTY UNIVERSITY

JOHN W. RAWLINGS SCHOOL OF DIVINITY

**Implementing and Equipping a Fivefold Ministry with Theological Education to Defend
and Uphold Biblical Doctrines in the Church**

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

by

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THE DOCTOR OF MINISTRY THESIS PROJECT ABSTRACT

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God instructed believers to put forth their best work to rightly handle His Word of truth (2 Tim 2:15). Unfortunately, God's truth is under attack and has been polluted with false teaching and incorrect understanding of Scripture. It is incumbent on the local church to combat this problem of incorrect biblical teaching head-on. Therefore, this action research project aims to demonstrate that through proper theological training in the church, this problem will be remedied. This action research assumes that arming the local church with theological training will strengthen its core. To this aim, this research project included teaching five theological training sessions on the fivefold ministry, baptism, prayer, counseling, and preaching for one hour each. Post-training surveys were completed on each topic to gauge the effectiveness of the training. Pre- and post-interviews were also conducted to understand the root causes of the lack of theological study in the church and determine other related themes. Quantitative data was collected from participants who joined the training sessions and contributed through post-training surveys. Qualitative data was organized by the researcher's observations, which critical themes surfaced from pre and post-interviews and an hour focus group with participants. The research results indicate the participants believe the local church should offer theological training to its ministerial staff and leaders in order to combat false and incorrect teaching so that the church may be equipped as Christ intended.

Adorate Dominum cum Theologia
(Worship the Lord with Theology)

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Abbreviations

APEST	<i>Apostle Prophet Evangelist Shepherd Teacher</i>
DMIN	<i>Doctor of Ministry</i>
KJV	<i>King James Version</i>
NIV	<i>New International Version</i>
NKJV	<i>New King James Version</i>
NLT	<i>New Living Translation</i>
OGHBYRG	<i>Obey God He'll Bless You Real Good</i>

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Introduction

The material God used during creation was His Word. Today, He uses people filled with His Word to build the local church. Joe Thorn writes, “A local church is an assembly of believers in Jesus who are united together by a common confession, are gathered in one localized body, are ruled by Scripture, and work together for the mission given to them by their Lord.”¹ Jesus understood that building His church would be no easy feat, so He implemented a structure known today as the fivefold ministry. On this, Paul shares, “Now these are the gifts Christ gave to the church: the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, and the pastors and teachers. Their responsibility is to equip God’s people to do his work and build up the church, the body of Christ” (Eph. 4:11-12, New Living Translation). To be effective in advancing the church to maturation, those who are gifted in one of the fivefold functions must be endowed with sound theology. Theology is critical to the fivefold ministry in the local church because it assists each role in correctly sharing what God has revealed about Himself in Scripture. Thorn adds,

The word theology comes from two Greek words: *theos* (God) and *logos* (words). Theology is the knowledge of God articulated. It is not meant to be personal in its scope, but communal. Theology should not be private, but public. The source of all theology is Scripture, but the purpose of theology is to make God known to all.²

Everyone has cultivated a theology shaped by their culture, upbringing, and religion. A person’s worldview is fundamental to their theology and what it means to live in a relationship with God and other people. What one believes about God, or does not believe, drives their decisions, relationships, and actions throughout life. Elaine A. Robinson writes,

Our theology becomes expressed in our lives through our embodied practices. When we speak of ‘God’, the divine mystery that is deeper and wider than our human

¹ Joe Thorn, *The Life of the Church: The Table, Pulpit, and Square* (Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 2017), 9.

² Thorn, *The Life of the Church*, 10.

understanding and imagination, we are encouraged to remember that all of our thinking and speaking about the life of faith emanates from this one reality we call God.³

A person's theology changes over time due to secular reasonings or teachings based on the Word of God. How a person reacts to life's circumstances is determined by how closely their theology is to biblical teachings or secular views. It is vital for those who are called into the ministry to have sound theological training to assist others as they deal with life issues. While those who claim to be called ministers or gospel teachers may or may not opt to obtain formal theological training in a school setting, it is critical that they receive training in some fashion to ensure they can assist the church with their spiritual needs.

This introduction will provide the ministry context, problem statement, purpose statement, and thesis statement of this project. The ministry context will discuss the history and culture of Unity Gospel House of Prayer. It will describe the city's demographics, church services, and programs. The problem statement will explain the issue that this action research will address. The purpose statement will expound on why this action research thesis is necessary and the expected outcome. Finally, the thesis statement will summarize the thesis and the intent.

Ministry Context

This DMIN action research will focus on a local ministry in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, Unity Gospel House of Prayer (Unity). Unity became a reality in the home of Elbridge and Naomi Lock on January 30, 1973, where the first service was held. Both founders are deceased, and the role of pastor transitioned to Marlon Lock, and his wife, Kimberly Lock, in April 2009. Pastor Marlon Lock is the senior pastor and graduate of Life Christian University, and First Lady Kimberly Lock is a graduate of Liberty University's Christian Apologetics program. Unity is an

³ Elaine A. Robinson, *Exploring Theology* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2014), 9.

independent apostolic Bible-teaching church that has grown in membership of more than 3,500 in-person and online. In addition to the senior pastor and first lady, the church staff consists of several ministers, Bible teachers, deacons, worship team, choir, musicians, and other leadership teams that support the growing ministry. The pastor fully supports this action research thesis and looks forward to providing the team and facilities necessary for this project's successful completion and outcome.

Cultural Positioning

Milwaukee is well known and the most populated city in Wisconsin, situated on the shore of Lake Michigan. While Milwaukee is one of the most diverse cities in the United States, it is still one of the most racially segregated. As of April 1, 2020, Milwaukee's population was about 577,222, comprised of 34% White, 38.8% Black or African American, 19.4% Hispanic, 4.6% Asian, 0.5% American Indian and Alaska Native, and 2.7% of two or more races. Unity Gospel House of Prayer does not follow Milwaukee's racial diversity; it is comprised chiefly of Black or African Americans. Milwaukee's poverty rate is 25.4%, with a median annual household income of \$44,192. The median age is 31.5, and 28.6% of the population is under the age of 18, 12% 18-24, 30% 25-44, 18% 45-64, and 10% over the age of 65.⁴ About 46.9% of Milwaukee residents claim to be religious, and 22% identify as Catholic, 7% Lutheran, 5% Christian Other, 4% Baptist, 6.4%, and 2.5% Pentecostal.⁵ Milwaukee has one of the highest crime rates in the United States, including violent crimes, compared to other cities its size. Milwaukee is noted as one of

⁴ "QuickFacts: Texas," United States Census Bureau, last modified July 1, 2021, accessed March 19, 2022. U.S. Census Bureau QuickFacts: Milwaukee city, Wisconsin, <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/TX/PST045221>

⁵ "Best Places," *Religion in Milwaukee, Wisconsin*, accessed March 19, 2022, <https://www.bestplaces.net/religion/city/wisconsin/milwaukee>.

the most dangerous places to live in the United States.⁶ Unity is in an impoverished neighborhood that is prone to violence. Many church members live in poverty and have either committed crimes or have been victims of violent crimes.

Church Services and Programs

Unity provides several services for the membership and community. The church offers programs for the membership to participate in, such as the praise and worship team, praise dance, mass choir, and the audio/visual department. The Sunday morning worship services begin with Sunday school, followed by praise and worship service with music and dance, followed by a sermon teaching and offering through giving. Tuesday night service begins with an hour of prayer followed by praise and worship, and teaching. Thursday night provides several classes for parenting, women, marriage, discipleship, and financial management. The church also offers a weekly adult men's Bible study that is regularly attended by teen boys and adult men who are members and visitors. The church supports the community with events such as Turkey Drive, Prison ministry, clothing drive, mammogram bus, and health and wellness events.

COVID-19 Impact

Prior to the COVID-19-related shutdown in 2020, the average attendance to Unity's Sunday morning service was over 2,000 in person. Unity provided online services and Bible studies until it could officially open its doors in mid to late 2020. Despite Unity's best efforts to offer stimulating virtual services and teaching, many members preferred the in-person experience. As the membership slowly trickled back to the church building, Unity leadership

⁶ "Milwaukee, WI Crime Rates," *NeighborhoodScout*, accessed March 19, 2022, <https://www.neighborhoodscout.com/wi/milwaukee/crime#description>.

ensured that all government guidelines and safety protocols were adhered to during in-person service. Unity's attendance is gradually growing back to the pre-pandemic rates as people begin to feel more comfortable as the virus spread declines. While the pandemic has caused some of the current members to not return to in-person services, it has also brought many new members who feel the need to join the church after dealing with the effects of the pandemic.

Spiritual Climate

At its inception, Unity was a traditional church that adhered to strict philosophies and held to biblical values that today would be considered outdated. The founding pastor, Elbridge Lock, had no education and could not read anything but the Bible. Pastor Elbridge Lock built Unity based on faith in Jesus Christ and that nothing is impossible through Him; this faith has been the foundation of this ministry. Faith was the bedrock of Unity, and Pastor Elbridge Lock became known as a faith healer. People came from all over to hear his teachings for an opportunity to approach him after service in hopes of receiving healing. Many claimed to be healed due to pastor Lock's prayers or healing touch. Under the founding pastor, many claimed to be filled with God's Spirit and said they were called to be apostles, prophets, teachers, evangelists, pastors, and ministers.

As Elbridge Lock began to pass the torch to his grandson, Marlon Lock, he instilled this same value to continue his legacy of building on faith for years to come. In April 2009, the founding pastor passed away, and Marlon Lock became the senior pastor. Understanding that he needed to implement structure in the church, pastor Marlon and his wife Kimberly, along with several church leaders, began attending church leadership conferences to learn how to add structure to Unity. Implementing what they learned, the new pastor and wife created formal

vision and mission statements for Unity. The church's mission is derived from Mark 16:15, believing that as long as they adhere to teaching the Word of God, those who believe and become baptized will be saved. Acting on this newly formed mission, the pastor began holding training sessions with the ministers teaching them how to properly teach God's Word and interact with the membership. The church's mission was recited at every service so everyone could remember it and understand the impetus behind the changes he was making to the church as the new leader.

The vision of the church was also made into a formal statement. Unity's vision is to see the Word of God change the lives of those who connect with the ministry. It was essential for the pastor to visualize the mission of the church in the lives of the members and ministerial staff. The strong faith that Unity was built on has now become apparent in the mission and vision statements, and there is an expectation of that faith to be revealed in the lives of the believers in a very transparent way. The pastor expected to visualize a fundamental change in the lives of Unity's members due to their faith in the church's mission. The membership grasped the new mission and vision statements and acted on them the same way as the pastor, with faith that a real change would come about in their lives.

The motto of the church has been a rallying cry for the members of Unity since its inception: "Obey God, He'll Bless You Real Good." The founding pastor would say this statement at the end of every service and even when ending his conversations. Everyone began repeating the motto; even visitors picked up the saying. The slogan has become so well known that its acronym is now a brand name and official trademark for a music label and clothing line known as "OGHBYRG".

Under Pastor Marlon Lock, the spiritual climate at Unity has shifted from traditional to a climate where growth and change skyrocketed and are heavily embraced. Pastor Marlon continues to seek ways to improve the ministry and has now established that Unity is a fivefold Ministry that is comprised of the spiritual giftings that Christ gave to the church: “Now these are the gifts Christ gave to the church: the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, and the pastors and teachers” (Eph. 4:11, NLT). Pastor Lock is not only embracing those who have been called with these fivefold giftings but also seeking to develop them with sound theological training. Historically, the belief that formal training is unnecessary has stalled the progress the pastor wishes to make for Unity’s fivefold ministry. Changing the idea that formal theological education is a secular concept, pastor Lock not only received a theology degree but now encourages his ministerial staff and others interested to pursue one.

Problem Presented

God calls ministers of the gospel of Jesus Christ to build up the church and make disciples. God has provided the church with servants He has bestowed with gifts for the perfecting of the church: “Now these are the gifts Christ gave to the church: the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, and the pastors and teachers” (Eph. 4:11, NLT). The Apostle Paul made the responsibility clear for those who are endowed with any of these five gifts: “Their responsibility is to equip God’s people to do his work and build up the church, the body of Christ” (Eph. 4:12, NLT). Unfortunately, many who are called to help build up the church are not equipped with solid theology and apologetics training to support their calling. Moreover, the lack of a deep study of Scripture rooted in biblical theology and apologetics exacerbates the condition by not allowing God’s truth to change sinners’ hearts, leaving them in an unconverted

state. The trickle-down effect of the minister's lack of theological and apologetics training is detrimental to the church because, according to the Bible, "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge, I also will reject you from being priest for Me" (Hosea 4:6, New King James Version).

Pastor Marlon Lock understands that the ministerial staff significantly impacts the membership and overall functionality of Unity Gospel House of Prayer. He would like to implement a training program to strengthen his team. Lock ascertains that this undertaking requires theological assistance to help his staff in critical areas. It is not uncommon for church leaders to ask God for assistance with maintaining the congregation. For example, Moses became frustrated bearing the people's needs alone, so he cried out to God. God responded, "Gather before me seventy men who are recognized as elders and leaders of Israel. Bring them to the Tabernacle to stand there with you. I will come down and talk to you there. I will take some of the Spirit that is upon you, and I will put the Spirit upon them also. They will bear the burden of the people along with you, so you will not have to carry it alone" (Num. 11:16-17, NLT). It is crucial for the ministerial staff to bear the weight of the church, and they must be capable of carrying out the ministry's needs. In order to assist the fivefold ministry at Unity Gospel House of Prayer, it is critical for the ministerial staff to understand the theological foundations of its core tenets. There are specific areas that the pastor is concerned about strengthening his fivefold ministry team to meet the congregation's needs: preaching, prayer, counseling, and baptism. Suppose these areas are not taught and studied on a firm theological foundation. In that case, the minister risks misinforming the church membership on fundamental biblical truths necessary for their salvation or conformity to Christ. A solution to this preventable dilemma is to empower the ministers with solid theological training on several core beliefs to support the church's fivefold

ministry, including how to exegete Scripture. This thesis aims to create theological-based training for the fivefold ministerial staff that will enable them to be better stewards and communicators of God's Word. This training will focus on areas Pastor Marlon Lock desires the ministers to concentrate on to improve their fivefold ministry. The problem at Unity Gospel House of Prayer is that it lacks the theological training and support needed to implement and correctly carry out its fivefold ministry.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this DMIN action research project is to develop and implement a theology-focused training program at Unity Gospel House of Prayer to support its fivefold ministry. This objective will be accomplished by creating a solid theology program on five central core areas the church desires to develop: fivefold ministry, prayer, counseling, baptism, and preaching. The participants of this action research will consist of ordained and non-ordained ministers who the pastor will allow to participate in this study. The participants will provide feedback and, in return, will gain valuable information necessary to carry out their ministry within the church and community.

The Bible is adamant that it is necessary for believers to study the word of God to show themselves approved (2 Tim. 2:15). If God requires all believers to study His Word, those called to serve in the ministry should learn at deeper levels to teach God's truths to others correctly. This action research will utilize pre and post-interviews to gain information that the participants may not desire to share openly about the intervention and how it impacted their understanding of the fivefold ministry. The one-day training will consist of five sessions on each central tenet and a focus group to determine the fivefold ministry's strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities in the

final hour of the workshop. A fivefold ministry questionnaire will also be utilized for those participants who are interviewed, and surveys will focus on each of the core areas this ministry wishes to concentrate on cultivating.

Basic Assumptions

This action research assumes that the church has largely disregarded theological education and has defaulted to teaching and ministering the Bible based on their own reason and understanding. Paul Washer writes, “Many pastors leave their theology behind when they come out of their study. They are theological in conversation and in their office. But when they step out of their office, they run the church by carnal means.”⁷ As a result of this lack of theological training, believers and the surrounding communities have become more skeptical of the church. Many are questioning the authority of the church as the help and responses they receive appear increasingly secular instead of spiritual and biblically based. This behavior is inconsistent with God and His Word, and people are beginning to view the church and its teachings as myths or untruths.

This action research thesis assumes that theological training in the church, especially for those called to serve in the ministry, will combat the skepticism and doubt the church is facing. It is further believed that the outcome of this action research will greatly diminish incorrect teaching of God’s truths and biblical doctrines. God’s truths are not relative, and proper promulgation of His Word is necessary for the growth and maturity of the church into the unity that God intends (Eph. 4:13). David S. Dockery adds, “When the church carries out this theological task, and when theological education is church centered and church focused, the true

⁷ Paul Washer, *Ten Indictments Against the Modern Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Reformation Heritage Books, 2018), 31.

content of the faith, the whole counsel of God (Acts 20:27), can be preserved and proclaimed in churches in the United States and around the globe.”⁸

It can also be assumed that the church and the Christian worldview will constantly come under attack, and therefore it is imperative for the church to have a sound theology to stand on and defend. This research assumes that each participant desires to gain spiritual maturity and increased theological knowledge as a result of this project. This project also assumes that each participant will be able to actively demonstrate their gifting as a result of continued participation in the theological training this action research offers.

Finally, this action research assumes full and honest participation in each area of this action research and that the outcome will impact ongoing training and development at the church.

Definitions

This thesis action research project primarily involves the ministerial staff's theological education at Unity Gospel House of Prayer. This section will clarify both the theological definition of key terms and how Unity may define or emphasize those same terms. Terms like faith, fivefold ministry, gospel, apologetics, prayer, and Christian counseling are significant terms that this research thesis will elucidate. Providing definitions of these key terms will allow the reader to visualize and relate to this action research without confusion.

Apologetics. A well-formed defense of the Christian worldview. “Apologetics” comes from the Greek word *apologia*, which means ‘defense.’ Doing apologetics is speaking in defense

⁸ David S. Dockery, *Theology, Church, and Ministry: A Handbook for Theological Education* (City of publication: B&H Publishing Group, 2017), xxviii.

of the faith or providing reasons for belief.”⁹ The discipline of apologetics is encouraged in the Bible. The most prominent Scripture that supports apologetics says,

Instead, you must worship Christ as Lord of your life. And if someone asks about your hope as a believer, always be ready to explain it. But do this in a gentle and respectful way. Keep your conscience clear. Then if people speak against you, they will be ashamed when they see what a good life you live because you belong to Christ (1 Pet. 3:15-16, NLT).

This Scripture encourages believers to have an explanation ready, but it also provides how the rationalization should be given: gently and respectfully.

Apostle. Often thought of as one of the twelve apostles, this action research will view a current-day apostle as one who is “sent out”. Modern-day apostles have specific duties, similar to the Apostle Paul, of spreading the gospel and planting churches. The apostles today do not write Scripture and are not considered a continuation of the original twelve or the Apostle Paul. They carry the purpose of being “sent out” to a place or people to make disciples and carry out the Great Commission. Authors Alan Hirsch and Tim Catchim write, “The apostle is tasked with the overall vigor, as well as extension of Christianity as a whole, primarily through direct mission and church planting. As the name itself suggests, it is the quintessentially missional ministry, as ‘sentness’ (Latin *missio*) is written into it (*apostello* σ sent one).”¹⁰

Baptism. A public display of being immersed in water to demonstrate an inward change that has taken place in a believer’s life as a result of the work of Jesus Christ. This action research will use the definition of baptism in the book *Understanding Baptism*, as it closely relates to Unity Gospel House of Prayer’s understanding. Author Bobby Jamieson writes, “baptism is a church’s act of affirming and portraying a believer’s union with Christ by

⁹ Paul Chamberlain and Chris Price, *Everyday Apologetics: Answering Common Objections to the Christian Faith* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2020), 6.

¹⁰ Alan Hirsch and Tim Catchim, *The Permanent Revolution: Apostolic Imagination and Practice for the 21st Century Church* (Somerset, state: John Wiley & Sons, Incorporated, 2012), 8.

immersing him or her in water, and a believer's act of publicly committing him or herself to Christ and his people, thereby uniting a believer to the church and marking off him or her from the world.”¹¹

Christian and Biblical Counseling. The process of assisting others with their difficult circumstances, from a Christian perspective and with the Word of God. Author Heath Lambert defines counseling as “a conversation where one party with questions, problems, and trouble seeks assistance from someone they believe has answers, solutions, and help.”¹² This project will use Lambert's view of Christian counseling as one that may combine theological and secular teachings and strategies to assist those dealing with difficult circumstances. According to Lambert, Christian and biblical counseling are similar in every way, except that biblical counseling relies solely on the Bible for its methods and does not consider secular practices helpful.¹³

Evangelist. One who travels from place to place spreading the gospel. An evangelist may also be considered a missionary. The office of the evangelist is critical to the church, especially for outreach purposes, and will be needed until Christ returns for His church. Lambert writes, “The evangelist is the recruiter to the cause, the naturally infectious person who is able to enlist people into the movement by transmitting the gospel.”¹⁴

Fivefold ministry. The fivefold ministry model stems from Ephesians 4:11, which says, “Now these are the gifts Christ gave to the church: the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, and the pastors and teachers” (NLT). Author Matthew Green provides the goal for these giftings,

¹¹ Bobby Jamieson, *Understanding Baptism* (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2016), 38.

¹² Heath Lambert, *A Theology of Biblical Counseling: The Doctrinal Foundations of Counseling Ministry* (Grand Rapids, MI: HarperCollins Christian Publishing, 2016), 14.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 31.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

saying, “According to Ephesians 4:12, the role of those in the fivefold ministry is “for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry.”¹⁵

Gospel. The entire biblical story of God’s actions and mission in the world and what He is accomplishing through Jesus Christ. The word gospel is derived from the Greek *euangelion*, meaning good news. According to authors Bruce Ashford and Heath Thomas, “the gospel is the announcement that God’s kingdom arrived in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus, who is King and Savior, in fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy.”¹⁶ The gospel can be framed by significant events in the Bible and how those events connect to bring about God’s plan for the world, including humanity.

Pastor. One who leads and oversees the church and may also manage the day-to-day activities of the ministry. The pastor ensures the members and leaders of the church receive the necessary training and nourishment to grow spiritually. Ashford and Thomas write, “The shepherd (pastor) is called to nurture spiritual development, maintain communal health, and engender loving community among the people of God.”¹⁷

Prayer. Method of communicating with or speaking directly to God. Prayer is the essential way of being in fellowship with God and demonstrating human dependence on Him. This project understands prayer as making requests that can only be fulfilled by God and doing so with spoken or unspoken words. Gary Millar writes, “Prayer is established (perhaps even defined as) calling on God to come through on his promises. To pray is to ask God to do for us

¹⁵ Matthew D. Green, *Understanding The Fivefold Ministry: How do these five leadership gifts work together* (Lake Mary, FL: Charisma House, 2015), 151.

¹⁶ Bruce Riley Ashford and Heath A. Thomas, *The Gospel of Our King: Bible, Worldview, and the Mission of Every Christian* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2019), 13.

¹⁷ Ibid.

what we cannot do for ourselves. It is to admit our weaknesses and appeal to his awesome strength.”¹⁸

Preaching. Method of communicating God’s truths to an audience in a way that is understandable and relatable. Preaching provides clarity to God’s people about what He expresses in the Bible for proper application to their lives. Authors Chase Kuhn and Paul Grimmond write, “Preaching is not just a convenient strategy we have adopted to disseminate the Christian message. It is not simply another product of Christian tradition or our evangelical heritage. Rather, it reflects the character of the word of God which stands over against us to announce something we could never have imagined but which changes us forever.”¹⁹ The definition provided by Kuhn and Grimmond supports the biblical reasoning for needing preaching: “How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher (Rom 10:14)?”²⁰

Prophet. One who declares God’s truths and speaks on His behalf to His people. Prophets reveal the secrets of God as they receive revelation. A prophet is one who speaks directly from God and is committed to not straying from what God has revealed. Hirsch and Catchim write, “The prophet is called to maintain faithfulness to God among the people of God. Essentially prophets are guardians of the covenant relationship.”²¹

¹⁸ Gary Millar, *Calling on the Name of the Lord: A Biblical Theology of Prayer* (Westmont, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2016), 28.

¹⁹ Chase R. Kuhn and Paul Grimmond, *Theology Is for Preaching: Biblical Foundations, Method, and Practice* (Ashland, state: Lexham Press, 2021), 33.

²⁰ Ibid., page number.

²¹ Ibid., 33.

Teacher. Those who commit to teaching the Word of God to His people correctly and not straying away from the Scripture. Teachers continuously study the Bible to show themselves approved unto God (2 Tim. 2:15). Teachers are gifted with knowledge from the Holy Spirit and have the ability to impart that knowledge to others in the church and community as needed. Hirsch and Catchim say, “The teacher mediates wisdom and understanding. This philosophical type brings comprehensive understanding of the revelation bequeathed to the church.”²²

Theological Education. Education that is focused on edifying and building up the church. Dockery states, “Theological education is the task of equipping those whom God has called for lives of mission and ministry.”²³ Dockery further confirms that “Theological education must be academically sound; it must be grounded in the Scriptures; it must be Christ centered; and it must be ministry and mission focused.”²⁴ Theological education is vital for the church to grow, mature, and unite.

Limitations

It is not uncommon for action research projects to face certain restrictions beyond the researcher's control; the same is true for this thesis project. Specifically, this action research will have a small group of participants who will provide feedback for this research project. Those who participate in interviews and are willing to attend the one-day workshop may only be about ten people. Another limitation of this action research is that the pool of participants is not a diverse demographic, and nearly one hundred percent are African American or Black.

²² Hirsch and Catchim, *The Permanent Revolution*, 8.

²³ Dockery, *Theology, Church, and Ministry*, lxii.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, xvii.

This action research project will take place during a six-and-a-half-hour workshop that will focus on each central theme of this thesis: fivefold ministry, prayer, baptism, counseling, and preaching; the final hour will consist of a focus group. Attendance of participants at this full-day workshop is anticipated. Still, it cannot be guaranteed, especially in light of the COVID-19 pandemic, which may impact the researcher's and participants' attendance.

As mentioned before, the action research study will focus on the five central themes of this project: fivefold ministry, prayer, baptism, counseling, and preaching. The participants have different levels of knowledge regarding each of the main themes. The researcher is limited in understanding how much information each participant will need to participate in the study successfully. The researcher will attempt to disseminate the curriculum during each session but has no control over the participant's ability to obtain and understand the thesis material.

While the church has designated space within its facility for this action research project to take place, the researcher has no control over any issues that may arise within the facility that may interrupt the flow of the study.

Delimitations

This action research project will not include participants who have not received the “call” or gift of the fivefold ministry at Unity Gospel House of Prayer. This decision is because it will not be helpful to use people who are not called to serve in the ministry in a specific way or who may not require a deep study of Scripture. As such, only those who are called to serve as apostles, prophets, teachers, evangelists, and pastors will be included in this study. Not all participants may be actively working in their fivefold ministry gift, but they are still able to participate. There will be no exclusions to participants in this study based on race or sex. The

ideal age for participants in this study will be those over twenty-five who have gained some experience serving in the ministry. However, all participants over the age of eighteen will be considered to be a part of the project.

The pre-interviews will be conducted two weeks before the Saturday workshop training to allow sufficient time to gain information that may not necessarily come out during class sessions. The one-day workshop will start at 10:00 am and go to 4:30 pm on Saturday, July 30, 2022. During the sessions, surveys will be anonymous in order to obtain honest responses and feedback from each participant. The researcher will present information on each core doctrine and conduct a focus group in the last hour of the training. Each session will end with a survey after a lecture and class discussion on the topic. Each section will incorporate biblical theology to substantiate God's intention for each module and how to relay that intent to others. The researcher will encourage the participants to ask questions and provide feedback based on the church's culture and their biblical understanding. A focus group will be conducted during the last hour of the training. Post-interviews will be conducted four weeks after the workshop to gain the impact of the training and how effective it was.

Thesis Statement

It goes without saying that God is protective of His Word. The Bible says, "Every word of God is flawless; he is a shield to those who take refuge in him. Do not add to his words, or he will rebuke you and prove you a liar" (Prov. 30:5-6, New International Version). However, there are times when those who are called to teach the Scriptures do not handle it correctly and do great violence by imputing their meaning into God's Word instead of what He intended. Unfortunately, many who are called into the ministry believe they only need to read the Bible to

determine its meaning as opposed to exegeting Scripture and utilizing a sound hermeneutic to understand what God is saying to believers. It is critical to teach the word of God correctly, according to His purpose and intention. If Unity Gospel House of Prayer implements this intervention to provide a theology-based training program to support its fivefold ministry, then the importance of theological education will be understood and appreciated as a foundation for the core aspects of its ministry.

CHAPTER 2: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

In order to develop an action research DMIN project that will contribute to the overall conversation in a way that will uniquely add to what has already been written and researched, it is necessary to review the most relevant contemporary literature. The purpose of the literature review is to identify what is available in academia and expose any gaps that still need to be addressed. The following literature review showcases the works that played an instrumental part in this research.

Literature Review

A common goal among Christians is to share the gospel of Jesus Christ. While this goal is universal among the Christian community of believers, there are several that have been gifted to share the gospel in a specific way to build up the church. Being gifted as a minister of the gospel of Jesus Christ is critical in the church, and the role should be taken seriously. Apostle Paul stated that God made him a minister of the Gentiles so that they would become acceptable to God: “that I might be a minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering of the Gentiles might be acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Spirit” (Rom. 15:16, NKJV). Ministers, or servants, in the church today should also have the mindset that the Apostle Paul had; their work should assist others in becoming acceptable to God by way of the Holy Spirit.

Since the disruption of COVID-19, the church has been seeking ways to stay connected to God. While churches are now going virtual, members do not feel the closeness of relationships and desire a more human touch to maintain their spirituality. In light of the current state of the pandemic, the church’s work is more difficult in trying to minister to the membership and

community. Practicing Christians are either switching churches or leaving them altogether, making it critical for the community church to offer a sound theology in such trying times. A Barna study recorded,

We see that very few (14%) have actually made a church switch amid the pandemic. It is more likely for a Christian to have stopped attending church altogether during the pandemic; in fact, 32 percent of practicing Christians have done just that. The remaining 18 percent of practicing Christians are viewing worship services from multiple churches throughout the month.²⁵

To maintain membership in the church and an eagerness for Christ, it is incumbent upon the church's ministers to delve deeper into Scripture to edify the church as God intended.

Theological Training in the Church

In her systematic theology, *The Doctrine of God*, Katherine Sonderegger explains the foundational meaning of theology, writing,

Theology is not principally, not properly, a discipline that refers to God or even less, about Him. It does not mention, or use, or refer to the holy. It does not mark out the defiled from the clean and pure. Theology does not aim to survey the whole of a religious literary artifact, and discover its Unity or power or composition. No, theology is the simple, impossibly simple conviction that God is Real.²⁶

Dockery offers another definition of theology in his book *Theology, Church, and Ministry*:

Theology is actually classified as a science and traditionally as the queen of sciences. Theology is scientific on account of three main things: (1) its aim is to find truth; (2) it has a distinctive means of apprehending its subject matter; and (3) it has a disciplined procedure. In other words, like every other science, theology seeks truth, not by randomly making guesses or presumptuously labeling mysteries as "truth" but rather by discovering identifiable truth in a disciplined, methodical way.²⁷

²⁵ Barna Group, "One in Three Practicing Christians Has Stopped Attending Church during COVID-19," *Barna Group*, accessed February 18, 2022, <https://www.barna.com/stateofthechurch/>.

²⁶ Katherine Sonderegger, *Systematic Theology: The Doctrine of God*, vol 1 (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress, Publishers, 2015), 509.

²⁷ Dockery, *Theology, Church, and Ministry*, liv.

It is incumbent on the church to teach theology to build it up to maturity. Jim Putman et al. write, “Churches often rely on Bible colleges or seminaries to equip people for ministry, yet all Christians are called to ministry, regardless of their formal education (see 1 Peter 4:10-11). If we limit ministry to those who have formal training, we force a majority of the church body to live in the spiritual nursery.”²⁸ It is often thought that it is not necessary for the ministerial staff of the church to have formal training in theology and apologetics and that the Holy Spirit will do the ministering on behalf of the minister or teacher. However, this thought is not consistent with Scripture. Author Craig Ott confirms the necessity of formal theological training in the church, saying, “Formal theology is often perceived as irrelevant, being preoccupied with debates from centuries past or with abstract propositions disconnected from daily life. However, we should not dismiss a theological understanding of the Bible and sound interpretation of the Bible too quickly...warnings regarding the danger of false teachers abound in the New Testament.”²⁹ Theological teaching in the church is necessary as it provides what God is sharing about Himself and what He is doing in the world, and He needs theology teachers to do it. Stephen Harris helps readers to understand how God shares information about Himself. Harris writes,

“God ordinarily teaches us about himself through other people. This simple truth seems to be a commonplace in Christian experience: pastors, counselors, and spiritual directors regularly contribute to one’s understanding of God and his ways. Christians typically understand them to be called and gifted by God to serve in this capacity.”³⁰

²⁸ Jim Putman et al, *Real-Life Discipleship Training Manual: Equipping Disciples Who Make Disciples* (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress Publishing Group, 2010), 256.

²⁹ Craig Ott, *The Church on Mission: A Biblical Vision for Transformation among All People* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2019), 37.

³⁰ Steven Edward Harris, *God and the Teaching of Theology: Divine Pedagogy in 1 Corinthians 1-4* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2019), 1.

Dockery writes, “Theology renders service to the church in many ways. It satisfies the mind so that we can know God (Jer. 9:23–24) and know the living Christ (Phil. 3:10–14). Theology is necessary for the church’s teaching and apologetic tasks (1 Pet. 3:15).”³¹

From a theological standpoint, failure to understand who God is has severe implications for the believer and could result in false worship. Studying the nature of God allows the believer to not only know Him but to “put on” His characteristics. In his contemporary book, Richard Baukhaum explains knowing God by what He has revealed:

We can answer the question “Who is God?” only by attending to who God has revealed himself to be. To this the whole biblical revelation is relevant. Asked what the whole Bible is about, I would say it is most centrally about the identity of God, while at the same time it tells the story of God and his creation, that all-encompassing story that extends from creation in the beginning to new creation at the end. Intensively the Bible is about the identity of God; extensively it tells the story of God and the world.³²

According to Ashford and Thomas, “When Scripture describes God, it does so on the basis of what God has said and done. In other words, the one true and living God is a personal being rather than an impersonal force. He speaks and acts within the world rather than existing as an abstraction. God is an actor, the primary actor, in a world-encompassing and true story.”³³

The repeated consensus in contemporary Christian writing is that God reveals what He wants to be known about Him. Sonderegger shares this sentiment in her systematic theology: “The Christian doctrine of God begins, is governed by, and finds its rest in the call to the One God, the One Lord of Israel. God has revealed what humans need to know about Him and what He wants them to know about Him.”³⁴ In his systematic theology, Michael Horton explains how

³¹ Dockery, *Theology, Church, and Ministry*, xxvii.

³² Richard Bauckham, *Who Is God? (Acadia Studies in Bible and Theology): Key Moments of Biblical Revelation* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2020), 8.

³³ Ashford and Thomas, *The Gospel of Our King*, 13.

³⁴ Sonderegger, *Systematic Theology*, 3.

God shares some of His attributes with believers, assisting them with becoming like Him:

“God’s attributes have often been distinguished as incommunicable and communicable, so called to distinguish those attributes that belong to God alone and those that may be predicated of God and humans.”³⁵

From a theological perspective, D. A. Carson and Timothy Keller explain the gospel and the true biblical story: “The real biblical narrative is the unfolding of God’s purpose and plan. The Bible is God’s story, and its storyline is the gospel: God’s plan to redeem a people for himself and restore his fallen creation through Christ.”³⁶ The gospel is God’s story, and studying with Him as the main character provides clarity around the central message of the Bible. Carson and Keller add, “The gospel is the Bible’s main message, and preaching the content of the Bible— that is, the prophetic anticipation of God’s redemptive purpose in Christ from the Old Testament and the apostolic witness to the accomplished work of Christ in the New Testament— unleashes the power of the gospel message and achieves its God-ordained end.”³⁷ In *The Best Kept Secret of the Christian Mission*, John Dickson explains several critical components of the gospel story. He writes, “The gospel message is the grand news about how God’s coming kingdom has been glimpsed and opened up to a sinful world in the birth, teaching, miracles, death, and resurrection of God’s Son, the Messiah, who will one day return to overthrow evil and consummate the kingdom for eternity.”³⁸

³⁵ Michael Horton, *The Christian Faith: A Systematic Theology for Pilgrims on the Way* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Academic, 2011), Chap 6.

³⁶ D. A. Carson and Timothy Keller, *The Gospel as Center: Renewing Our Faith and Reforming Our Ministry Practices* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012), 35.

³⁷ Ibid., 30.

³⁸ John Dickson, *The Best Kept Secret of Christian Mission: Promoting the Gospel with More Than Our Lips* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2010), 107.

As previously mentioned, many depend solely on the Holy Spirit for instruction in the Holy Scriptures. While the Bible confirms that the Holy Spirit is indeed a teacher, it further confirms that it teaches in participation with the believer who must also “study to show themselves approved” (2 Tim. 2:15, King James Version).

Although the Holy Spirit is not tangible, it should not be considered valueless from a theological standpoint. The Holy Spirit connects to the human spirit to impart God’s truths and characteristics to the believer. The Holy Spirit acts as a personal agent to God in the believer’s life, making Him, in turn, personable to the believer. The Holy Spirit has a significant influence on theology and acts in ways to help believers understand God’s Word. Authors Christopher Morgan and Robert Peterson say, “Scripture presents the Holy Spirit as a person, not an impersonal force. That the Spirit is personal is seen in how he has personal traits, performs personal ministries, and is affected as a person.”³⁹

Theologically speaking, the Holy Spirit does great work in the church and is responsible for the giftings and callings of those who are to edify the church. Author Charles Journet says, “The Spirit is the supreme responsible subject of the Church’s activities. It is the Spirit, therefore, who, through the humanity of Jesus, forms the Church and introduces her to the world.”⁴⁰ The Bible clarifies how the Holy Spirit is responsible for various giftings in the church and determines how to distribute them:

There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone it is the same God at work. Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. To one there is given through the Spirit a message of wisdom, to another a message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit, to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to

³⁹ Christopher W. Morgan and Robert A. Peterson, *Christian Theology: The Biblical Story and Our Faith* (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2020), 29h.

⁴⁰ Charles Cardinal Journet, *The Theology of the Church* (San Francisco, CA: Ignatius Press, 2015), 73.

another speaking in different kinds of tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues. All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he distributes them to each one, just as he determines (1 Cor. 12:4-11, NIV).

In *The Theology of the Church*, Journet writes,

The Church is similar to Christ. It is fitting that the Church, intended for men and gathering them together, is, like man, at the same time invisible and visible, composed of a spiritual soul and a visible body. However, the Church has for her model, not man, but Christ; for, it is in Christ that divinity and humanity are united.⁴¹

Authors Gregg Allison and Andrea Köstenberger explain how the church works with the Holy Spirit, stating,

The church age, as well, may accurately be described as the age of the Holy Spirit, inaugurating the last days. Thus the Holy Spirit serves as Jesus's successor on the earth, the "Counselor," or "other helping Presence" sent jointly by God the Father and God the Son (John 14:26; 15:26), empowering the church's mission and witness and providing the energizing dynamic underlying the proclamation of Jesus's resurrection and triumph over Satan, the demonic forces, sickness, and even death.⁴²

Apologetics Training in the Church

Another method of studying God's Word that defends the Christian worldview and argues for God's truth is called apologetics. The foundational Scripture that supports defending the faith is "But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear" (1 Pet. 3:15, NKJV). During the earthly ministry of Jesus, He had no problem providing evidence to those who doubted or were unbelieving: "Then He said to Thomas, 'Reach your finger here, and look at My hands; and reach your hand *here*, and put *it* into My side. Do not be unbelieving, but

⁴¹ Journet, *The Theology of the Church*, 35.

⁴² Gregg Allison and Andreas J. Köstenberger, *The Holy Spirit* (city, state: B&H Publishing Group, 2020), 153.

believing” (John 20:27, NKJV). Chamberlain and Price provide a clear definition of apologetics, defending the faith and how it serves God’s people:

“Apologetics” comes from the Greek word apologia, which means “defense.” Doing apologetics is speaking in defense of the faith, or providing reasons for belief. It involves untangling the many misconceptions that people lug around due to their upbringing or the various cultural sound bites they’ve consciously or unconsciously absorbed into their religious point of view. Apologetics serves to clear away the intellectual rubble strewn about by our cultural moment and the entrenched assumptions of our day, providing the message of Jesus with a fairer hearing in the marketplace of ideas.⁴³

Apologetics and theology are inseparable. To defend the tenets of Christianity, one must have a sound theology as a foundation. Justin Bailey understands this dependency, writing, “Indeed, apologetics need not articulate a complete theology, even if it is implicitly funded by one. Apologetics rather serves to prepare the way for faith, or even to leave the door of faith slightly ajar.”⁴⁴

Defending God’s attributes is necessary for the church, especially during turmoil and suffering. Apologists are needed in the church to respond to the overarching question: If God is good, why does evil exist? Ministers must be prepared to help believers see that God is good during periods of devastation and that His characteristics remain untarnished. Bauckham explains, “Rather, God acts for reasons we cannot always know or understand. There is more to God’s ways than we can grasp. We cannot calculate his mercy and his judgment. God abounds in steadfast love and faithfulness, and so we can rely on him to act with his people’s good at heart. But the ways in which he does this may be far beyond our grasp. He remains, after all, God.”⁴⁵

⁴³ Paul Chamberlain and Chris Price, *Everyday Apologetics: Answering Common Objections to the Christian Faith* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2020), 6.

⁴⁴ Justin Ariel Bailey, *Reimagining Apologetics: The Beauty of Faith in a Secular Age* (Westmont, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2020), 215.

⁴⁵ Bauckham, *Who Is God*, 47.

Wilson and Heistand write that pastors need to have an apologetic background to respond to questions within their ministry: “Pastor theologians are ecclesial apologists who bear shepherding responsibility in ecclesial contexts that their apologetics chiefly serve. They therefore produce their apologetic in conversation with other apologists, theologians and thought leaders with an eye to the needs of their community and its questions and objections.”⁴⁶

To respond to objections and questions about the gospel, the church needs to engage in apologetics. Apologists in the local church provide evidence that God’s story is true and that the work Jesus did on the cross, including His resurrection, can be trusted. In the contemporary book *Stand Firm*, authors Paul Gould, Travis Dickinson, and Keith Loftin take a deep dive into why apologetics is necessary for the gospel to advance:

We must become “cultural exegetes,” learning about those we seek to reach— their beliefs, values, and emotional response patterns— so we can identify relevant starting points, adequate bridges (using the planks of reason, conscience, and imagination), and the various barriers to belief to be cleared so the gospel will get a fair hearing.⁴⁷

The church has a responsibility to set the record straight on those defeating beliefs that oppose the gospel and attack the tenets of Christianity. William Lane Craig writes, “When apologetics is persuasively presented and sensitively combined with a gospel presentation and a personal testimony, the Spirit of God is pleased to use it to bring people to Himself.”⁴⁸

Christian apologists rely on the Holy Spirit when defending the Christian worldview and providing evidence of its validity. Craig, an apologist, writes, “So it’s clear that both Jesus and the apostles were not afraid to give evidence for the truth of what they proclaimed. This doesn’t

⁴⁶ Todd Wilson and Gerald L. Heistand, eds, *Becoming a Pastor Theologian: New Possibilities for Church Leadership* (Westmont, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2016), 175.

⁴⁷ Paul Gould, Travis Dickinson, and Keith Loftin, *Stand Firm: Apologetics and the Brilliance of the Gospel* (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2018), 13.

⁴⁸ William Lane Craig, *On Guard: Defending Your Faith with Reason and Precision* (Colorado Springs, CO: David C. Cook, 2010), 24.

mean they didn't trust the Holy Spirit to bring people to God."⁴⁹ While the Holy Spirit may not be considered evidence for many nonbelievers, it is proof for the believer. John Feinberg believes that the Holy Spirit has abilities that outweigh smarts and persuasion that help defend Christianity:

It is true that no one will be argued into the kingdom of God solely on the basis of the brilliance of our objective case for Christianity. It is also true that the type of persuasion we are talking about when we speak of subjective certainty is something that only the Holy Spirit can and does produce in a person. Still, on any occasion the Holy Spirit just may use our case for the objective certainty of a belief as a basis (though not necessarily the only basis) for persuading the nonbeliever to turn to Christ. So, we must present the very best defense we can muster.⁵⁰

In his book *Urban Apologetics*, Christopher Brooks reiterates the goal of apologetics in the local church. He writes, "If the goal of apologetics is to win men and women to Christ through a Spirit-led and Spirit-empowered defense of the gospel, then the relationship between the local church and the apologist is foundational."⁵¹ The local church must have apologists serving the membership not only to win arguments but to win and maintain souls. In today's secular society, the church is being challenged for its stance on sin and Christian beliefs. Apologists are needed in the church to defend against challenges and objections to its core tenets and to respond to tough questions from the membership and community. Brooks adds, "Apologetics is embodied in a revitalized and robust church whose distinctiveness is its most attractive element."⁵²

⁴⁹ Craig, *On Guard*, 15.

⁵⁰ John S. Feinberg, *Can You Believe It's True? Christian Apologetics in a Modern and Postmodern Era* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2013), 115.

⁵¹ Christopher W. Brooks, *Urban Apologetics: Why the Gospel is Good News for the City* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 2014), 61.

⁵² Justin Ariel Bailey, *Reimagining Apologetics: The Beauty of Faith in a Secular Age* (Westmont, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2020), 58.

Together, theology and apologetics training in the local church will establish a more secure foundation and elaborate more succinctly, in unison, the Holy Scriptures and their correct application. Theology and apologetics training will elucidate the essential core doctrines of Christianity and support the giftings of the fivefold ministry in areas of prayer, preaching, baptism, and counseling. Unity has attempted to provide ministerial training, but it was not structured or measurable. Implementing a measurable and well-developed theological training will allow educational growth in the church's leadership.

Fivefold Ministry

The fivefold ministry model is derived from Ephesians 4:11, which says, “Now these are the gifts Christ gave to the church: the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, and the pastors and teachers” (NLT). The author of Ephesians, Apostle Paul, made the responsibility clear for those who are endowed with any of these five gifts: “Their responsibility is to equip God’s people to do his work and build up the church, the body of Christ” (Eph. 4:12, NLT). For those called into the fivefold ministry, it is vital for each minister to classify their calling into one of these giftings that the Holy Spirit has given to the church. It is a great work that has been gifted to specific individuals in the body of Christ. Paul goes on to explain that this work will continue throughout the end of the age when he says: “This will continue until we all come to such unity in our faith and knowledge of God’s Son that we will be mature in the Lord, measuring up to the full and complete standard of Christ” (Eph. 4:13, NLT). For as long as humans are in these corruptible bodies, they will never measure up to the complete standard of Christ; therefore, the ministry must continue.

In his contemporary book, *Understanding the Fivefold Ministry*, Green defines the fivefold ministry gifts by writing,

The fivefold ministry gifts are ultimately not titles but activities. For instance, an evangelist is not an evangelist unless he or she preaches the gospel and wins souls for the kingdom. Ultimately, your gift will be authenticated, not by the title that you are assigned, but by the evidence of God's anointing on your life as He empowers you to build up His people and bring His message to those who are lost.⁵³

Green goes on to say that “According to Ephesians 4:12, the role of those in the fivefold ministry is “for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry.”⁵⁴ Authors Hirsch and Catchim write, “These gifts are clearly and unequivocally stated as being in the fivefold expressions of apostle, prophet, evangelist, shepherd, and teacher; they have a Christological source and basis and approximate what can now be called the constitutional ministry of the church and— following our metaphor of constitution— its legitimate executive.”⁵⁵ When the church is thriving in a functioning fivefold ministry, there is a greater chance for correct application of Scripture in the lives of believers and protection from those who spread false teachings in the church. Hirsch and Catchim add, “According to Paul, a fully functioning fivefold APEST ministry is the Christ-given defense mechanism against heresy and false doctrine. There is something about APEST as a whole that moves the church past theological naiveté and anchors it in a more integrated understanding of its central message and core doctrines.”⁵⁶

⁵³ Green, *Understanding the Fivefold Ministry*, 151.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Hirsch and Catchim, *The Permanent Revolution*, 14.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 16.

Theology of Prayer

Prayer is essential to the church and a freedom that should be exercised continuously.

Believers are free to pray directly to God for themselves and others. Andrew Prevot writes,

From a Christian perspective, prayer happens whenever there is interaction between these two freedoms, that is, whenever the triune God and any given creature choose (and we hope and believe that God always makes this choice) to relate in a manner that also necessarily involves other qualitative, experiential, and social (thus not just abstractly self- determining) aspects of their respective freedoms.⁵⁷

The Bible instructs believers never to cease praying (1 Thess. 5:17). Prayer is more than making requests to God; it is communication with Him. Understanding the theology behind prayer helps believers formulate them to be meaningful and not lofty. David Peterson writes,

Biblically shaped prayer does not simply ask God to meet our material needs but begs him to sustain and mature us as disciples of Christ (Eph. 3:14– 19; Col. 1:9– 14; 1 Thess. 3:12– 13). Spirit-directed prayer seeks wisdom from God so that we may fulfill his purpose for us and be fruitful in his service (James 1:4– 8). Such prayer should characterize our individual lives and our gatherings as his people.⁵⁸

The theological foundation of prayer is the gospel story of God. The Bible portrays the prayers that went up to God and how He reacted. In his book, *Calling on the Name of the Lord*, Gary Millar writes, “What we should pray for is controlled by the gospel. Over and over again in the Bible God tells us to ask, because he is delighted to give. It is no accident that all the words in the Bible for ‘prayer’ mean the same thing – they mean ask.”⁵⁹ Millar further states how the Apostle Paul’s prayers were biblically shaped by writing, “Paul draws on Jesus’ own teaching to emphasize that the gift of the Spirit draws us into Jesus’ own relationship with his Father,

⁵⁷ Andrew Prevot, *Thinking Prayer: Theology and Spirituality amid the Crises of Modernity* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2015), 2.

⁵⁸ David G. Peterson, *Encountering God Together: Leading Worship Services That Honor God, Minister to His People, and Build His Church* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R Publishing, 2014), 52.

⁵⁹ Gary Millar, *Calling on the Name of the Lord: A Biblical Theology of Prayer* (Westmont, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2016), 238.

enabling us to pray to his Father as our own, using the title ‘Abba’. For Paul our prayers are made possible and informed at every level by the gospel.”⁶⁰

Theology of Preaching

Preaching is declaring God’s truths to an audience in a way that allows the hearers to understand and correctly apply biblical teachings to their lives. Chase Kuhn and Paul Grimmond write, “Preaching is a task founded upon a deep commitment to the belief that God has spoken and continues to speak to his people through the Scriptures.”⁶¹

It is vital for the preacher to have a solid theological foundation in order to communicate God’s Word effectively to the congregation. Kuhn and Grimmond add, “Theology plays a crucial role in preaching, as preaching is the predominant teaching post within the fellowship. Theology does not hijack the sermon, but the sermon must be theologically informed.”⁶² A solid theological background allows the preacher to tell God’s story as He intended. Stephen Wright writes, “It is the task of theology to gather up the founding story of the Church as Scripture has narrated it for us and interpret it in such a way as to give meaning to the subsequent and present story of the Church and the world.”⁶³

Preaching should explain clearly what God is communicating in His Word so that the people of God can hear His voice through the message. The Bible states,

How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone

⁶⁰ Millar, *Calling on the Name of the Lord*, 209.

⁶¹ Chase R. Kuhn and Paul Grimmond, *Theology Is for Preaching: Biblical Foundations, Method, and Practice* (Ashland, state: Lexham Press, 2021), 15.

⁶² Ibid., 21.

⁶³ Stephen Wright, *Alive to the Word: A Practical Theology of Preaching for the Whole Church* (London, UK: Hymns Ancient & Modern Ltd, 2010), 106.

preaching to them? And how can anyone preach unless they are sent? As it is written: “How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!” (Rom. 10:14-15, NIV).

Author Jason Meyer writes, “Preaching has an expository dimension because God entrusts the preacher with a specific message. The fact that heralding God’s word requires exposition explains why preaching and teaching in Scripture often appear together (e.g., Matt. 4:23; 9:35; 11:1; Luke 20:1; Acts 5:42; 15:34; 1 Tim. 5:17).”⁶⁴ God is concerned with the accurate preaching of His Word; therefore, He sent preachers that take great care in accurately delivering what He desires to be communicated about Himself.

Peterson explains this further, writing, “The New Testament uses ‘building’ terminology to talk about God’s great work of establishing the new covenant people of God. This takes place through the death, resurrection and ascension of the Lord Jesus Christ, which leads to the sending of his representatives to preach the gospel in the power of his Spirit.”⁶⁵ It is crucial that preachers of God’s Word study from a historical and cultural perspective to ensure they are not changing the meaning of what God intended during their sermons. Meyers adds,

Preachers are not wordsmiths in a way that makes them the source of the words. Preachers must never lose sight of the fact that in the one great distinction between the created universe and the Creator, they are on this side of the divide as his creatures. Therefore, preachers are not creators of words, but stewards of the Creator’s words.⁶⁶

Christians are participants in the great story of God, and those who are called to share this news have a pivotal role to play. The story of God is very critical to the Christian who is seeking to understand who God is and what that means for them. Studying the gospel from a theological and apologetic standpoint is very beneficial, especially to those who are called to share the gospel. Andrew Ballitch and Stephen Yuille write, “When the gospel is preached to a nation or

⁶⁴ Jason C. Meyer, *Preaching: A Biblical Theology* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2013), 17.

⁶⁵ Peterson, *Encountering God Together*, 32.

⁶⁶ Meyer, *Preaching*, 172.

congregation, it fans them, tries them, purges them, and so separates them, so that a man can see the manifest difference between the chaff and the wheat— that is, between the godly and the wicked.”⁶⁷

Theology of Baptism

Baptism is an external presentation of an internal change in the life of the believer. In his book *Understanding Baptism*, Jamieson writes, “In the New Testament all Christians were baptized, and all the evidence we have points to people being baptized as soon as they embraced the gospel. After trusting Christ, baptism is the first thing faith does. It’s how faith shows itself before God, the church, and the world. Baptism is where faith goes public.”⁶⁸ Jamieson goes on to say, “baptism is a church’s act of affirming and portraying a believer’s union with Christ by immersing him or her in water, and a believer’s act of publicly committing him or herself to Christ and his people, thereby uniting a believer to the church and marking off him or her from the world.”⁶⁹ According to the Bible, the church is instructed to baptize, “Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit” (Matt. 28:19, NIV). Peterson adds,

Baptism in the name of Jesus Christ suggests that the person being baptized actually calls upon Jesus as Lord and Messiah as a way of confessing faith in him. The name of Jesus represents his divine authority and power to grant the blessing of the Spirit and to save people from the coming judgment through the forgiveness of sins (Joel 2:32; cf. Acts 4:12; 5:31; 10:43; 13:38). At the human level, calling upon Jesus as Lord and Messiah is essentially what makes a person a Christian (Rom. 10:9-10).⁷⁰

⁶⁷ Andrew S. Ballitch and J. Stephen Yuille, *The Wholesome Doctrine of the Gospel: Faith and Love in the Writings of William Perkins* (Grand Rapids, MI: Reformation Heritage Books, 2019), 74.

⁶⁸ Jamieson, *Understanding Baptism*, 38.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 9.

⁷⁰ Peterson, *Encountering God Together*, 81.

Author Peter Leithart writes, “Baptism preaches because it’s God’s work. Baptism isn’t simply water, nor water poured, nor water over which a Trinitarian formula is intoned. Baptism is an act of the church, using water in the name of the Trinity to bathe a person entering the church.”⁷¹ Leithart further elucidates the message of baptism in the church, saying, “Baptism points to Jesus, who rose from the dead as the firstfruits of the age to come. As it points to Jesus, baptism tells the world, ‘Behold, a new creation has come!’ To the baptized, it’s performative speech, effecting what it declares: ‘Behold, you are a new creation!’”⁷²

The Apostle Peter made sure to point out that it is not the water washing of baptism that saves believers; it is the spiritual reality behind the immersion in water. The Bible states, “and this water symbolizes baptism that now saves you also—not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge of a clear conscience toward God. It saves you by the resurrection of Jesus Christ” (1 Pet. 3:21, NIV). Baptism demonstrates that believers are united with and have clothed themselves with Christ (Gal. 3:27). To continually show their immersion in Christ, Christians should live each day consistent in the spiritual reality that they are adorned with Him. The display of Christ does not end after baptism; it is a continual and consistent walk for the rest of the believer’s life.

Theology of Counseling

The church is a space where believers can go to get counseling for various problems and when grappling with issues of life. Living a Christian life does not guarantee a life free of problems. Siang-Yang Tan and Eric Scalise write, “The church needs to stand up and

⁷¹ Peter J. Leithart, *Baptism: A Guide to Life from Death* (Ashland, state: Lexham Press, 2021), 15.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 19.

acknowledge that suffering and mental illness are realities, and as Christians, we must learn to step fully into our God-given role as ambassadors of reconciliation and those who help foster healing, restoration, recovery, and transformation.”⁷³ Attending a church service can be therapeutic when hearing the preached Word of God. In his book, *A Theology of Biblical Counseling*, Heath Lambert writes:

Understanding the doctrine of the church in a theology of biblical counseling is important because the church is the place where counseling ministry will most meaningfully happen. While it is important to understand theology and doctrine, we need to apply what we learn in a community of believers—in the church. The church is the location—even the organism—where the truths we have studied in this book find their home.⁷⁴

It is critical for Christian counselors or ministers to have a sound theological foundation in God’s Word in order to provide counseling to the church. Lambert explains,

By the plan of God, every issue in Christian doctrine requires the church to uphold it. It is not enough to know the truth or even to value the truth. The truth must take root in the church. If counseling is grounded in our understanding of the truth, and the truth is rightly upheld in the context of the church, then counseling finds a real home in the church.⁷⁵

Using God’s truths to demonstrate that He knows best how to deal with life’s issues will allow the Christian counselor to help someone who is suffering. Lambert adds,

This is what we do in counseling. We take what we know from the truths of theology, and we apply it to people who are suffering under the weight of all the kinds of pain this world has to offer. We apply biblical truth to struggling people for the purpose of building their hope and increasing their joy in truly knowing Christ in this life and ultimately in the life to come.⁷⁶

A theological foundation in Christian counseling assures that the minister is not providing misleading information and communicating God’s truth and love with the authority of the

⁷³ Siang-Yang Tan, and Eric T. Scalise, *Lay Counseling, Revised and Updated: Equipping Christians for a Helping Ministry* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2016), 28.

⁷⁴ Lambert, *A Theology of Biblical Counseling*, 304.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 305.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 319.

Scriptures. Author Virginia Todd Holeman says, “Professional and academic theologians serve the church by providing the kind of resources that Christian counselors will use to increase their capacities to think theologically and to live a more Christ-centered life.”⁷⁷ God is concerned about His children’s mental health, which is why He put specific individuals in the church to comfort and demonstrate His love and grace. The Bible states that God is close to the brokenhearted and desires to save them from a crushed spirit (Ps. 34:18). The Christian counselor that can provide examples from the Word of God to help those in need is much needed in the church. Christian counselors are critical to the church to help the congregation see God at work in their lives during difficult times. Holeman states, “Counseling is one avenue through which Christian mental health professionals can assist others in the process of opening their lives more fully to God by helping them remove the barriers.”⁷⁸

Conclusion

God confirms through Scripture that believers are to study His word seriously. The Bible states, “Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth” (2 Tim. 2:15, NKJV). A critical theme throughout Christianity is to be like Christ. However, it takes work to become like Christ and deeply study God’s Word. God has given the church the necessary tools to assist humans in conforming to the image of Christ. God has a plan for the church to do this critical work, and He has put specific roles in place to bring about the change He desires in the world. It is vital that ministers and Christians study the Word of God from a theological perspective. The core doctrines of

⁷⁷ Virginia Todd Holeman, *Theology for Better Counseling Trinitarian Reflections for Healing and Formation* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2012), 26.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 16.

Christianity deserve to be treated with respect and great care; not doing so has severe implications. Dockery writes, “Theological education that transforms is a dynamic process of taking students from saving grace through healthy growth to discovering their giftedness to reflecting God’s glory in all facets and phases of their lives.”⁷⁹ Comprehension of the theological undertones of prayer, preaching, baptism, and counseling will allow for a greater understanding of what God communicates about these Christian activities. Ignoring the theology behind major church activities is not only careless handling of God’s Word but causes inaccuracy of biblical teachings and incorrect application. This literature review provides contemporary works on the importance of the proper communication of the Word of God through theology and apologetics to support the fivefold ministry. This action research found that in the local church, especially those in the inner cities, adopting a theologically based fivefold ministry is under-explored and needs additional investigation.

Theological Foundations

Jesus has a strategy for equipping His people. He has implemented a team known as the fivefold ministry that is charged with the calling to build up and edify His church. This team consists of apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers (Eph. 4:11). In Ephesians 4, believers undoubtedly see this enthusiastic team described in Scripture. Paul wrote, “Now these are the gifts Christ gave to the church: the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, and the pastors and teachers. Their responsibility is to equip God’s people to do his work and build up the church, the body of Christ” (Eph. 4:11, NLT). Authors J. R. Briggs and Bob Hyatt write, “Paul’s intention here is not to provide another gifts list, as in other places where he describes the Holy

⁷⁹ Dockery, *Theology, Church, and Ministry*, xl.

Spirit empowerments given to believers. Here he describes foundational gifts given to the church as a whole, and those gifts are specific people: apostles, prophets, evangelists, shepherds and teachers.”⁸⁰ Jesus personally gifted these leadership roles to the church, and each has a specific duty to fulfill to support the church's growth. Many believe that the positions of apostle and prophet are no longer available to the church, but that is not correct; the functions of these roles are necessary and continue in the church today. The Apostle Paul clarifies that all of these roles are pertinent to the cause of the church's unification and maturity and will continue until the goal is fully achieved. The Bible says, “So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ” (Eph. 4:11-13, NIV). The benchmark is clear, and these five positions have ongoing and critical work to fulfill for the church. It is vital for each of these equipping offices to be supported with proper theological training to be successful in achieving the goal Jesus has set before them. Dockery states, “Theological education is the task of equipping those whom God has called for lives of mission and ministry.”⁸¹ J. R. Woodward clarifies, “If the candidate is not yet ready to be an equipper, due to lack of character, skills, theological training or missional living, the process becomes a learning experience.”⁸²

While these roles have distinct objectives for maturing the church, there are some overlapping responsibilities. For example, each of the fivefold ministry offices must be able to

⁸⁰ J. R. Briggs and Bob Hyatt, *Eldership and the Mission of God: Equipping Teams for Faithful Church Leadership* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2015), 115.

⁸¹ Dockery, *Theology, Church, and Ministry*, lxii.

⁸² J. R. Woodward, *Creating a Missional Culture: Equipping the Church for the Sake of the World* (Praxis. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2012), 208.

pray, counsel, spread the gospel, and baptize other believers in the church and new converts. Author Mark Roberts states, “The various roles mentioned in 4:11 overlap considerably. Take Paul, for example. He was an apostle (Eph. 1:1). Yet he also evangelized (1 Cor. 1:17), taught (Col. 1:28), and exercised pastoral oversight of his churches (1 Thess. 1– 5). Moreover, it’s likely that Paul prophesied (1 Cor. 13:2; 14:3-6, 37).”⁸³ While each office has methods unique to its gift, it is vital for each to operate seamlessly while elevating new converts to faith-filled believers. Those who have been given the gift to serve in the capacity of the fivefold ministry must obtain proper theological training to be successful. Roberts further confirms, “The church will only grow as it should when each member contributes. Apostles, prophets, evangelists, and pastors and teachers are given by Christ to the church in order to equip all of God’s holy people for our ministry, so that we might help the church grow in unity, maturity, and stature.”⁸⁴

Why Theological Training is Necessary

Jesus is known as the redeemer, the Christ, and the Son of God, but He is also known as a teacher. Jesus was called “Rabbi” throughout His earthly ministry, which means teacher (John 1:38). Jesus established the need for training during His earthly ministry. Jesus taught in the synagogues and villages packed with people, teaching them the gospel of the kingdom (Matt. 9:35). Jesus was a teacher who exemplified what He taught. After witnessing Jesus praying, the disciples asked Him to teach them how to pray (Luke 11:1).

Jesus then offered a prayer model that they should follow when praying: “When you pray, say: Father, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come. Give us each day our daily

⁸³ Mark D. Roberts, *Ephesians* (Grand Rapids, MI: HarperCollins Christian Publishing, 2016), 134.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 139.

bread. Forgive us our sins, for we also forgive everyone who sins against us. And lead us not into temptation” (Luke 11:2-5, NIV). Woodward explains, “If we seek to see this prayer realized as much as we can expect on this side of the new heavens and new earth, we not only need to recover the five equippers but, from the life and ministry of Jesus, we need to understand how he was the archetypical apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor and teacher.”⁸⁵ Jesus continued His prayer training with a parable explaining the need to be consistent in prayer because there are benefits even when the circumstances seem bleak.

Jesus demonstrated the need for theological training in the church when He went to the synagogue daily to teach (John 8:2). Jesus taught as one with authority (Matt. 7:29), and He captivated His audience in a way that made them come back for more of His lessons on the Scriptures. Jesus ensured that His teachings were well comprehended by using parables that made it easy for the people to understand (Matt. 13:10-11). Authors Mark Driscoll and Gerry Breshears write, “As part of his teaching ministry, Jesus often taught his students (disciples) about the future. On a few occasions he promised them that one day he would leave them and send the Holy Spirit to perfectly remind them of his life and teachings so that they could write and teach accurately and truthfully to complete the Bible.”⁸⁶

Jesus demonstrated the need for teaching the Holy Scriptures, but He also mandated it in His final command to those who would go on establishing the church. Jesus states, “Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age” (Matt. 28:19-20, NIV). Jesus's final words to the

⁸⁵ Woodward, *Creating a Missional Culture*, 116.

⁸⁶ Mark Driscoll and Gerry Breshears, *Doctrine: What Christians Should Believe* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2010), 54.

church emphasize the need for ongoing training and engagement with people, doing the work to build the church to its culmination.

Why the Fivefold Ministry is Necessary

As already established, the work to build up the church by spreading and teaching the gospel was mandated by Jesus Himself. Jesus did more than give a directive; He also put a strategic team in place to carry out His will and purpose for unifying and maturing the church to be like Him: the fivefold ministry. Thomas Schreiner writes,

Gifts were given to equip believers for ministry. We see in verse 16 that “every supporting ligament” and “each individual part” plays a role. The purpose of the gifts is “to build up the body of Christ” (Eph. 4:12). The building up of the body leads to its unity and its stability and maturity. Such maturity means that the church becomes more like Jesus Christ, and at the same time the church will have a doctrinal solidity.⁸⁷

Jesus ensured the victory of the church by gifting it with the fivefold ministry offices. In his commentary on Ephesians, Kent Hughes writes, “The gifts and enabling grace that we have have been given to us as Christ apportioned them. They came from the conquering King. They are given with great expectation on his part, for he expects us to use them to bring power and victory in the Church.”⁸⁸ According to Grant Osborne, “Gifted leaders are not just hired or appointed but are sovereignly bestowed, and the church should consider its staff and volunteer leaders to be gifts from God. Their purpose is not just to do the work of the Lord but to train and involve every member in that work. In other words, gifted leaders help all members to develop and use their gifts.”⁸⁹

⁸⁷ Thomas R. Schreiner, *Spiritual Gifts: What They Are and Why They Matter* (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2018), 10c.

⁸⁸ R. Kent Hughes, *Ephesians (ESV Edition): The Mystery of the Body of Christ* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2013), 115.

⁸⁹ Grant R. Osborne, *Ephesians Verse by Verse* (Oak Harbor, state: Lexham Press, 2017), 86.

As Jesus walked the earth, engaging people with His teachings, He embodied the fivefold ministry. Of the many disciples Jesus had, He chose twelve of them to be apostles (Luke 6:13). The word apostle in Greek is *Apostolos*, which means one sent on a mission. Jesus taught the apostles, and they went out spreading the gospel, and their teachings have impacted the world in a significant way still today. Woodward says, “Jesus was sent by the Father to bless the world, and we are sent by Jesus to do the same. Apostles understand that they are sent people, and in turn they send people.”⁹⁰ Jesus also performed the works of a prophet during His earthly ministry, another office of the fivefold ministry. Woodward also says, “Jesus is the archetypical prophet. His anguish over the lives he observed in Jerusalem led him to confront the fraud and hypocrisy that he found in the religious and political institutions of his day.”⁹¹ He went about speaking what God taught Him and told Him to speak (John 8:28), which is a function of a prophet. Jesus also foretold future events, which is another work of a prophet. As noted in Mark, Jesus referred to Himself as a prophet, saying, “A prophet is not without honor except in his own town, among his relatives and in his own home” (Mark 6:4, NIV).

Likewise, Jesus performed the duties of the office of evangelist. The word evangelist in Greek is *euaggelistés*, which means one who brings good news. An evangelist is also one who travels to spread the gospel, and Jesus did both of these roles. Woodward adds, “However, this is exactly what evangelists do, and they call others to cross barriers that the broader culture sets up. Just as the story of Jonah was written to help Israel remember why she was chosen, Jesus the evangelist came to lead Israel to her true calling: to be a blessing to all nations.”⁹² In the Bible, as Jesus travelled to Galilee proclaiming the gospel, he said, “The kingdom of God has come near.

⁹⁰ Woodward, *Creating a Missional Culture*, 116.

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² Woodward, *Creating a Missional Culture*, 116.

Repent and believe the good news!” (Mark 1:15, NIV). Jesus portrayed the responsibilities of the evangelist so that the church could carry on in this capacity today.

Additionally, Jesus acted in the capacity of a pastor or shepherd over His people.

Woodward writes, “When Jesus looked upon the people, he had compassion on them because he saw that they were ‘harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.’”⁹³ Jesus said, “I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep” (John 10:11, NIV). Jesus cares for the church profoundly and is committed to the point of sacrificing His life for them. As a pastor, Jesus cared for his flock of people by praying for them, healing them, casting out demons, and even feeding them. Jesus demonstrated the role of the pastor for the church, and it remains true today.

The fivefold ministry roles were active in the Old Testament but may have looked differently because those chosen were pioneers in these areas and were bound by the Law. In the Old Testament, God directly engaged with those He called to do His will, like Moses, who embodied the complete fivefold gift with God’s help. Applying the same knowledge of these roles during Old Testament times to New Testament is a mistake because Jesus fulfills the Law and ushers in the church age with grace and truth. The Bible says, “For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ” (John 1:17, NIV). The fivefold ministry transitions from the Old Testament law to New Testament grace and truth under Jesus. The transition does not negate any of the roles, but it does use them differently for what Jesus purposes for His church. Beyond focusing on the expansive theological perspective of core functions in the ministry, there is a shift towards the contributions of the individual believer to unify and build up the church.

⁹³ Woodward, *Creating a Missional Culture*, 118.

Unifying the Church

Just as the Godhead works together in perfect unity, the church must work towards this same unity to thrive while performing the salvific task Jesus set before them. Fred Sanders writes, “God made it known that his unity was triunity precisely when the Father sent the Son and the Holy Spirit, in fulfillment of the promise of redemption.”⁹⁴ Hughes demonstrates that the triune God is the origin of unity in his commentary as he expounds on Ephesians 4:6:

In verses 4–6 Paul celebrates the origin of our unity: “There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call— one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.” Many New Testament scholars believe this was an early Christian confessional hymn, and it may well have been (cf. 1 Corinthians 8:6; 12:4– 6). The important thing to see is that it teaches us that our unity is rooted in the Holy Trinity (“Spirit,” v. 4; “Lord,” v. 5; “God,” v. 6). Each of the seven great unities in verses 4– 6 is connected with one of the Persons of the Trinity.⁹⁵

As the foundation of Christian unity, the triune God is the perfect example for the church to model to achieve harmony. Osborne adds, “Here Paul enjoins us to imitate the Godhead and live a life deserving not only of God and Christ, whose children we are, but of the very calling we have received from them.”⁹⁶ The Apostle Paul provided an analogy of the human body to demonstrate how the many parts of the church should function to achieve unity. Paul writes, “The human body has many parts, but the many parts make up one whole body. So it is with the body of Christ. Some of us are Jews, some are Gentiles, some are slaves, and some are free. But we have all been baptized into one body by one Spirit, and we all share the same Spirit” (1 Cor. 12:12-13, NIV). Author Stephen Um expounds on this verse, saying,

Paul uses the body metaphor to build his case for the beauty of the church. “Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it.” The church does not function as a collection of separate individuals. The church does not even function like a democracy.

⁹⁴ Fred Sanders, *The Triune God* (Grand Rapids, MI: HarperCollins Christian Publishing, 2016), 37.

⁹⁵ Hughes, *Ephesians*, 109.

⁹⁶ Grant R. Osborne, *Ephesians Verse by Verse* (Oak Harbor, state: Lexham Press, 2017), 76.

There is never a 51 percent to 49 percent victory in the church. It does not split up along party lines. It is far more vitally connected than that. The church functions as a body.⁹⁷

The local church must reflect the unity of the triune God and work in harmony to achieve living out the gospel. On this, the Apostle Paul says, “I appeal to you, dear brothers and sisters, by the authority of our Lord Jesus Christ, to live in harmony with each other. Let there be no divisions in the church. Rather, be of one mind, united in thought and purpose” (1 Cor. 1:10, NIV). Um takes a deep look into the substance of Paul’s unity plea to the Corinthian church due to the gospel they received. Um writes,

The upside-down content of the gospel is supposed to shape their mental framework, their “mind,” and their worldview. And out of that mental framework they are to arrive at judgments and opinions that are in line with the truth of the gospel. So not only is the tone of Paul’s appeal attractive, but so is the substance. Paul lays out a path toward unity: agreement; mended relationships; and intentional, harmonious life together.⁹⁸

To be sure, unity in the church is necessary to stand firm during pursuits that may seek to dismantle the church.

Growing the Church

Jesus expected His church to grow throughout the church age. His expectation was evident when He said, “Now I say to you that you are Peter (which means ‘rock’), and upon this rock I will build my church, and all the powers of hell will not conquer it” (Matt. 16:18, NIV). According to Matthew Henry, “This assures us that the enemies of the church shall not gain their point. While the world stands, Christ will have a church in it, in which his truths and ordinances shall be owned and kept up, in spite of all the opposition of the powers of darkness; They shall

⁹⁷ Stephen T. Um, *1 Corinthians: The Word of the Cross* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2015), 23.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 2.

not prevail against it, Ps. 129:1, 2.”⁹⁹ While many may believe church growth is about increasing in number, Jesus made it clear that His church would grow to triumph over any obstacle that sought its destruction. In his commentary on Ephesians, specifically chapter four, Hughes explains how Jesus intends to grow His church by gifting it with leadership saying,

In verses 7–16 Paul explains how God grows a church through its living out the theological fact of its spiritual unity. The passage gives us the keys to church growth, not in numbers, but in the pure sense of what develops the members of the Body of Christ. The first element introduced is that of spiritual endowments in general and gifted leadership in particular.¹⁰⁰

Church growth is about developing the church in a way that brings unity and maturity. The fivefold ministry gifts that Christ gave the church are integral in bringing about the church’s growth. Hughes says, “Those who stand in the stead of the foundational apostles and prophets as evangelists and pastor/teachers must open wide the foundational teaching of the Old and New Testaments if there is to be true church growth.”¹⁰¹ The fivefold ministry cultivates a culture of growth that arises from everyone in the church working together as one unit. Authors Dave Earley and Rod Dempsey write:

In Ephesians 4, Paul gives perhaps the clearest explanation of the inner workings of the church, stating, “And He personally gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, for the training of the saints in the work of ministry, to build up the body of Christ” (Eph. 4:11–12). He continues in verse 16, “From Him the whole body, fitted and knit together by every supporting ligament, promotes the growth of the body for building up itself in love by the proper working of each individual part.”¹⁰²

⁹⁹ Matthew Henry, *The Gospel of Matthew - Complete Bible Commentary Verse by Verse* (Balneário Rincão, Brazil: Grupo Oxigênio Ltda-ME, 2016), 8j.

¹⁰⁰ Hughes, *Ephesians*, 114.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰² Dave Earley and Rod Dempsey, *Disciple Making Is: How to Live the Great Commission with Passion and Confidence*. (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2013), 5u.

In other words, the body of Christ grows as a result of all members working collectively towards the same goal. To say it negatively, church growth is thwarted if parts of the body of Christ, the church, are not working jointly to reach the goal of unity and maturity in Christ. Author James Thompson writes,

The gifts are not those of 1 Corinthians but those that involve proclamation: “some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers” (4:11). The ministries have a role in building the church (i.e., in *oikodomē*) as they equip the whole church for service. The ultimate goal of the church is to measure up to Christ. The church will reach this goal when believers arrive at the unity of the faith (4:13).¹⁰³

Method of Growth: Discipleship

The great Creator of heaven and earth used that same creativity with His method of growing the church, known as discipleship. Greg Ogden says, “A disciple is one who responds in faith and obedience to the gracious call to follow Jesus Christ. Being a disciple is a lifelong process of dying to self while allowing Jesus Christ to come alive in us.”¹⁰⁴ Although Jesus left the earth in physical form, He sent back the comforting Holy Spirit to dwell believers, ultimately making them disciples. Jesus said to His disciples, “But in fact, it is best for you that I go away, because if I don’t, the Advocate won’t come. If I do go away, then I will send him to you” (John 16:7, NIV). Brooks St. Clair Morton says, “Jesus calls His church into creative ministry. Standing on a mountain as Yahweh the Son, the New Moses, the resurrected and glorified Messiah with full heavenly and earthy authority sends His assembly of disciples to accomplish the task of making disciples.”¹⁰⁵ Jesus encouraged His disciples for the important work they had

¹⁰³ James W. Thompson, *The Church According to Paul: Rediscovering the Community Conformed to Christ* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2014), 211.

¹⁰⁴ Greg Ogden, *Discipleship Essentials: A Guide to Building Your Life in Christ* (Westmont, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2007), 24.

¹⁰⁵ Brooks St. Clair Morton, *The Great CoMission: Making Sense of Making Disciples* (Lanham, MD: UPA, 2012), 31.

before them in establishing the church. After His sermon on the mount teaching (Matt. 5:1-11), Jesus inspired His disciples by calling them the “light of the world,” saying, “You are the light of the world—like a city on a hilltop that cannot be hidden” (Matt. 5:14, NIV). Morton describes how Jesus’ disciples will carry on the redemptive work of ushering in the church.

When we read, therefore, that Jesus calls His disciples (the Church in the making) the “light of the world”, he has identified them as the purposed people and place who will continue his ongoing redemptive mission in His presence to those trapped in the fallen indicative— souls remaining under the guilt, power and presence of sin. When we read, therefore, in Matthew 28:19 “Go” or “As you go, make disciples,” we understand that the story has been handed over in divinely restored authority for our new purpose. God’s initiative has become our indicative.¹⁰⁶

Discipleship is a continuous work that Jesus implemented to grow His church: disciples make disciples. Charles Davis writes, “Every disciple has the capacity to help another disciple in the journey of following and obeying Jesus. Whether it happens while sharing the journey and talking, or in a formal confirmation class, every lesson someone learns can be passed on to someone else.”¹⁰⁷ Making disciples is essential work that leads to spreading the gospel of Jesus Christ throughout the earth. Jesus told His disciples, “I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age” (Matt. 28:18-20, NIV). Jon Nielson says, “When Jesus commissioned the disciples to ‘make disciples of all nations’ and to ‘observe all that [he had] commanded’ (28:19– 20), he was speaking both to them and to all church generations that were to follow (2 Tim. 2:2).”¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁶ Morton, *The Great CoMission*, 42.

¹⁰⁷ Charles A. Davis, *Making Disciples Across Cultures: Missional Principles for a Diverse World* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2015), 125.

¹⁰⁸ Jon Nielson, *Matthew: Making Disciples for the Nations*, vol 1 (Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R Publishing, 2020), 11.

Disciples embody the fivefold ministry by baptizing, teaching, and evangelizing as they care for the salvation of others while growing the church. Michael Green says, “The Great Commission includes the baptism and careful discipling of new believers. Matthew is not satisfied, Jesus is not satisfied, with any hasty profession of faith, any perfunctory baptism. The apostles are called not to evoke decisions but to make disciples. And that is an altogether tougher assignment.”¹⁰⁹ No matter the gifting in the fivefold ministry, making disciples is the primary work. Earley and Dempsey write, “Even as Paul was busy fulfilling his calling as an apostle to the Gentiles, he also fulfilled the Great Commission by making disciples. He took what the Lord had deposited into him and committed it to faithful men who in turn taught others also.”¹¹⁰

No More Apostles and Prophets Theory

The fivefold ministry concept is often debated in religious circles, especially when it pertains to the offices of the apostles and prophets. Author Jason Allen states, “In the main, the church has long understood the offices of apostle and prophet as reserved for the first century, ceasing to exist with the death of the apostles and the completion of the New Testament.”¹¹¹ However, the Scripture is clear that all five roles will be in place until the equipping of the saints is complete, and that work continues in the church today. The Bible says,

So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ (Eph. 4:11-13, NIV).

¹⁰⁹ Michael E. Green, *The Message of Matthew: The Kingdom of Heaven* (Westmont, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2020), 333.

¹¹⁰ Earley and Dempsey, *Disciple Making Is*, 7x.

¹¹¹ Jason K. Allen, *Discerning Your Call to Ministry: How to Know for Sure and What to Do about It* (Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 2016), 15.

John Eckhardt says, “It has never been the will of God for this office to be vacant. This is true concerning every office within the fivefold ministry of Ephesians 4:11.”¹¹² The equipping of the church is not complete, and these roles are still needed and much alive today, preparing people for works of service. The confusion comes from an incorrect understanding of Ephesians 2:20, which says that God’s house, the church, is “built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone” (NIV). It is thought that since the apostles and prophets are the foundation, they are no longer needed in the church. While apostles today are not writing Scripture, they stand on the foundation of Scripture as they are sent out into the world to make disciples. Schreiner says, “The Scriptures constitute our sole and final authority, and thus the role of apostles and prophets played in the foundational period of the church is no longer needed. The Scriptures are our sole and final authority.”¹¹³ However, that same logic would have to be applied to the most essential part of the foundation, Jesus the cornerstone, and without Jesus, there is no church. According to Roberts, “The first two people-gifts in 4:11, apostles and prophets, served a foundational role in the earliest church. Yet according to verse 11, the people given by Christ to the church are not just these founders but also those who serve in the present time. All apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers are part of Christ’s gift.”¹¹⁴ Osborne further confirms, “It has often been argued that these two offices ceased in the first century and have since been replaced by the others in the list. There is no evidence for the cessation of these offices in the New Testament.”¹¹⁵

¹¹² John Eckhardt, *Moving in the Apostolic: How to Bring the Kingdom of Heaven to Earth* (Grand Rapids, MI: Chosen Books, 2017), 53.

¹¹³ Schreiner, *Spiritual Gifts*, 68.

¹¹⁴ Roberts, *Ephesians*, 133.

¹¹⁵ Osborne, *Ephesians Verse by Verse*, 86.

Authoritarian Theory

Another misconception surrounding the fivefold ministry is that those serving in these roles may assume a higher authority, often attributed to the early prophets and apostles whom God spoke to directly or those who walked with Jesus. However, Green states, “While the model is not without its critics who suggest that—in the wrong hands—it breeds authoritarianism, many pastors who have implemented it have charted dramatic growth in their churches.”¹¹⁶ The fivefold ministry that Jesus gifted the church is not about laws but about serving in a way that provides adequate coverage for the needs of the people. Roberts provides some clarity to this misunderstanding by saying, “In Ephesians 4:11, the gifts are not abilities or empowerments but rather people serving in certain roles: ‘So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers.’”¹¹⁷

Unity Gospel House of Prayer will not implement the fivefold ministry to bring people under subjection but assist them in their spiritual journey by building up the church as Jesus instructed. Proper research on the fivefold ministry as it relates to the New Testament church under grace and truth will allow this ministry to contribute to the successful unification and maturing of the church. The participants in this study will be voluntary and asked to provide open, honest responses to all surveys to bring about the desired change in the ministry. The purpose of Unity agreeing to this action research is to develop a solution that will meet the needs of the church set forth by Jesus. According to Ernest Stringer, “An action research project can have these organizational or academic outcomes, and also provide the basis for rich and profound theorizing and basic knowledge production, but its primary purpose is as a practical

¹¹⁶ Green, *Understanding the Fivefold Ministry*, 14.

¹¹⁷ Roberts, *Ephesians*, 133.

tool for developing solutions to problems experienced by stakeholders in the context.”¹¹⁸ Further, the participants will have the opportunity to reflect on real change in the ministry as they assist in advancing it to higher theological stages.

Conclusion of Theological Foundations

Biblical exposition of the fivefold ministry and how these gifts work together to grow the church and conform believers to the image of Christ is made clear in Scripture. The Apostle Paul, with the help of the Holy Spirit, left no question of the purpose, work, timeframe, and ultimate goal of the fivefold ministry gifts that Jesus gave the church. The Apostle Paul says,

Now these are the gifts Christ gave to the church: the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, and the pastors and teachers. Their responsibility is to equip God’s people to do his work and build up the church, the body of Christ. This will continue until we all come to such unity in our faith and knowledge of God’s Son that we will be mature in the Lord, measuring up to the full and complete standard of Christ (Eph. 4:11-13, NLT).

The gifts Jesus has provided the church will not only bring unbelievers to Christ but create a pathway to discipleship and leadership in the church for sustained growth, unity, and conformity to the image of Christ. Michael Frost and Alan Hirsch write, “Only when all five functions of leadership are equally balanced do we have a leadership team worthy of Paul’s vision in Ephesians.”¹¹⁹ This theological framework provides this research with the necessary foundation of the ministry put in place by Jesus Christ for the local church, known as the fivefold ministry. Frost and Hirsch say, “Furthermore, this teaching is found in Ephesians, which is Paul’s primary tract on the nature of the church itself and the nature of the ministry of the church. Ephesians and

¹¹⁸ Ernest T. Stringer, *Action Research*, 4th ed., (Los Angeles, CA: Sage Publications, 2014), 9.

¹¹⁹ Michael Frost and Alan Hirsch, *The Shaping of Things to Come: Innovation and Mission for the 21st-Century* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2013), 72.

its teaching forms part of Paul's fundamental ecclesiology, and as such, ought to be read as a fundamental description, even a prescription, of the church in all ages."¹²⁰

Theoretical Foundations

To build this DMIN study, several theoretical foundations were available and researched. A combination of the Bible and modern-day church modeling was considered to develop this theological training intervention for Unity Gospel House of Prayer. The Bible and current church modeling concepts provide several examples of the various methods used and implemented to help build up the church as Jesus instructed and gave gifts for that purpose. Careful analysis of these various methods provided support for the design intervention sessions that will be used for this action research study.

Equipping Believers

The Bible provides several Scriptures that demonstrate God is concerned with equipping believers to stand firm when faced with adversity and carry out His Word. All Scriptures in the New Testament regarding "equipping" demonstrate that this work is not done with human standards and that it can only be accomplished with God. God's Holy Spirit is the true "equipper" of men to carry out the vital work of spreading the gospel to a dark world. Hebrews 13:20-21 clarifies this saying, "Now may the God of peace, who through the blood of the eternal covenant brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, equip you with everything good for doing his will, and may he work in us what is pleasing to him, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen" (NLT). Peterson writes, "God may also

¹²⁰ Ibid., 154.

equip us to do his will through the support and challenge of fellow believers (3:12–14; 10:24–25; 12:15–16), by taking us forward to maturity (5:11–6:3) and by enabling us to benefit from his fatherly discipline (12:1–13).”¹²¹ In his final charge to his young protégé Timothy, the Apostle Paul warned him to stay true to the teachings he received. He went on to say, “All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work” (2 Tim. 3:16-17, NIV). Charles Swindoll says,

Only God-breathed words possess His life. Furthermore, because ‘God is Light, and in Him there is no darkness at all’ (1 Jn. 1:5), He cannot lie. Therefore, any word given by Him through inspiration must be true. God superintended the transfer of His thoughts to human writers, so that they composed and recorded His Word without error.¹²²

The Apostle Paul is confirming to Timothy that the Word of God is sufficient for all things related to the church, and he should rely on the theological teachings he has received to continue his work in the church.

The Scripture that this research is based on solidifies that Jesus gave certain gifts to the church for the specific purpose of “equipping.” Paul writes, “So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ” (Eph. 4:11-13, NIV).

¹²¹ David G. Peterson, *Hebrews: An Introduction and Commentary* (Westmont, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2020), 330.

¹²² Charles R. Swindoll, *Insights on 1 and 2 Timothy, Titus* (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2014), 241.

Church Modelling

Author Sue Mallory describes a movement to equip the Brentwood Presbyterian Church in Los Angeles, CA. This movement entails how the church works together, ministers and members, with the shared responsibility of equipping the church:

The pastoral staff, the minister of music, and many other church members would be called on to help launch the whole church into the vision of living as an equipping body of believers. We were modeling it as we preached it. In fact, the more we planned, the wider the participating group grew to become. I was discovering that the more people became involved in shaping and bringing events, projects, and programs into the life of the church, the more they became committed to helping them succeed.¹²³

Brentwood's shared ministry model focuses not on collecting more people in the church but on building them up to release them back into the world to continue the work.¹²⁴ Mallory communicates that other equipping churches are also sharing the responsibility and not leaving the job to one person or pastor. Mallory states,

The senior pastors and the staff members at Ginghamburg Church, Church of the Resurrection, and Windsor Village Church are all equipping heroes. They are literally talking the talk and walking the walk of equipping ministry. They are working through the day-by-day trials and tribulations that come even when they know they're doing what is right and good. They are fighting the good fight, keeping the faith, and equipping others to carry on!¹²⁵

The attractional church model was reviewed to understand if the methods used in this type of church could be gleaned for this action research. David Angus Bell says, "Attractional refers to a church's model of doing ministry and approach to mission that is centered on drawing people into the church's building, programs, meetings, and services in order to best encounter and connect with God and Christian community."¹²⁶ This model focuses on the unchurched and

¹²³ Sue Mallory, *The Equipping Church: Serving Together to Transform Lives* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2001), 81.

¹²⁴ Ibid., 9.

¹²⁵ Ibid., 158.

¹²⁶ David Angus Bell, "The Missional Megachurch Essential Elements That Make an Attractional Megachurch Missional to Its Core" (PhD diss., Biblical Theological Seminary, 2011), 4.

considers them customers they believe should receive special treatment and cater to their needs. Author Andy Stanley says, “We genuinely want to be a network of churches that unchurched people find irresistible. We don’t grade ourselves on size. We grade ourselves on how attractive we are to our target audience.”¹²⁷ The attractional church’s strategy is to have programs that will draw people into the church. Stanley continues, “In our search for common ground with unchurched people, we’ve discovered that, like us, they are consumers. So we leverage their consumer instincts.”¹²⁸ According to author J. D. Greear, evangelism may be considered an attractional method of bringing others to Christ. Greear says,

A great deal of the evangelism we see in the Bible could very easily be called “attractional.” God told Israel they were to be like a “city set on a hill,” a shining light the Gentiles would come toward (Ex. 19:5–6). As Gentile nations saw God’s glory radiating from his people, they would be attracted to Jerusalem to worship (Isa. 2:2).¹²⁹

Another church model considered in this action research is the missional church. Hirsch states, “Missional church requires a missional ministry and leadership system that can initiate, generate, develop, and sustain movements.”¹³⁰ The missional type of church is greatly concerned with the Great Commission given by Jesus to “go and make disciples of all the nations” (Matt. 28:19, NIV). According to author Matthew Sliger, “Mission begins with God; yet his mission demands our participation. The missional God inculcates this sending nature into his church.”¹³¹ Unlike the attractional model, the missional model strives to be biblically accurate and not

¹²⁷ Andy Stanley, *Deep & Wide: Creating Churches Unchurched People Love to Attend* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2012), 15.

¹²⁸ Ibid., 16.

¹²⁹ J. D. Greear, *Gaining by Losing: Why the Future Belongs to Churches That Send* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2015), 59.

¹³⁰ Alan Hirsch, *The Forgotten Ways: Reactivating Apostolic Movements* (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2016), 249.

¹³¹ Joseph Matthew Sliger, “Attractional Church: The Impact of the Inner Life of a Local Church on Corporate Mission in North America” (PhD diss., Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2017), 12.

consumer-focused. While the attractional model works to look attractive to draw unsaved people into the church, the missional model builds up its members and ministers to go out into the world, gathering the unsaved and demonstrating true worship before them. Jared Wilson notes, “What the Bible seems to express is that unbelievers in the service are best served not by having their tastes catered to but by witnessing the gathered church exalting God in the receiving of Christ-centered teaching, the singing of God-centered songs, and the observing of the sacraments.”¹³² The missional church model is greatly concerned with the Great Commission given by Jesus to go out and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Matt. 28:19).

Apostolic Church Planting

Church planting is demonstrated in the Bible as Paul and other apostles spread the gospel and set up churches in various areas. Hirsch says, “At its core, the apostolic task is about the expansion of Christianity both physically in the form of pioneering missionary effort and church planting and theologically through integration of apostolic doctrine into the life of individual Christians and the communities they are a part of.”¹³³ The Apostle Paul established the church planting mission which is still a vibrant movement today. Author J. D. Payne writes, “Biblical church planting is evangelism that results in new churches. Another way to consider this concept is that it is evangelism that results in new disciples, who then gather together and self-identify as the local expression of the universal body of Christ.”¹³⁴ On this, Rich Kao writes,

¹³² Jared C. Wilson, *The Prodigal Church: A Gentle Manifesto Against the Status Quo* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2015), 65.

¹³³ Hirsch, *The Forgotten Ways*, 236.

¹³⁴ J. D. Payne, *Apostolic Church Planting: Birthing New Churches from New Believers* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2015), 18.

When Jesus said, “I will build my church and the gates of hell will not prevail” (Matt. 16:18), Paul took that mandate to heart and ran with it with all his might— through imprisonments, beatings, lashings, dangers, hardships, hunger, and more (1 Cor. 11:23–27). Jesus provided the foundation upon which to plant churches, and Paul became its premier practitioner.¹³⁵

The Apostle Paul and those who worked with him to plant churches appointed leaders in every church they established; this included other members of the fivefold ministry, such as pastors.

Payne says, “Paul and Barnabas appointed elders for them in each church and, with prayer and fasting, committed them to the Lord, in whom they had put their trust” (Acts 14:23). Payne continues, “The pastors for these churches came from the new disciples that made up the newly planted churches.”¹³⁶ He also writes,

One of the most important developments in the life of a new church is the appointment of its first pastors. According to Paul, these leaders are a gift to the church for the equipping of the saints: And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes.¹³⁷

The Apostle Paul laid the foundation for church planting, and this apostolic function is still thriving worldwide. Rodney Harrison, Tom Cheyney, and Don Overstreet provide an example of a modern apostolic movement saying,

It is not surprising that during the eighteenth century the Sandy Creek Association went from one to forty-two congregations in seventeen years. Two centuries later the California Southern Baptist Convention grew from one to fifty-six congregations between 1936 and 1942. Today, believers in China are starting hundreds of new churches each week, providing evidence that the apostolic work of the missionaries sent out by the churches continues.¹³⁸

¹³⁵ Rich Kao, *Caring Deeply about Church Planting: Twelve Keys from the Life of Jesus* (Milton, state: Taylor & Francis Group, 2020), 6.

¹³⁶ Payne, *Apostolic Church Planting*, 42.

¹³⁷ Ibid., 108.

¹³⁸ Rodney Harrison, Tom Cheyney, and Don Overstreet, *Spin-Off Churches* (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2008), 24.

Church planting is still flourishing today because of the fivefold ministry gifts that Jesus gave the church. Harrison, Cheney, and Overstreet say, “Just as the ongoing apostolic work of our Lord continues to this day, the work accomplished by the power of the gospel proclaimed through apostles, prophets, evangelists and pastor-teachers is an ongoing activity of the Spirit of God through his chosen human instruments who were sent to equip the saints.”¹³⁹ On this, Hirsch provides another model of current-day apostolic movement:

Another great example of an apostolic movement is found in NorthWood Church in Keller, Texas. With over two thousand members, NorthWood is a large church that has birthed almost 180 churches. From the beginning, Northwood has been outwardly focused, with a clear mission to impact the world both locally and globally. As a result, more than eight hundred church planting leaders have been trained, coached, or mentored through NorthWood’s Church Multiplication Center. There are clusters of the churches that NorthWood has started in nineteen cities throughout the United States. Sixty-two new churches were planted in the network in 2005. Bob Roberts is the exceptional leader of this movement and has written about the model in his book *Transformation. Real apostolic stuff!*¹⁴⁰

Conclusion of Theoretical Foundations

This researcher considered many theoretical foundations to assist in developing a sound theological training program at Unity Gospel House of Prayer. The Bible provided examples of how the Apostle Paul equipped others in the ministry to continue building it up as Christ intended. Several church models were considered that have implemented strategies to grow the church and bring the unsaved to Christ. The Brentwood church has a shared model that includes the entire church, ministers, and members to equip others. The attractional model has attractive programs that draw the unsaved to church. Lastly, the missional model equips its ministers to go out and gather the unsaved, bringing them into the church.

¹³⁹ Harrison, Cheney, and Overstreet, *Spin-off Churches*, 24.

¹⁴⁰ Hirsch, *The Forgotten Ways*, 248.

This action research will take into consideration a mixture of all theoretical foundations. This researcher recognizes that theological training is vital to be effective in equipping, modeling, and planting churches. Dockery provides insight into how theological education is necessary for the church's foundation to expand and mature:

Theological education is an effort to equip ministers and church leaders for the building up of the church (Eph 4:13–16). Equipping involves moving believers toward the unity of the faith and a maturity of the faith that has the full knowledge of God's Son. The kind of maturity described in Ephesians 4 needs a carefully articulated theological foundation that will lead the church away from instability and gullibility toward wisdom, trust, and discernment.¹⁴¹

This action research will differ from others because it will focus on implementing the fivefold ministry from the perspective of grace and truth ushered in by Jesus in the New Testament to equip the church. This stance will help alleviate the noise of critics, as discussed above, that object to the fivefold ministry in the church today that may be concerned about issues outside of this context. The goal of this work is to add to the conversation around the fivefold ministry as the search for scholarly works on this topic appears to be minimal. Ultimately, this action research will correspond to Scripture and develop a program with Jesus's intentions in mind of unifying and maturing the church until He returns.

¹⁴¹ Dockery, *Theology, Church, and Ministry*, xxvii.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

This thesis project aims to address the view that theological education is unnecessary in the church and to mitigate the lack of theological knowledge to support the ministry's core doctrines. Based on the problem identified in chapter one, this thesis project will explore and compare the benefits of having theological training to support Unity Gospel House of Prayer's fivefold ministry. This chapter will provide details of the design this researcher will use for the intervention at Unity. The intervention plans will include how participants will be recruited, the location of the intervention, the biblical training sessions, the timeline and schedule of the program, and the responses and feedback from the participants.

Intervention Design

The intervention strategy for this research method is action research. Action research is the best strategy to make the corrective change for Unity Gospel House of Prayer's need for a theological training program. Stringer says,

Action research enacts localized, pragmatic approaches, investigating particular issues and problems in particular sites at particular moments in lives of interacting individuals and groups. Its purpose is to provide participants with new understandings of an issue they have defined as significant and the means for taking corrective action.¹⁴²

This research aims to address the need for theological training in each of the core areas foundational to Unity Gospel House of Prayer: fivefold ministry, prayer, baptism, preaching, and counseling. This action research goes beyond providing the voluntary participants of this research with sound theological doctrine. Instead, this program will support the church's fivefold ministry as a whole as it continues to educate current and future ministers to build up and edify the church as Jesus intended before He returns.

¹⁴² Stringer, *Action Research*, 60.

Method

As previously stated, this researcher used the action research method for the intervention plan for Unity Gospel House of Prayer. This researcher seeks to design a plan for all participants involved to reach a solution that makes sense to them all. Stringer says, “The task of the action researcher, therefore, is to develop a context in which individuals and groups with divergent perceptions and interpretations can formulate a construction of their situation that makes sense to them all—a joint construction.”¹⁴³ This action research will not only include the views of the researcher but the views of the participants as well, so everyone involved will benefit. To create a theological program that supports the church as a whole, it is vital that the researcher gathers data from the divergent group of participants and be careful not to incorporate her own views implicitly. When developing materials such as surveys, questionnaires, and lesson plans for this intervention, this researcher needs to put aside personal perspectives, biases, and presuppositions that may taint or lead to desired responses and feedback from the participants.¹⁴⁴ Therefore, this action research will tailor the materials for each session that will support the church as a whole while gleaning data from all perspectives. The goal of this action research is to create positive change in the behaviors of those working in ministry, empowering them to stand on the Word of God as they build up the church to maturity. This plan will change the perspective of the ministerial staff that theological education is not necessary to support ministerial work in the church. Scriptural evidence will be provided to support the proposed change to have theological education in the church. The intervention will further offer theological training for each of the gifts within the fivefold ministry and prayer, baptism, counseling, and preaching, allowing each

¹⁴³ Stringer, *Action Research*, 73.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid., 101.

minister to understand their unique gifting. This intervention plan will enable much-needed change within the church regarding the education of the ministerial staff. These training sessions will be part of the satisfaction requirements for those in ministry to receive a minister's license and be able to work in the official capacity of these giftings as Christ purposed.

Project Conceptualization

Due to the church's busy schedule, this action research project will take place on Saturday, July 30, 2022, for a duration of six and a half hours in a workshop format. The training workshop will focus on each central theme of this thesis: fivefold ministry, prayer, baptism, counseling, preaching, and a focus group (see Appendix E) at the end. Each session was approximately one hour, starting at 10:00 am, with a thirty-minute lunch break. A benefit of having a one-day workshop is that none of the participants left and all remained in attendance for the duration. The risk of having the training sessions over several weeks or months would be that participants do not return regularly or not at all after the first session. The intervention plan was a combination of pre-course surveys, training sessions, focus groups, and post-course surveys to weigh the impact of the overall training workshop. Surveys were conducted during the workshop after each session to gauge the impact of the training.

The curriculum for these sessions comprised theological training in each of the five central areas of Unity Gospel House of Prayer: the fivefold ministry, prayer, baptism, counseling, and preaching. Each theme was taught and discussed in one-hour increments during the Saturday workshop. The researcher provided a brief opening statement explaining the action research's objective, discussed the day's schedule, and allowed participants to sign consent forms. After the opening briefing, the researcher conducted the training for the first subject: the fivefold

ministry. At the end of the training, the researcher allowed time for the participants to take the survey on the fivefold ministry (see Appendix C); the survey took about five minutes. Once the surveys were complete, the researcher's assistants collected the completed surveys and sealed them in an envelope. The researcher then proceeded to teach the next session, following the same pattern for the training on prayer, baptism, counseling, and preaching. The hourly sessions included lectures, supporting biblical Scriptures, and demonstrations to help explain the theology behind each of the core concepts this intervention addresses. The researcher also incorporated apologetic strategies during the workshop sessions to illustrate how the ministers can defend Christianity as they are engaging unbelievers and believers who are uncertain about Christian doctrines.

For the lecture part of the training sessions, the researcher used a large screen and projector to help demonstrate the teachings, using slide show presentations. The researcher created binders for each participant that included the presentation, all surveys, and pens for participants to complete surveys and write any additional comments or feedback they may want to write on the surveys. Considering the COVID-19 pandemic, participants were encouraged to wear masks, but were not required. The pastor of Unity Gospel House of Prayer provided the entire fourth floor of the church's multi-purpose facility known as the "OGHBYRG Place" for the Saturday workshop, allowing participants to social distance if desired.

The participants in this action research were provided with the researcher's contact information to reach her by email, phone, and text. Each participant was given the opportunity to provide feedback after the workshop anonymously via email, phone call, or text. Participants were also encouraged to write feedback at the bottom of the confidential surveys. Time was also

allotted for questions and feedback during the workshop for those participants who chose to speak openly.

Class Curriculum

The researcher created the class materials based on her study of Scripture and information researched in the literature review section of chapter two of this thesis. The researcher presented the information in a lecture format while allowing for questions throughout the presentation. Printed notes were provided to the participants in binders for each session presented during the workshop. The binders included the actual presentation, all surveys, and a pen for note-taking. The training sessions provided during the workshop, in the order presented, were as follows:

Training Session 1

The workshop began with an opening prayer, agenda, and a formal introduction by the researcher. The researcher gave a brief overview of the workshop's flow, explaining that a corresponding survey for each subject would be conducted after each training session. The first training was on the fivefold ministry. The information presented on the fivefold ministry began by providing the foundation Scripture Ephesians 4:11-13 and gleaning seven points or takeaways from this passage. These points covered who gave the giftings of the fivefold ministry (Jesus), the objective and purpose of the fivefold ministry, and the timeframe that this ministry will be in effect. The researcher then demonstrated with Scripture that Jesus embodied all giftings of the fivefold ministry. A detailed explanation of each office was rendered to the audience that included the characteristics and responsibilities of each. The researcher wrapped up this

enlightening session by revealing the outcome of the fivefold ministry as provided in Ephesians 4:14-16. The teacher explained what a successful fivefold ministry could accomplish and how it could thrive as Jesus intended. A summary of the session was given, and time was allotted for questions. The session was so informative that no one had questions but expressed that the information was very eye-opening. Those who signed consent forms had an opportunity to take the survey (see Appendix C) immediately following the training on the fivefold ministry. The researcher asked the participants to respond to each of the five questions by indicating agree or not agree. The survey took approximately five minutes to complete. Once all surveys were complete, the participants were asked to pass them face down to the end of the row, and the researcher's volunteer assistants collected them.

Training Session 2

The second session on baptism started immediately after all surveys were completed and collected from the first session. The researcher explained seven baptisms in the Bible: baptism into Moses, John the Baptist's baptism, Jesus' baptism, baptism of the cross, fire baptism, baptism of the Holy Spirit, and the baptism of believers. Each of the seven baptism events was taught in detail with scriptural support. The literature review section of this thesis allowed the researcher to explain the theology behind baptism, including what it means and why it is done today. The researcher noticed that the audience was captivated; many mentioned they had never understood baptism and the meaning behind it. This session was very effective in helping believers understand baptism's purpose and the message it relays to God. The researcher summarized the seven baptisms and the pursuit of being baptized as believers. Once all

discussion was complete, the researcher asked the participants to complete the survey on baptism.

Training Session 3

Once all surveys on baptism were completed and collected, the researcher began the next topic on counseling. The researcher described biblical counseling, Christian counseling, and secular counseling. The literature review section on counseling from chapter two helped the researcher to demonstrate the need for Christian and biblical counseling in the church. This session included several Scriptures revealing how the Word of God is beneficial when counseling others who are enduring difficult situations. The researcher was further able to demonstrate that theological training is vital for the counselor to have to advise successfully. Once the researcher summarized the information and the purpose of counseling in the church, she opened up for questions and comments. The most profound statement that struck the researcher and raised the most discussion is the belief that the church has given counseling away to the secular world and supported this view with the push in today's culture to see a therapist. Once all discussion was ended, the researcher asked the participants to complete the survey on counseling. After all completed surveys were collected, a thirty-minute break for lunch was given.

Training Session 4

The fourth session on prayer began immediately after lunch. The researcher explained the theology of prayer with the help of the literature review and Scripture. The researcher explained that prayers shaped by theology are meaningful, filled with the gospel, and Spirit-directed. The

researcher discussed several types of prayer: adoration, thanksgiving, confession, healing, intercession, and imprecation. The researcher also asked one of the church's prayer warriors to demonstrate a theology-rich prayer that embodied several types of prayer taught during the session. After the prayer demonstration, the researcher summarized the information presented and opened up for discussion and questions. The survey on prayer was conducted and collected after the discussion.

Training Session 5

The fifth session on preaching began immediately after the surveys were collected on prayer. The theological information presented on preaching was primarily derived from the literature review section of chapter two of this thesis. The researcher stressed that it is vital for the preacher to have a solid theological foundation in order to communicate God's Word effectively to the congregation. The presenter described several forms of preaching to the participants: topical, textual, narrative, expository, and hellfire. During this session, the researcher asked the church apostle to take five minutes to demonstrate topical preaching using the subject of defending the existence and role of the apostles in the church today. After the demonstration, the researcher continued explaining the purpose of preaching and the qualifications of a preacher. This fiery session ended with no questions, and the survey on preaching was conducted and collected.

Focus Group Session 6

The workshop's final session engaged the participants in a focus group. For this session, the attendees were divided into groups of five. The title of the focus group was "Bringing the

Seminary to Church” (see Appendix E). The focus group discussion was modeled after a SWOT analysis to understand the ministry's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. The researcher asked the pastor to facilitate the focus group session while she walked from group to group, observing the participants and taking notes on their responses to each question. The researcher gave the pastor pre-determined questions to ask the participants about the ministry and the topics covered in the workshop. The focus group was full of high-spirited conversation because many participants felt they were in a safe space to voice their opinions on how to improve ministry, specifically at Unity Gospel House of Prayer. The focus group could have easily continued longer than an hour, but the researcher noticed some participants yawning, and a couple left before the focus group started due to an appointment. Once the focus group portion of the class ended, the participants were asked to take a final survey on the overall workshop to assess how well the presenter delivered the information. Once the last surveys were completed and collected, the researcher gave final words, thanking the participants for their time and input.

Data Collection

The purpose of gathering data from participants is to ensure the researcher is not responding to the problem being addressed herself. Stringer says, “There is a real sense, however, that we seek a sense of objectivity as we gather data, as we need to ensure that information is gained directly from the participants and is not tainted by the perspectives, biases, or experiences of research facilitators.”¹⁴⁵ Data gathering consisted of conducting six surveys during the workshop: one for each session and a final assessment survey of the researcher. The surveys were short, with only five questions for the participants to respond to for each (see

¹⁴⁵ Stringer, *Action Research*, 100.

Appendix C). After the completion of each session, participants were asked to respond to a five-question survey by responding with agree or not agree.

All participants are gifted in one or more of the fivefold ministry offices or have received the “call” and have not taken steps to act on their gift. The participants chosen to be interviewed were asked to take the fivefold ministry test before the post-interview. Those participants who were not selected to be interviewed could take the fivefold ministry test as an option. The researcher explained that this test might help the participants ascertain additional strengths or gifts, confirm their current office, or identify their position in the ministry. The survey questions assumed that all participants were Christians, and each was to the five central themes of this action research: the fivefold ministry, prayer, baptism, preaching, and counseling. A copy of each survey is provided in Appendix C.

The surveys were included in each binder at the end of every section. For example, the survey for the fivefold ministry was placed immediately after the fivefold ministry section of the printed notes in the binder; the remaining topics followed this same pattern. All surveys had to be completed during the time allotted during the workshop, as they were collected and stored in a secure envelope and kept confidential. No personal data was captured on the paper surveys to maintain confidentiality. However, some participants wrote additional comments at the bottom of the survey.

Stringer states, “As people explore their lifeworlds together and work toward solutions to their common problems, new realities emerge that extend the processes of inquiry.”¹⁴⁶ There is no set timeframe for action research to come to an end. However, this researcher has deemed two months appropriate for this intervention as a reasonable trial period for evaluation to complete

¹⁴⁶ Stringer, *Action Research*, 207.

the pre-interviews, one-day workshop, and post-interviews. As this intervention is implemented in the ministry, the researcher will continue to assess the success of the plan long term. Continual observance of the theological program may result in changes in method and materials for future participants seeking theological training to support their fivefold ministry gift.

Tim Sensing says, “When you gather data, look for what people experienced: their reactions, behavior changes, and/or organizational impact, etc.”¹⁴⁷ This researcher logged entries in a reflective journal during the Saturday workshop detailing the participant’s reactions, emotions, and overall responsiveness to the materials being presented. The researcher will include details about how well the sessions went and if they were thought to be effective or not. A final satisfaction survey was given to the participants to capture their responses on the overall effectiveness of the intervention and how well they thought the sessions went. The researcher was able to capture qualitative data from everyone involved, analyze it, and quantify the results on a scale of one to ten, determining the effectiveness of the sessions. On a scale of one to ten, one is not effective at all, and ten is extremely effective. Demographic information will be gathered on the participant’s attendance, age, and education. The results will be discussed in chapter four of this thesis.

This researcher will use Sensing’s Insider and Researcher Angles as tools of observation during this action research for gathering data.¹⁴⁸ According to Sensing, the use of surveys, focus groups, and demographic data is considered to capture data from an Insider angle. The use of observation and taking notes is considered to capture data from a Researcher’s angle. A range of sources will be used in this intervention, such as surveys, focus groups, observation, and note-

¹⁴⁷ Tim Sensing, *Qualitative Research: A Multi-Methods Approach to Projects for Doctor of Ministry Theses* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2011), 71.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid., 179.

taking. According to Stringer, “The credibility of a study is enhanced when multiple sources of information are incorporated.”¹⁴⁹

Permissions

This researcher obtained approval from Liberty University’s Institutional Review Board (IRB) prior to attempting to implement the proposed project training intervention design. Liberty University’s Doctor of Ministry Program and Candidacy Handbook states that live research cannot begin until IRB approval is secured.¹⁵⁰ Further permission was obtained from the Senior Pastor and First Lady of Unity Gospel House of Prayer to move forward with this action research intervention program.

Promotion and Recruitment

Immediately after receiving approval from Liberty’s Institutional Review Board, this researcher submitted a letter to Pastor Marlon Lock requesting his permission to proceed with the action research within the church (see Appendix F). The pastor made a plea announcement during Sunday morning and Tuesday evening services for interested participants to contact the researcher directly for more information on the overall project (see Appendix G). The announcement was made for an entire month, and a flyer (see Appendix G) was displayed on the church’s bulletin board in the foyer. Voluntary participants were asked to sign consent forms (see Appendix B) and provided details on the six and half hour Saturday workshop.

¹⁴⁹ Stringer, *Action Research*, 92.

¹⁵⁰ John W. Rawlings School of Divinity: *Doctor of Ministry Program and Candidacy Handbook* (Lynchburg, VA: Liberty University), 18.

Project Participants

For this action research, participants were required to be eighteen years of age or older and may or may not be active in the fivefold ministry but feel the call to serve in some capacity in the church. Each participant must be a member of Unity Gospel House of Prayer. Those who hold titles as Elders in the church were also welcome to participate in this action research. This intervention program only used willing participants who signed a consent form demonstrating their willing participation in this intervention. However, if someone chose to drop out of this program, it was explained that they were able to do so. According to Sensing, “If someone chooses not to participate, accept amiably. No one who chooses not to engage in your research should be pressured or treated unkindly. Similarly, if a participant chooses to pull out of your project, even in the middle of an interview, remember, he is within his rights to do so.”¹⁵¹ If participants drop from the intervention program, they will still be reported in the overall demographics and total count of participants who agreed to participate. The participant statistics will be updated to reflect how many participants started out in the program and how many completed it. The researcher will seek to meet with the person who drops the program to try and understand the reason for them dropping out to include in the final evaluation should they approve.

The researcher is a licensed minister gifted as a teacher in the fivefold ministry serving under Pastor Marlon Lock at Unity Gospel House of Prayer. The researcher is also a Sunday School teacher for adults and teenagers. The researcher has also conducted Bible studies and preached sermons at the church.

¹⁵¹ Sensing, *Qualitative Research*, 35.

Implementation of the Intervention Design

This section will provide details on the overall implementation of the intervention, including a description of the training environment, the workshop sessions, and the data-gathering methods.

Training Environment

The pastor provided the fourth floor of the church's multi-purpose building for the Saturday workshop. The area has a total square footage of 3,012 sq. ft. and was fully equipped with a restroom and plenty of room for seating. The space was well-lit, and the climate was controlled for a comfortable setting. Some participants complained of being either too hot or too cold, and the temperature had to be adjusted a few times throughout the day. The area was also equipped with a large projector and screen for presenting. The researcher brought her personal laptop and connected it to the church's projector system on which the Microsoft PowerPoint™ presentation was projected on the large pulldown screen. The church provided fifty chairs for the workshop and three tables for food and drinks provided by the researcher. The researcher and a few volunteers showed up early to set up the space for the day's activities. The chairs were arranged in front of the screen and spaced so that no one was sitting too close together. The food and beverage tables were behind the participants to ensure they were not a distraction from the presentation. The participants thought the layout of the room was conducive to learning. The arrangement ensured there would be no distractions as all attendees faced the large projector screen with nothing to distract them in their peripheral view. The facilitator also stood in front of the participants while conducting the training. The workshop layout is shown in Figure 3.1.

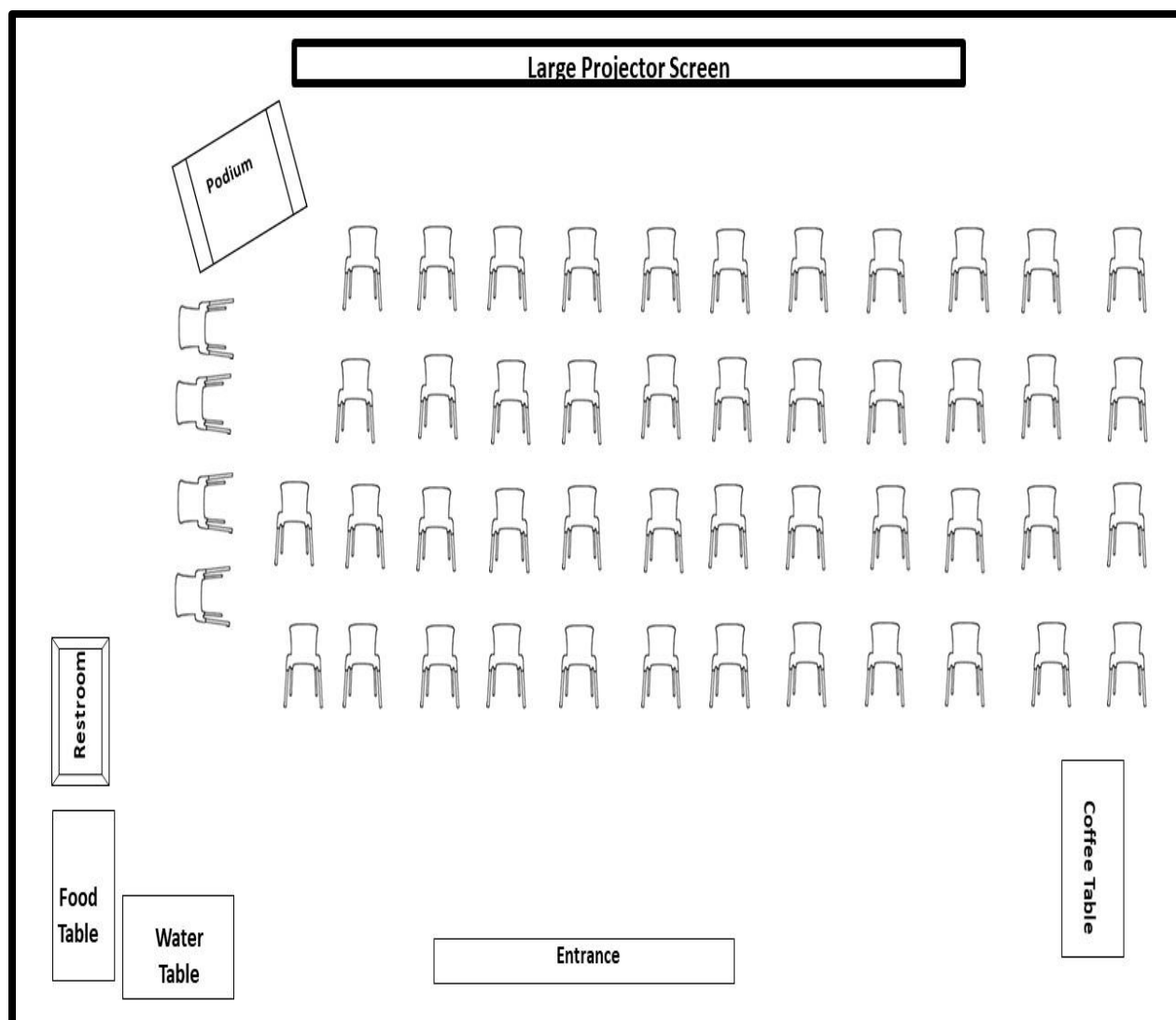


Figure 3.1. Layout of workshop space.

The researcher decided to provide snacks, lunch, and beverages to sustain the participants throughout the six and half hour workshop. The researcher thought it necessary to provide for the needs of the attendees so that they would not grow restless or leave due to hunger. Because the seminar started at 10:00 am, the researcher considered that many might need food upon arrival or a snack before lunch. An assortment of pastries, coffee, and water was provided to hold the participants over until lunchtime, which included subs and chips. The food and beverage costs are outlined in the following Table 3.1.

Table 3.1. Food and Beverage Costs.

Food	QTY	Cost	Total Cost
Member's Mark Breakfast Tray, Six Flavor Assortments	2	\$ 20.98	\$ 41.96
Costco box of individual bags of variety chips	2	\$ 15.99	\$ 31.98
Pretty Subs Made with Love Catering for 75 people	1	\$ 150.00	\$ 150.00
Beverages			
Case of water	2	\$ 3.99	\$ 7.98
Einstein Bagel Coffee for the Group Medium Roast	1	\$ 17.99	\$ 17.99
Einstein Bagel Coffee for the Group Dark Roast	1	\$ 17.99	\$ 17.99
Total Cost of Food and Beverage			\$ 267.90

The researcher noticed several participants helping themselves to pastries and beverages throughout the morning. Several participants commented that having food and drinks at the workshop made it feel warm, welcoming, and like they were attending a paid professional conference or seminar.

Participant Consent

Prior to the Saturday workshop, fifteen ministers approached the researcher interested in participating in the project. Of these fifteen ministers, ten were selected to participate in the pre-interview and post-interview process because the other five could not attend the one-day workshop. The ten chosen ministers were given consent forms to sign at the beginning of each interview. The researcher explained the consent to participate forms and that it was necessary for them to be signed before the interview could begin.

Forty-five people attended the training on the day of the seminar, including the ten selected for the pre-interviews. There was great interest in the workshop, and the pastor estimated that at least fifty would show up. During the introduction, the researcher explained the

consent forms in the front pocket of each binder placed on the seats. The researcher explained that those who wished to participate in the study and provide feedback on the sessions should sign the voluntary consent form. The researcher gave the attendees time to review and sign the consent forms. In addition to the ten already interviewed, twenty people signed the documents, which were collected immediately before the first session began, for a total of thirty participants. The researcher stated that those who did not sign the consent form were welcome to stay during the training but would not be asked to participate in the surveys and focus group sessions.

Sensing's Observation from Angles

As previously stated, this researcher used Sensing's Insider and Researcher Angles as tools of observation during this action research for gathering data.¹⁵² Sensing suggests observing from three angles: Insider, Outsider, and Researcher.¹⁵³ However, this researcher did not use an Outsider Angle as no other independent scholars were accessible at the time of the workshop to observe from this viewpoint. Not incorporating the Outsider angle view did not harm the gathering data because Sensing says, "Finally, your expertise as the minister, researcher, and active participant will be the filter of all the data."¹⁵⁴ The Insider Angle allowed the researcher to observe the participants during the pre and post-interviews and the surveys. The Researcher Angle allowed the researcher to observe by taking notes and observing the participants during the workshop sessions. According to Sensing, the use of surveys, focus groups, and demographic

¹⁵² Sensing, *Qualitative Research*, 179.

¹⁵³ Ibid., 74.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid., 75.

data is considered to capture data from an Insider angle. The use of observation and taking notes is considered to capture data from a Researcher's angle.¹⁵⁵

Insider Angles - Interviews

Again, observing from an Insider Angle perspective involves viewing pre-interviews, surveys, and post-interviews. Ten interviews were conducted one-on-one and provided significant evidence and support to evaluate this intervention. The researcher traveled to the interviewee's home or met at restaurants to carry out the dialogue. The researcher explained that the interview would be recorded and kept confidential. The researcher further expressed that the meeting was more of a conversation than an interrogation. A significant observation from the interviews was that the interviewees felt comfortable and divulged their true feelings on ministry and having theological training within the church when they otherwise would have kept quiet on the point. Sensing says, "Interviews allow people to describe their situations and put words to their interior lives, personal feelings, opinions, and experiences that otherwise are not available to the researcher by observation."¹⁵⁶

Before the pre-interviews, the participants were asked to take the fivefold ministry test (see Appendix D) and come to the interview with the results. Three female participants were shocked by their results from the fivefold ministry test. Ironically, the results for all three showed they were gifted as pastors. The researcher explained the characteristics of a pastor as caring for others, encouragers, and servants. Discussing a pastor's characteristics further, they accepted the results as they began to analyze how they interact with others in their homes and at work. The

¹⁵⁵ Sensing, *Qualitative Research*, 179.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid., 103.

other seven interviewees agreed with the results of their fivefold ministry test and considered it a confirmation of their calling. All of the participants were eager to participate and discuss ministry. The researcher noticed that many participants took this opportunity to recall the events of their initial calling.

The post-interviews had a different feel from the pre-interviews due to the workshop. The researcher saw a significant change from the pre-interviews on the question of having theological training in the church. Only five participants felt that theological training was necessary for the church during the pre-interviews. After the workshop, all ten, during the post-interviews, thought theological training was absolutely necessary for the church. All interviewed participants felt the need to have additional sessions to ensure those serving in the church correctly understood core doctrines. Several participants admitted they did not understand the core doctrines of the ministry fully until receiving the information presented at the seminar.

Insider Angles – Surveys

Thirty participants completed six surveys each for this action research during the Saturday workshop for a total of one hundred eighty surveys. Each participant had a binder that included the presentation, surveys on each topic, and an ink pen. All surveys were completed and collected during the workshop and stored in a sealed envelope. The surveys were each five questions designed to gain insight into the participant's understanding of each core doctrine taught. The participants were asked to respond to each of the five questions by indicating agree or not agree. After the researcher presented a topic, the participants were given time to take a survey on the information shown. The researcher noticed that several participants, who were not interviewed, were unsure about the question “is theological training necessary for the church”

and wrote a “not sure” response. The researcher noticed several amplifying remarks on the surveys regarding how well the information was presented and how impactful it was. At least one participant wrote a question on one of the surveys, but the researcher could not correlate a response due to the anonymity of the surveys.

A final survey was included in each binder to assess the researcher's presentation and the overall workshop. The researcher noticed that the last survey had the most remarks on how the participants felt the seminar went. All additional comments were uplifting and encouraged the researcher to continue with future training sessions for the church. In total, six surveys were completed by the thirty participants.

Summary of Intervention Implementation

As a result of the action research methods employed, this intervention was completed as designed. The pastor's support and promotion of this intervention resulted in forty-five attendees to the Saturday workshop and thirty participants in the study. Ten participants completed the pre- and post-interviews, and thirty completed the surveys. The following chapter will analyze the results of the surveys, training sessions, and pre- and post-interviews. The researcher will evaluate the results to assess this intervention's overall impact on supporting a fivefold ministry.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

Descriptive Data Assessment

The intention throughout this action research was to demonstrate the need for theological training to support the fivefold ministry at Unity Gospel House of Prayer. The posited position has been that forgoing theological training in the church is to the detriment of edifying its members and attendees as Jesus instructed. While those currently active in the fivefold ministry are working according to the church's fundamental beliefs, the pastor desires to have theological support for the ministry's five core themes: fivefold ministry, prayer, baptism, counseling, and preaching. Therefore, this action research intervention aims to demonstrate the relationship between proper theological training and the effective equipping of the church. This action research intervention will further show that the fivefold ministry is still in effect, and all of its offices are collectively working together to build up and equip the church to its maturity.

The researcher began interpreting data over a year ago while participating in training to receive her minister's license at the church, which is when she first identified and began to shape the problem addressed in this thesis project. Observing the licensing training, the researcher identified gaps that need to be addressed regarding the five doctrines discussed in this thesis. Sensing says, "For the DMin researcher, that first day occurred before the DMin project was even conceived; the pastor-student was already striving to understand the context through the course of ministerial activities and practices."¹⁵⁷ Once establishing the problem and thesis statements, the action research was underway. The researcher observed and collected data over four months. The investigative project yielded a six and half hour workshop session, one hundred eighty completed surveys, and twenty pre- and post-interviews.

¹⁵⁷ Sensing, *Qualitative Research*, 179.

Data Gathering Scoring Approaches

The results of this action research will be shown from a quantitative and qualitative perspective. The quantitative results will be obtained through post-course surveys. Thirty participants completed one survey for each training for the first five sessions and one satisfaction survey at the end of the day for a total of one hundred eighty surveys. Author Kakali Bhattacharya says, “Quantitative research aims to discover certain patterns that can be captured and predicted accurately with some degree of confidence that something beyond coincidence is occurring which is generalizable to a population of interest.”¹⁵⁸ The qualitative results will be rendered from the pre- and post-interviews. Additional qualitative results will come from the focus group conducted to gauge what the participants believed were the ministry's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats.

Participant Demographics

A total of thirty participants consented to provide feedback for this action research ranging in age from twenty-eight to seventy (see Table 4.1). While more men were in attendance on the day of the workshop, only seven volunteered to participate, while the others attended for the entire day. It is unknown why more men chose not to be active participants in this study while attending the whole workshop. Despite not participating, these men provided positive feedback to the researcher and felt the training was beneficial and necessary. The participants' education levels ranged from high school graduates to graduate PhD level, with most having some college. Of the thirty contributors who completed the six and half hour training session, seven were men, and twenty-three were women. All participants were active members of Unity

¹⁵⁸ Kakali Bhattacharya, *Fundamentals of Qualitative Research a Practical Guide* (New York, NY: Routledge/Taylor & Francis Group, 2017), 22.

Gospel House of Prayer, and the majority have been confessed Christians for more than twenty years. The participants attend Bible studies and Sunday services regularly while also serving in the ministry in various areas and on church auxiliaries.

Table 4.1. Participant Demographics.

	<i>Occurrence</i>	<i>% of Participants</i>
<i>Gender</i>		
Female	23	77%
Male	7	23%
<i>Age</i>		
30 to 50	20	67%
50 to 70	10	33%
<i>Education</i>		
High School	8	27%
Some College	12	40%
College	9	30%
Graduate		
Doctorate, PHD	1	3%
<i>Years of Christianity</i>		
> 20 Years	28	93%
< 20 Years	2	7%

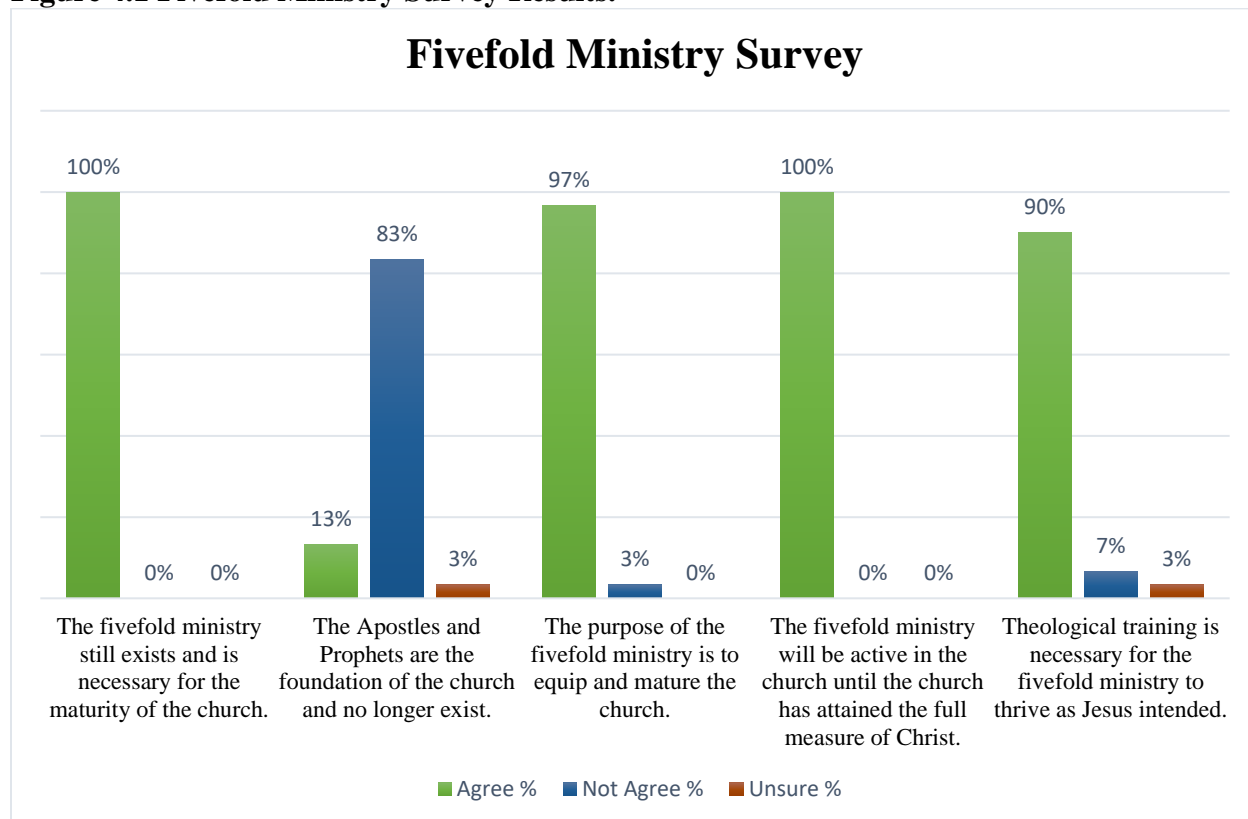
Survey Results

Immediately following each training session, the participants were asked to respond to the corresponding surveys by selecting agree or not agree. Due to some participants writing “unsure” to some questions, a third category was added to the analysis of each survey result to capture these responses. Each survey was designed to gather data in three specific areas: weigh the effectiveness of the teaching provided, identify any gaps that could be addressed in future training, and recognize any patterns that are representative of the larger congregation. The results will be summarized according to these three areas for each survey below.

Results of the Fivefold Ministry Survey

The results of the fivefold ministry survey demonstrate that the participants feel strongly that this ministry is needed and effective for the church today (see Figure 4.1).

Figure 4.1 Fivefold Ministry Survey Results.



The high results are a direct consequence of the training provided since it became apparent from the interviews that many did not know much about the fivefold ministry. The elevated scores reinforce that the participants understood the purpose of the fivefold ministry and its outcome for the church after the training session. One participant wrote a note on the survey that said, “Great teaching, I did not know about the fivefold ministry until today, and I am amazed at how great it is.” Another wrote, “This class helped me to understand more about Jesus and my purpose.” Despite that, thirteen percent of the participants do not agree that the apostles and prophets still exist in the church, which may very well be a topic for future training. Still, they believe the

fivefold ministry is necessary for the maturity of the church. It is unsure if the thirteen percent support a threefold ministry that does not include the apostles and prophets since the researcher could not validate it due to the anonymity of the surveys. The question regarding theological training being necessary for the fivefold ministry to thrive as Jesus intended left ten percent of the participants unsure or not agreeing. These ten percent represent those still skeptical of theological training in the church and thus were not persuaded to think differently.

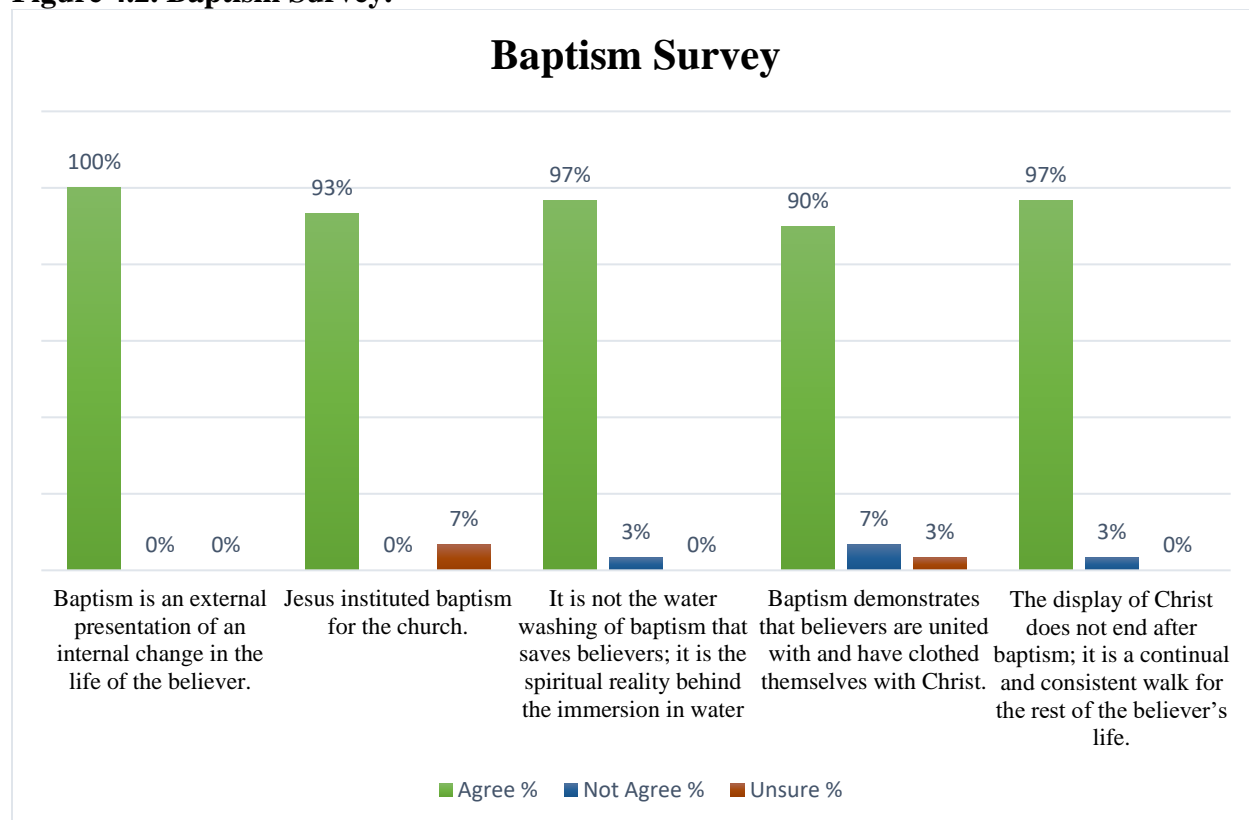
Results of the Baptism Survey

The results of the baptism survey demonstrate that the training was highly effective and reinforced the importance and meaning of baptism (see Figure 4.2). The scores on this particular survey were high, as expected, because the researcher took great care to explain several baptism events from the Bible and the theology of baptism. The baptism training reinforced that this spiritual act demonstrates a continuous internal change in the believer's life. However, despite the detailed presentation on the theology of baptism, some participants were unsure of its connection to Christ, as evidenced in the results on questions two through five. Author Edward Hoare writes, "They are plainly speaking of an inward and spiritual work, for they ascribe it to the agency of the Holy Ghost himself—'By one Spirit are ye all baptized;' while the use of the word 'baptized' is proof of a connexion [*sic*] between this inward change and the outward sacrament."¹⁵⁹ Still, the researcher could not address the participants who were skeptical of the relation between baptism and Christ and baptism and salvation due to the privacy of the survey, but this is evidence of a gap that needs to be addressed in future training. Although most of the participants responded favorably to the training, if the small percentage of participants that were

¹⁵⁹ Edward Hoare, *Baptism as Taught in the Bible and the Prayer Book* (London, UK: Project Gutenberg, 2016), 5.

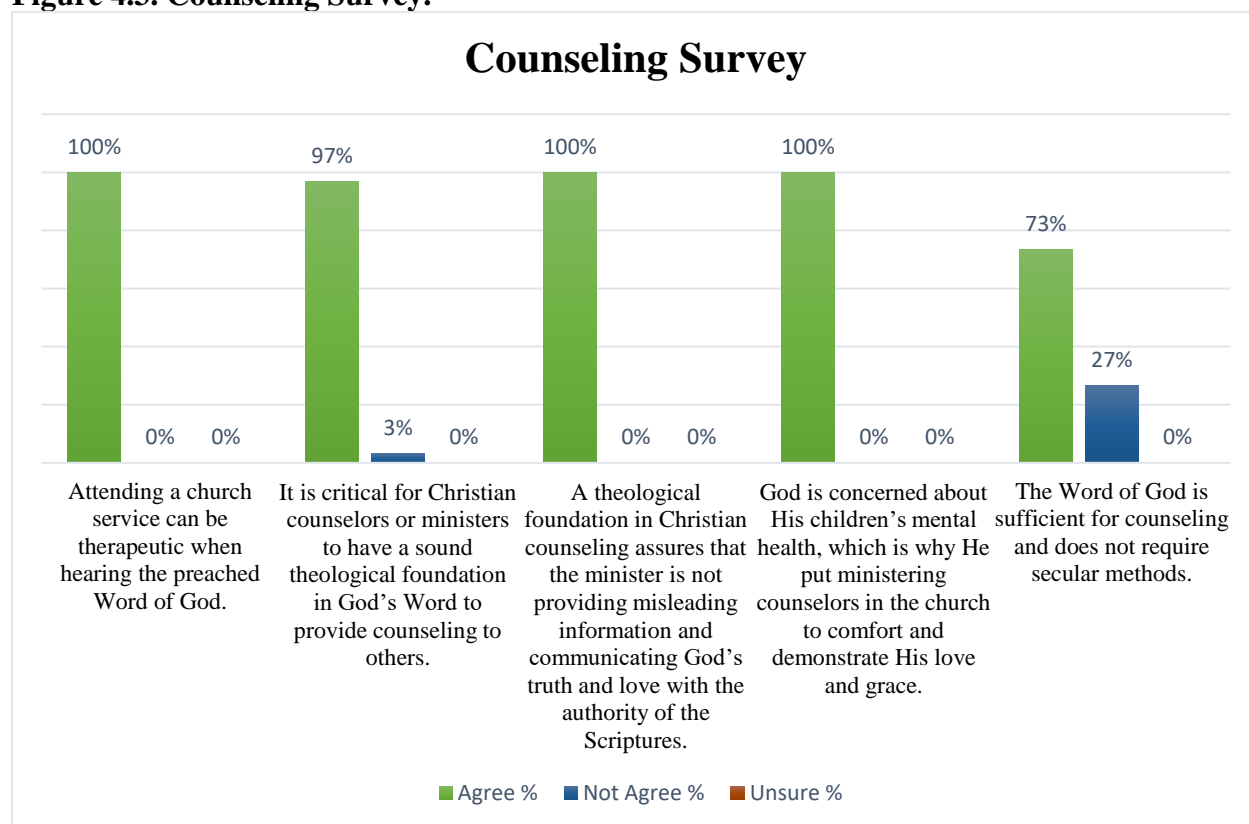
unsure or did not agree with certain aspects of the doctrine of baptism were applied to the entire congregation, the need for more in-depth training would be urgent.

Figure 4.2. Baptism Survey.



Results of the Counseling Survey

The results of the counseling survey show the participants agree that this is a vital ministry for the church (see Figure 4.3).

Figure 4.3. Counseling Survey.

The training on counseling provided several Scriptures that would be useful when assisting someone in need of support and strategies during difficult times. The training further provided descriptions of biblical, Christian, and secular counseling. Christian counseling is a mixture of Scripture and worldly methods, while biblical counseling holds strictly to Scripture and secular counseling only uses nonspiritual methods. Surprisingly, twenty-seven percent of the participants feel that Scripture alone is insufficient to counsel believers and requires the help of secular methods. Obviously, this group believes that Christian counseling is superior to biblical counseling, as evidenced by the results of the last question on this survey. According to author Heath Lambert “Christians who rely—to one degree or another— on the counseling insights of secular people have been called integrationists, Christian counselors, and Christian

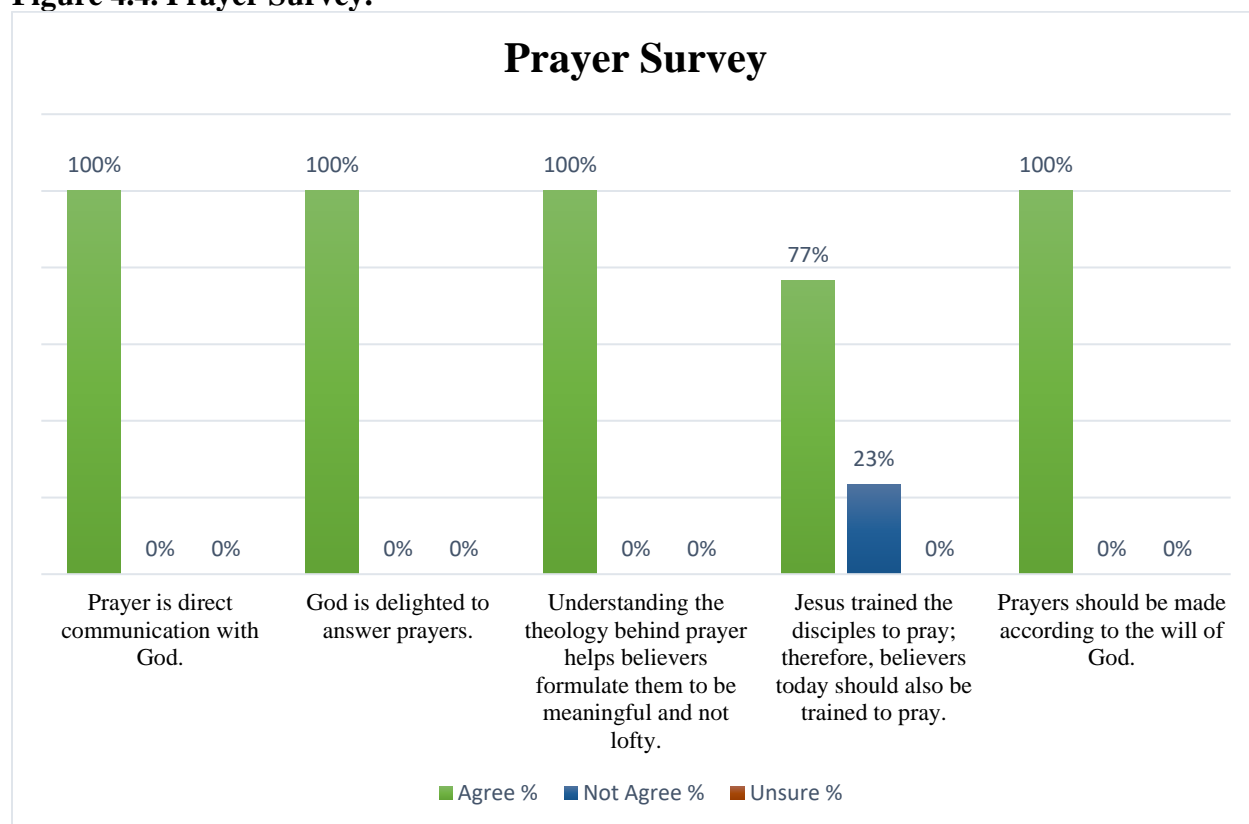
psychologists— among other things.”¹⁶⁰ The researcher did not take a position during the training and wanted the participants to reflect their honest beliefs in the survey. The twenty-seven percent exposed an area that needs further research in the church regarding why they feel biblical counseling is not sufficient alone. Furthermore, three percent of the participants are skeptical about church counselors needing to be theologically informed, which is a noticeable pattern in the survey results.

Results of the Prayer Survey

Based on the prayer survey results, it is evident that the participants grasped the information presented during the workshop. All questions, except the one asking if believers should be trained to pray, were responded to correctly or per the information given by 100% of the participants (see Figure 4.4). Surprisingly, the few participants that were usually skeptical of theological training in other areas agreed that it is essential to understand the theology of prayer. Oddly enough, twenty-three percent of the participants thought believers should not be trained in prayer despite the Bible demonstrating that Jesus taught His disciples to pray. Author Tim Keller states, “But if prayer were completely ineffable, when the disciples asked Jesus, ‘Lord, teach us to pray’ (Luke 11:1), Jesus would have responded, ‘I can’t—it’s just indefinable.’ He did not say that prayer is like the sound of one hand clapping. Rather, he gave his disciples a set of words, the Lord’s prayer.”¹⁶¹ The response to the question of training prayer reflects the need for more discussion around this topic, especially since the Bible instructs believers to pray incessantly (1 Thess. 5:17).

¹⁶⁰ Lambert, *A Theology of Biblical Counseling*, 25.

¹⁶¹ Timothy Keller, *Prayer: Experiencing Awe and Intimacy with God* (East Rutherford, state: Penguin Publishing Group, 2014), 106.

Figure 4.4. Prayer Survey.

One not trained according to Scripture on how to pray may lead to unmeaningful, lofty, and repetitive prayers. Mark Driscoll and Ashley Chase write, “Jesus’ teaching on prayer uses a similar method from which we can all benefit. He was constantly in prayer, so He both modeled it to His disciples and taught explicitly about it.”¹⁶² Jesus taught His disciples to pray; therefore, believers today should also be prepared to understand Jesus’ biblical teachings on the subject.

Author Meg Lacy Vega says,

And when the disciples ask Jesus how they should pray, he does not make a list of bullet points for them to consider. He models for them what prayer *looks* like and teaches them how to *practice* it: “Our Father, in heaven, hallowed be thy name . . .” In using Jesus as a

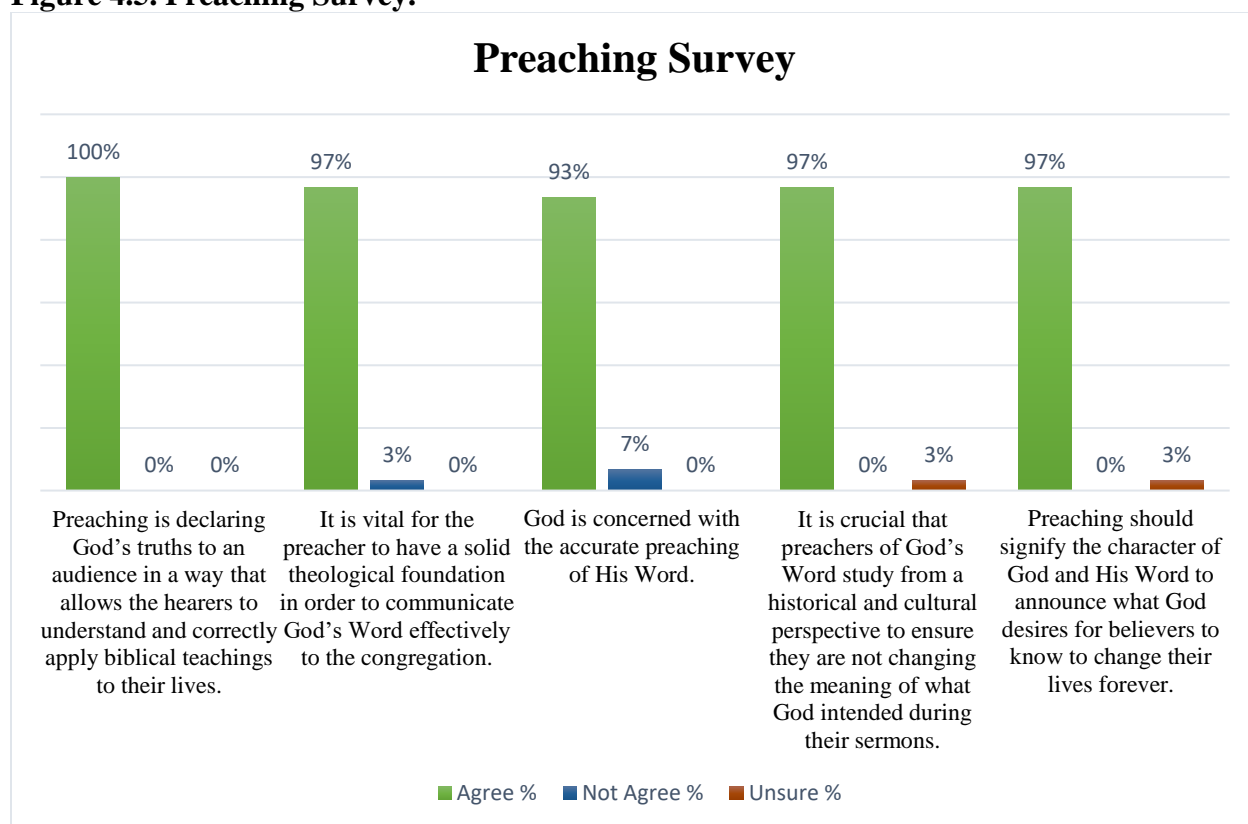
¹⁶² Mark Driscoll and Ashley Chase, *Pray Like Jesus: Learn to Pray to God as Father* (Chicago, IL: Charisma House, 2021), 49.

model for pedagogy, teachers must note that his teaching begins not with the mind, but with the body: with incarnation, action, and practice.¹⁶³

Results of the Preaching Survey

Most participants responded favorably to the preaching survey as a direct result of the training session on this topic (see Figure 4.5). The researcher presented the theology of preaching and explained five different methods of preaching: narrative, topical, textual, expository, and hellfire.

Figure 4.5. Preaching Survey.



While the majority of the participants responded correctly and according to the information taught on preaching, a few participants did not agree or were unsure that God was concerned

¹⁶³ Meg Lacy Vega, "Living Ritual: How the Lord's Prayer Shapes Liturgy and Lives," *Review and Expositor (Berne)* 118, no. 4 (2021): 513-518.

about the accurate preaching of His Word. This finding is confusing because all participants are professed Christians and many preachers. For any of the participants to feel that God does not care if His Word is being handled correctly is alarming. Pastor Randal Pelton writes, “Thankfully, God’s Spirit comes to our aid every Sunday in the teaching and learning together, all for the sake of His reputation in the Church and in the world.”¹⁶⁴ Furthermore, based on the preacher survey results, the pattern of skepticism towards theological training has resurfaced. Also, a small percentage of participants did not feel it was necessary for a preacher to study the Bible from a historical standpoint. On this point authors Scott Duvall and Daniel Hayes write:

The bottom line is that we cannot simply ignore “those people living back then” and jump directly to what God wants to say to us. Why not? Again, because the way we listen to God (our interpretive approach) must honor the way God chose to communicate. We should not be so arrogant and prideful as to think that God cared nothing about the original audience but was merely using them to get a message to us.¹⁶⁵

Focus Group Results

During the workshop's last hour, the researcher facilitated a focus group with thirty participants: this focus group aimed to identify the church’s strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (see Table 4.2). The thirty participants were divided into five groups of six to allow for meaningful conversation, and the researcher thought the smaller groups would allow for more truthful responses. Author Christine Davis says, “Focus groups are led by a facilitator or moderator, and facilitation can be structured or loosely open-ended. Typically, facilitation

¹⁶⁴ Randal E. Pelton, *Preaching with Accuracy: Finding Christ-Centered Big Ideas for Biblical Preaching* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 2014), 13.

¹⁶⁵ J. Scott Duvall and J. Daniel Hayes, *Grasping God's Word: A Hands-On Approach to Reading, Interpreting, and Applying the Bible*, 4th ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: HarperCollins Christian Publishing, 2020), 111.

includes the use of a moderator's guide, which looks very much like an outline of topics to be covered."¹⁶⁶

Table 4.2. SWOT Focus Group.

Bringing the Seminary to Church			
Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
How does the fivefold ministry strengthen the church?	What are the major complaints about this church's ministerial staff?	If this church could be known for one thing, what would that be?	If you could change one thing about your church, what would it be?

Strengths

When asked, "how does the fivefold ministry strengthen the church?" the participant's responses demonstrated they learned from the training and were, therefore, able to have a meaningful discussion on this particular point. Kina said, "the church is strengthened when this ministry is in place because it allows the church to meet the needs of the people." Theo said, "it helps to keep the church relevant and truthful. It allows us to use our spiritual gifts to bring everyone together." Richard stated, "It helps us identify our calling and help others with our gifts." Susie said, "It brings unity, clarity, and character to the church while making disciples."

Weaknesses

What are the major complaints about this church's ministerial staff? This question brought about the liveliest discussions of all. The researcher noticed the room was buzzing and even observed one woman in tears when describing to her group a betrayal of confidence she

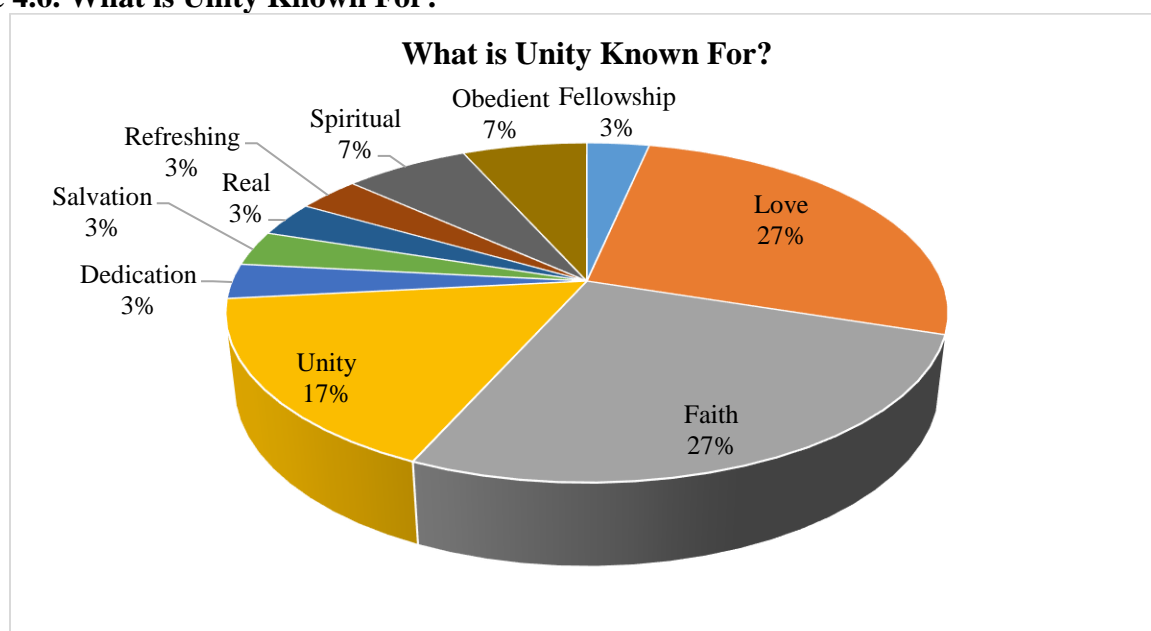
¹⁶⁶ Christine S. Davis, *Focus Groups: Applying Communication Theory through Design, Facilitation, and Analysis* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2017), 2.

encountered with one of the ministers. Christy said, “I confided in one of the ministers, and it was spread all over the church. I was devastated. I trusted this person and thought my problem would be kept between the two of us.” Terri said, “The ministers have a lack of communication. They also compete with one another and are not supportive of one another, especially when it comes to preaching in the pulpit.” Justin said, “Many ministers are not approachable and appear disconnected or like they have a selfish agenda.”

Opportunities

The researcher asked, “If this church could be known for one thing, what would that be?” All thirty participants summed up what Unity Gospel House of Prayer is known for in one word. The results demonstrate that most of the participants thought Unity represented love, faith, and unity (see Figure 4.6).

Figure 4.6. What is Unity Known For?



Threats

The researcher asked, “If you could change one thing about Unity, what would it be?” This question prompted another lively discussion. The researcher noticed that some of the participants were noticeably irritated at some of the responses from others in their groups. Lucy said, “I would change the quenching of the spirit for the sake of time during the service.” Ida said, “More inclusion of new ideas. More biblical training like this workshop.” Shonnie said, “Once a new member completes the New Members class, implement a beginner’s Sunday school or more training for babes in Christ. They still have a lot to learn.” Curtis said, “More willingness to fix issues and not make excuses. Also, do not cut the spirit short in service to stay on schedule.” Ironically Curtis and Lucy were in different groups, yet both stated they wanted to change stifling the spirit during church services so as not to lengthen the time of service.

Conclusion of Results

In conclusion, the surveys on the fivefold ministry, baptism, counseling, prayer, and preaching reflected that the training sessions were successful, as demonstrated by the high percentages of correct responses. While the researcher understood many gaps beforehand that she addressed in her presentations, the survey results exposed further gaps in these areas that should be honed in future sessions. Also, the results revealed a pattern related to the overarching thesis of this action research: the need for the church to have theological training for its core doctrines. Despite the training being highly effective and transparent, some participants held on to their skepticism regarding theological understanding of the fivefold ministry, baptism, counseling, prayer, and preaching. Wilson imparts that “Loving God with all of our minds

certainly means more than theological study, of course, but it certainly does not mean less than that.”¹⁶⁷

The focus group emerged several aspects of the ministry, both excellent and negative, that will allow the church’s leadership team to consider. The participants were transparent and honest when sharing their feelings about the church they love and support. More training and spiritual support are the primary themes that surfaced from the focus group. Additional themes from the qualitative interviews follow in the next section.

Theme One: Proper Development of The Fivefold Ministry

Jesus was a minister, and throughout the Bible, He called people from diverse backgrounds to follow Him in ministry to reach others. The Bible says, “As Jesus was walking beside the Sea of Galilee, He saw two brothers, Simon called Peter and his brother Andrew. They were casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen. “Come, follow me,” Jesus said, “and I will send you out to fish for people” (Matt. 4:18, NIV). Jesus continues calling believers to do ministry and even provided the church with unique giftings of the fivefold ministry: apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers. As already established in previous chapters, Jesus’ purpose for these five gifts was to work collectively to build up the church to maturity. Hirsch and Catchim reveal, “Each of the APEST vocations adds a necessary ingredient to the overall missional fitness and maturity of the church, but each needs to be informed and shaped by the others in order to anchor the church in the fullness of Christ’s nature and mission.”¹⁶⁸ The implications of not connecting your ministry calling to the fivefold ministry that

¹⁶⁷ Wilson, *Gospel-Driven Ministry*, 49.

¹⁶⁸ Hirsch and Catchim, *The Permanent Revolution*, 50.

Jesus implemented for the church is massive. In order for a minister to visualize and encapsulate their calling in a way that connects to Christ, they must bear in mind what He has established in the giftings of the fivefold ministry for the church. As Robert Tracy McKenzie notes, “To speak effectively to the church requires that we re-envision our calling. To re-envision our calling will require that we renew our minds.”¹⁶⁹

Pre-Interview and Post-Interview Demographics

The researcher selected ten participants who are active in the fivefold ministry for the pre- and post-interviews. Six women and four men were interviewed, all active members of Unity Gospel House of Prayer (See Table 4.3). Most of the interview participants had some college or were college graduates. All participants have served in ministry for over twenty years and ranged from thirty to seventy in age.

Table 4.3. Pre-Interview and Post-Interview Participant Demographics.

	<i>Occurrence</i>	<i>% of Participants Interviewed</i>
<i>Gender</i>		
Female	6	60%
Male	4	40%
<i>Age</i>		
30 to 50	7	70%
50 to 70	3	30%
<i>Education</i>		
High School	1	10%
Some College	4	40%
College	4	40%
Graduate		
Doctorate, PHD	1	10%
<i>Length of Ministry Service</i>		

¹⁶⁹ Robert Tracy McKenzie, “The Vocation of the Christian Historian: Re-envisioning Our Calling, Reconnecting with the Church,” *Fides Et Historia* 45, no. 1 (Winter, 2013): 13.

> 20 Years	7	70%
< 20 Years	3	30%

The researcher made sure to interview someone from each of the fivefold giftings. Of the ten interviewees, there were three pastors, three prophets, two evangelists, one apostle, and one teacher (see Figure 4.7).

Figure 4.7. Interview Participants Fivefold Gifts.



Connecting the Fivefold Calling to Service

The interviewer was surprised at the responses to the first pre-interview question regarding their awareness of the fivefold ministry (see Figure 4.8): “When did you first hear of the fivefold ministry”? Twenty percent of the participants had never heard of the fivefold ministry before participating in this research. Marva, a participant between thirty and fifty, stated, “I just heard of the fivefold ministry when you invited me to be a part of this research.” Thirty percent had heard of the fivefold ministry at some point in their church-going lives but never understood its purpose or meaning and had no fundamental knowledge. Patty, a participant between fifty and seventy, said, “I grew up in the Church of God in Christ, and I would hear talk

of the fivefold ministry, but I never really knew what it meant.” The other 50% had only recently heard of it during a minister’s training at church when the pastor proclaimed that Unity had a functioning fivefold ministry and provided some knowledge on the topic. Nigel, a participant between thirty and fifty, said, “I heard the pastor talk about the fivefold ministry in one of the minister’s meetings, but that was the first time.”

Figure 4.8. Fivefold Ministry Awareness.



During the pre-interviews, the participants were eager to share their stories of God calling them into the ministry. Each participant communicated a need to be confident that God was calling them into the ministry and that it was not a misguided desire of their own. Candace shared, “I ran from God at first; I could not believe He would call me. When I kept hearing His call, I needed to be sure I heard Him right.” Dewayne, a participant between thirty and fifty, disclosed, “I never saw myself in ministry. Because of my past, I didn’t think I could be used this way. I needed to make sure God was calling me.” Author Kathleen Cahalan writes, “As Scripture demonstrates, to be called by Yahweh is a deeply personal reality with profound communal

implications.”¹⁷⁰ The interviews revealed that because the participants were not well informed on the complete concept of the fivefold ministry, they could not recognize the connection to their service in the church, community, and overall purpose. Barbara, a participant between fifty and seventy, stated, “I never realized I was a part of the fivefold ministry as an evangelist; I just never made the connection because I don’t know much about it.”

Another disconnection the researcher observed from the interviews is that many participants were not serving in the capacity of their fivefold gifts. Like any organization, it is vital to place people in areas where they can thrive and be productive, and this should be no different for the church. Authors Eric Geiger and Kevin Peck write, “Developing leaders is hard work for an organization. It often seems like an even harder task for a local church. Many seem to be on the same page about its importance, and yet very few churches would admit to having a handle on the subject.”¹⁷¹ Many interview participants expressed frustration while serving in ministry because they often felt like they were not a good fit for their work. The researcher used this opportunity to discuss the participant’s fivefold ministry test results. The participants were excited to take the fivefold ministry test, which was yet another confirmation of their ministry calling, which removed any lingering doubts. While reconciling their church work with their responses to the fivefold ministry test, it became apparent that many were working in areas they were not gifted in, causing weariness. For example, Terri, an interview participant, took the fivefold ministry test and scored as a teacher. The results made sense to her because she cared greatly about understanding Scripture accurately. Terri stated, “I have always wanted to teach Sunday school or Bible study. This test confirmed my feeling that I’m not fulfilling my calling.”

¹⁷⁰ Kathleen A Cahalan, *Introducing the Practice of Ministry* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2010), 33.

¹⁷¹ Eric Geiger and Kevin Peck, *Designed to Lead: The Church and Leadership Development* (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2016), 11.

However, instead of teaching in the church, she has been asked to do community outreach which causes her great weariness. Terri said, “Everyone knows I am not an extrovert; it’s not my personality to strike up conversations with people I don’t know. I am not a good fit for the outreach team.” Allen writes,

There is an alarming inverse correlation between the seriousness of the ministerial task and the casualness with which it is often approached. We would not let an untrained mechanic rebuild our transmission or permit an unlearned pediatrician to diagnose our children. Yet churches often place individuals with the lowest levels of preparation in the highest office.¹⁷²

There were similar stories from other interview participants who felt unsure of their calling because their work in the church did not align with their gifting. Some participants admitted that because of this misalignment, they became complacent and served out of obligation rather than love which often led to burnout. Krista said, “I was so tired of going to meetings, my patience was wearing thin, and the people were starting to irritate me. I was starting to feel like the ministry wasn’t for me.” Even more, the interview participants recalled having the title minister and attending meetings but never actually doing the work in the church. Geiger and Peck state, “The spiritual growth of the people in the body is hampered. People who are gifted by God and called to serve Him are put on the bench as they watch the ‘professional ministers’ or the newest staff member make the ministry happen. They miss the joy of serving.”¹⁷³

Jesus gave believers specific fivefold ministry gifts so that they would serve others with joy when they used them while building up the church. Neil Cole writes, “The variety of gifts and how they are distributed among us—mixed together in each individual, with various portions and order of primacy—creates a diversity of special functions, designed by God to make the

¹⁷² Allen, *Discerning Your Call to Ministry*, 72.

¹⁷³ Geiger and Peck, *Designed to Lead*, 40.

body of Christ operative and beautiful.”¹⁷⁴ To be sure, it is critical for the church to identify areas of giftedness before assigning a role to avoid incongruencies and the church being blamed. Author Judith Urban says, “Shared ministry not only assists in calling people into ministry but also keeps them there; it does so by placing them in positions in which they can use their gifts.”¹⁷⁵ Operating outside of the capacity of your gifting can have severe implications and cause major offenses to those being served. To avoid such disproportions, author Betsey Heavner writes, “Each position to which persons may be elected, appointed, or assigned for ministry should have a written job description. Descriptions make it easier to invite and match people with positions, and they give individuals clear expectations for a position and the potential impact.”¹⁷⁶ As evidenced by the interviews with those serving in the fivefold ministry, it is vital for the one called to serve in these capacities to understand the connection of their service to Christ’s objective for the church. Understanding who you are in the fivefold ministry gives a greater awareness and connectedness to Jesus since all gifts come from Christ and return to Christ through loving service to build and edify His body.

Combating the Disconnect with Training

The researcher prepared the fivefold ministry training session to address the issues that were illuminated due to the pre-interview sessions. It was evident that there was a great need to teach the participants the fivefold ministry’s purpose, responsibilities, characteristics of each office, and the expected outcome. Those called to the fivefold ministry must have a sound

¹⁷⁴ Neil Cole, *Primal Fire: Reigniting the Church with the Five Gifts of Jesus* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House, 2014), 17.

¹⁷⁵ Judith A. Urban, *New Life through Shared Ministry: Moving from Volunteering to Mission* (Bethesda, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2013), 27.

¹⁷⁶ Betsey Heavner, *Guidelines Nominations and Leadership Development: Leaders Are the Key to Church Vitality* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2016), 18.

theology as they work together, delivering the Word of God to believers and nonbelievers. Allen writes, “Whatever their distinctions, these offices all share one common charge: minister the Word. The same charge falls upon overseers. This is why, in 1 Timothy 3:1–7, Paul lists only one skill—‘able to teach’—alongside the many character qualities an overseer must have.”¹⁷⁷ Learning how these gifts work together brings about a shared expected end in Christ, allowing for more collaboration and less competition, further resulting in enthusiastic servants. When asked what a successful fivefold ministry looks like, Lydia stated, “A successful fivefold ministry looks like Jesus. You pointed out how Jesus had each of the fivefold giftings Himself, so to me, it looks like Jesus.” Dewayne said, “A successful fivefold ministry looks like unity in the church. There is no room for competition.”

Understanding Jesus’ purpose for putting the fivefold ministry in place allows those with these gifts to have a greater sense of fulfillment and serve with greater intention. It is less likely that those who know their gift and serve in the capacity of their gift will get frustrated and suffer burnout. The post-interviews conducted after the training on the fivefold ministry demonstrate that having a clearer understanding of these gifts inspired the participants to work out their calling more passionately. Ranay, an interviewee between thirty and fifty, stated, “Learning the purpose and characteristics of the fivefold ministry helped me understand my calling as an evangelist and that Jesus gave me this gift. I feel more prepared to serve.” Ranay also shared how the training gave her a sense of urgency to walk in her calling, saying, “I feel like I need to get to work. I have a better sense of what I’m supposed to do to bring more people to Christ, and I don’t want to waste time.” In ministry, if one is not adequately trained in their calling, it can be challenging to understand what is expected. Debra, an interviewee between fifty and seventy,

¹⁷⁷ Allen, *Discerning Your Call to Ministry*, 15.

stated, “Now that I know so much about the fivefold ministry, I feel more secure in my calling and that I actually know what Jesus wants from me.” Listening to the various views and comments from those working in the fivefold ministry, it is clear where additional focus and training should be directed. If these observations are taken into consideration for both current and future ministers of the gospel, not only will the fivefold ministry thrive as Jesus desired, but God will get glory from a bountiful harvest, even if the laborers are few.

Theme Two: Theological Training in the Church

The action research for this project identified a running theme that some participants believe theological training is not necessary for the church. This notion prompted the researcher to seek a solution to this problem when she first identified it over a year ago. The researcher was convinced that facilitating a theological training workshop on five of the church’s core doctrines would change the minds of those participants who felt this way. The pre-interviews revealed why many believed theological training was unnecessary for the church. In the pre-interview with Sandy, the researcher asked, “Why do you think that theological training has a negative undertone at Unity?” Sandy, an interviewee between fifty and seventy, responded, “I remember the founder couldn’t read, and when God called him, he was able to read the Bible because of the Holy Spirit. He always said he didn’t have the letter and that the letter kills, but the spirit gives life.” The researcher recalls this same Scripture, “Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life” (2 Cor. 3:6, King James Version), said to the congregation several times in regard to theological and seminary education. Lawson, an interviewee between thirty and fifty, recalled, “I always thought the letter meant seminary education or man’s education, not the Holy Spirit, so I

believed it was not spiritual to go to school for theology.” The researcher understood that 2 Cor. 3:6 had been taken out of context, and its misuse deterred the ministerial staff from formal theological education. A proper exegesis of this verse will correct the misunderstanding of the notion that theological training is not necessary for the church.

Exegesis 2 Corinthians 3:6 (2 Cor. 3:1-6)

“Do we begin again to commend ourselves? or need we, as some *others*, epistles of commendation to you, or *letters* of commendation from you?” (2 Cor. 3:1, KJV)

In order to properly exegete 2 Cor. 3:6, it is necessary to start at the beginning of the chapter. Here the Apostle Paul is writing to the Corinthian church, addressing a charge against him by those who continue to promote the law by asking two questions in verse 1. Authors Kenneth Barker and John Kohlenberger state in their commentary:

Behind each of the two questions in this verse, both of which expect the answer “no,” stands an actual or expected charge against Paul. Since he had just spoken of the distinctive role of apostles (2:14-16) and of his own divine commission and authority (2:17; cf. 1:12; 1Co 4:15-16; 11:1; 14:18; 15:10), some of the Corinthians might say, “Paul, once again you are indulging in your notorious habit of self-commendation.”¹⁷⁸

“Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men” (2 Cor. 3:2, KJV)

While letters of commendation were common during this time, Paul declares that the only letter of commendation he needed was the Corinthian church. The letter the Apostle Paul speaks of is a living letter that is not written on paper or tablets of stone but in their hearts. This letter was not to be read but rather seen by all as a result of an internal change of the heart. Matthew Henry's Commentary states, “The Corinthians themselves were his real commendation, and a

¹⁷⁸ Kenneth L. Barker, and John R. Kohlenberger, *The Expositor's Bible Commentary New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Pub. House, 2017), 665.

good testimonial for him, that God was with him of a truth, that he was sent of God: You are our epistle.”¹⁷⁹ Paul declared that the only commendation he needed was the Corinthian church despite what others were doing.

“Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart” (2 Cor. 3:3, KJV)

The Apostle Paul is distinguishing from the tables of the law given to Moses in the Old Testament written on stone to the new covenant that God promised to write on hearts. Author Paul Duff states, “As such, Paul seemingly compares Moses’ ministry of letter— which is characterized as a ministry of death in the argument’s first sentence— to his own ministry of Spirit.”¹⁸⁰ It can be understood that the letters the Apostle Paul wrote about refer to the law of the Old Testament during the time of Moses. Author Scott Hafemann writes, “But unlike Moses’s ministry of the ‘letter,’ which in the context of 2 Cor 3 refers to the giving of the commands of the law without the power to obey them, Paul’s ministry is now a ministry ‘of the Spirit.’”¹⁸¹ Paul is making it known that Jesus is the author of this letter he speaks of, and He writes on hearts with the Holy Spirit as the ink pen. According to Matthew Henry’s commentary:

This epistle was not written with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; nor was it written in tables of stone, as the law of God given to Moses, but on the heart; and that heart not a stony one, but a heart of flesh, upon the fleshy (not fleshly, as fleshliness denotes sensuality) tables of the heart, that is, upon hearts that are softened and renewed

¹⁷⁹ Matthew Henry, *Second Epistle to the Corinthians - Complete Bible Commentary Verse by Verse: 2 Corinthians - Bible Commentary* (Balneário Rincão, Brazil: Grupo Oxiênio Ltda-ME, 2016), 17.

¹⁸⁰ Paul B. Duff, *Moses in Corinth: The Apologetic Context of 2 Corinthians 3* (Leiden, Netherlands: BRILL, 2015), 138.

¹⁸¹ Scott J. Hafemann, *Paul: Servant of the New Covenant: Pauline Polarities in Eschatological Perspective* (Tübingen, Germany: Mohr Siebeck, 2020), 122.

by divine grace, according to that gracious promise, I will take away the stony heart, and I will give you a heart of flesh, Eze. 36:26.¹⁸²

“And such trust have we through Christ to God-ward: Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God” (2 Cor. 3:4-5, KJV)

The Apostle Paul wants the Corinthians to understand that he is not being prideful and trusting in himself, but rather their trust, and his, is in Christ who makes them sufficient. The Apostle Paul is sharing an epiphany that the law could only show them how sinful they were and made them insufficient in the sight of God. However, the new covenant which came through Jesus Christ makes them competent by the power of the Spirit of the living God. Swindoll writes, “Paul acknowledged, however, that his successful ministry was due not to his own work, but to Christ’s work through him (3:4). In fact, he confessed his inadequacy, ‘Not that we are adequate in ourselves to consider anything as coming from ourselves, but our adequacy is from God’ (3:5).”¹⁸³

“Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life” (2 Cor. 3:6, KJV).

Now that Paul has established that their sufficiency comes from the Spirit, he now connects this competency to the ministry. On this, Paul points out the superiority of the new

¹⁸² Henry, *Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 18.

¹⁸³ Charles R. Swindoll, *Insights on 1 and 2 Corinthians* (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2017), 324.

covenant that comes by the Spirit over the old covenant letter of the law. Author William MacDonald writes:

The New Covenant is here called spirit. It represents the spiritual fulfillment of the types and shadows of the Old Covenant. What the law demanded but could never produce is now effected by the gospel. J. M. Davies summarizes: This ministry of the “letter” that killeth is illustrated in the 3000 killed at Sinai, at the inauguration of the Old Covenant; and the ministry of the Spirit, the life-giving ministry, is illustrated in the 3000 saved on the day of Pentecost.¹⁸⁴

The letter of the law could only give death because no one could live up to its demands. The new covenant Spirit gives believers life through the shed blood of Jesus Christ. The Bible says, “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life” (John 3:16, KJV).

In summary, the exegesis of this passage of Scripture demonstrates the great need for theological training in the church. The Bible is clear that rejecting knowledge is a direct correlation to death when it says, “My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge” (Hosea 4:6a, KJV). It is clear how the misinterpretation of Scripture can lead many on a path of destruction.

Spirit and Truth

“Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord” (Isa. 1:18a, KJV). God has given humans the ability to reason and know and learn Him through studying His Word. Humans have God-given cognitive skills that allow them to know God deeper and comprehend His truths. It was important to Jesus that He explain to the woman at the well that it is necessary to worship God in spirit and in truth (John 4:24); one should not be neglected for the other. Author Michael Brown says:

¹⁸⁴ William MacDonald, *Believer's Bible Commentary*, 2nd ed. (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Incorporated, 2016), 1847.

Consider the words of Jesus in John 4:24, where He said that “God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit [or, Spirit] and truth.” Obviously, there is total harmony between spirit (or, Spirit) and truth, and it is not a matter of either-or but of both-and. At the same time, Jesus is describing two elements here, spirit (or, Spirit) and truth, and on a certain level (and simply using this text to make a point rather than claiming that this was what Jesus meant), charismatics, who are people of the Spirit, can put more emphasis on spirit/Spirit, whereas cessationists, who are people of the truth, can put more emphasis on truth. Both are equally essential.¹⁸⁵

If believers fail to know the truths of God, it will be challenging to carry out the Great

Commission to bring others to Christ. Author J. P. Moreland writes,

Anti-intellectualism has drained the church of its boldness in witnessing and speaking out about important issues in the places where ideas are generated. And for those who do have such courage, anti-intellectualism has created a context in which we Christians often come off as shallow, defensive, and reactionary, instead of thoughtful, confident, and articulate.¹⁸⁶

The Apostle Paul urged his young protégé, Timothy, to study the Scriptures as a minister of the Gospel. The Bible says, “Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth” (2 Tim. 2:15, KJV). Author Vinson Synan writes, “Our part as ministers entrusted with the gospel is not to back away from the truth but to study the Word of God diligently, to rightly divide His Word, and to boldly proclaim His truth with absolute clarity and love.”¹⁸⁷

Studying the Scripture theologically not only helps one to know what God has revealed about Himself in His Word, but it also helps shape how believers live out their lives in relation to others while applying what they have learned. Theology directly impacts how believers make decisions and respond to their creator. Author Rhyne Putnam says,

¹⁸⁵ Michael L. Brown, *Authentic Fire: A Response to John MacArthur's Strange Fire* (Lake Mary, FL: Charisma House, 2015), 15.

¹⁸⁶ J. P. Moreland, *Love Your God with All Your Mind: The Role of Reason in the Life of the Soul* (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress Publishing Group, 2012), 17.

¹⁸⁷ Vinson Synan, *The Truth About Grace: Spirit-Empowered Perspectives* (Chicago, IL: Charisma House, 2018), 161.

Theology begins and ends with the God who created us, loves us, and knows us better than we know ourselves. When pursued properly, the study of theology can help us strengthen and affirm our personal faith, equip the body of Christ, reach the nations with the gospel, smash the idols lasting satisfaction in the rewards of serving our eternal King.¹⁸⁸

To be sure, theological training is necessary for the church to model Christ in a dark world that is looking for reasons not to worship Him the way He deserves. A Christian's faith is strengthened when they have a proper theology that is developed with the aid of the Holy Spirit, not in spite of it. Author Hans Schwarz says, "The Christian faith is not an obedient faith but a discerning faith. Therefore it is necessary that we espouse our faith in a logically coherent manner without any contradictions. This is exactly the task of theology."¹⁸⁹

Theme Three: Women Called to the Fivefold Ministry

Women have been a part of God's salvific plan of redemption from the moment He put enmity between Eve and the deceiving serpent (Gen. 3:15). This animosity between women and Satan is present today, driving women to build up the body of Christ to the destruction of Satan's kingdom. Theologian Philip Barton Payne writes:

In the curse against "the serpent," God affirms the seed of the woman "will crush your head" (Gen 3:15). K&D 1:102 notes, "as it was through the woman that the craft of the devil brought sin and death into the world, so it is also through the woman that the grace of God will give to the fallen human race the conqueror of sin, of death, and of the devil . . . [Christ] the destroyer of the serpent was born of a woman (without a human father)."¹⁹⁰

¹⁸⁸ Rhyn Putman, *The Method of Christian Theology: A Basic Introduction* (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2021), 18.

¹⁸⁹ Hans Schwarz, *The Christian Faith: a Creedal Account* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2014), 11.

¹⁹⁰ Philip Barton Payne, *Man and Woman, One in Christ: an Exegetical and Theological Study of Paul's Letters* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2009), 47.

Despite Eve's flawed split-second decision in the garden, women have fought to rise above the stain that is the apparent root cause of the intent to stifle women in the church. Author Eileen Campbell-Reed wrote, "In 2014 women constituted 15.8% of U.S. clergy. They led 10% of U.S. congregations."¹⁹¹ During the interview process, the researcher noticed that the women who took the fivefold ministry test and scored as pastors were shocked at the results. The researcher contacted the women to ask them about their startled reaction to the test results, wanting to understand why they were surprised. Candace, an interviewee between thirty and fifty, stated, "I grew up in the Baptist church, and women were not allowed in the pulpit, let alone preach. I had never seen a woman pastor before. Even though I feel like a woman can be a pastor, the thought of me being a pastor was weird." Liz, an interviewee between thirty and fifty, said, "I have heard men say that women cannot be pastors, and I never really understood it. I was so conflicted when God called me into the ministry as an evangelist. Finally, I had to ask myself, was I going to believe God or man? I chose God." Neither of these women serves as a pastor in the church, but they have been called into the fivefold ministry as a prophetess and evangelist. Those who refute women serving in leadership roles, especially that of overseer, in the church often refer to 1 Timothy 3 as support. 1 Timothy 3:1-11, NIV says:

Here is a trustworthy saying: Whoever aspires to be an overseer desires a noble task. Now the overseer is to be above reproach, faithful to his wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not given to drunkenness, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him, and he must do so in a manner worthy of full respect. (If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God's church?) He must not be a recent convert, or he may become conceited and fall under the same judgment as the devil. He must also have a good reputation with outsiders, so that he will not fall into disgrace and into the devil's trap. In the same way, deacons are to be worthy of respect, sincere, not indulging in much wine, and not pursuing dishonest gain. They must keep hold of the deep truths of the faith

¹⁹¹ Eileen Campbell-Reed, "Living Testaments: How Catholic and Baptist Women in Ministry Both Judge and Renew the Church," *Ecclesial Practices* 4, no. 2 (2017): 167.

with a clear conscience. They must first be tested; and then if there is nothing against them, let them serve as deacons. In the same way, the women are to be worthy of respect, not malicious talkers but temperate and trustworthy in everything.

The Greek word used in the first verse for “whoever” is “tis,” an undefining pronoun used when speaking of men and women, meaning anyone. Theologian and author Philip Barton Payne writes, “In fact, 3:1, ‘Anyone desiring the office of overseer desires good work,’ encourages women to aspire to be overseers. Paul repeats ‘anyone’ in 3:5 and includes parallels to each requirement for overseer specifically about women in 1 Timothy. He thereby shows that women can fulfill all the requirements of an overseer.”¹⁹²

Women in the Bible Who Served in the Fivefold Ministry

The statement “actions speak louder than words” could not be truer when it comes to the Apostle Paul’s view of women leaders in the church. While many refer to Scriptures written by Paul to silence women in the church, Paul also writes Scriptures demonstrating that he recognized several women as leaders in the church. Author Mark Strauss provides a reason why this may have happened, writing:

Though he did make a number of restrictive statements about women, these must be understood in the cultural and historical context in which he lived. The first-century world, and Judaism in particular, was strongly patriarchal, with men taking the lead in public and private life. There is a lively debate among Christians today concerning how much of what Paul says is a condescension to the culture of his day and how much of it is meant for the church of all time. In a patriarchal culture, allowing women to teach or lead men would have been scandalous in certain situations, and Paul seems to be trying to avoid giving the church a bad name.¹⁹³

Despite the cultural setting of the Apostle Paul’s time, he demonstrated an open-minded behavior towards women and their contributions to the church. On several occasions throughout the Bible,

¹⁹² Payne, *Man and Woman, One in Christ*, 504.

¹⁹³ Mark L. Strauss, *Jesus Behaving Badly: The Puzzling Paradoxes of the Man from Galilee* (Les Ulis, France: InterVarsity Press, 2015), 88.

Paul allows the reader to understand that women are a valuable part of the ministry and can hold various positions in the church. Here is a list of women the Apostle Paul worked with and recognized in the church according to author Payne and Scripture:

Women Prophets in the Bible

There are several women in the Bible, specifically called prophets. The sister of Moses was the first woman prophet mentioned in the Bible (Exod. 15:20). Authors Julianna Claassens and Irmtraud Fischer write, “The first named prophetess of the Hebrew Bible is in the Torah. This is Miriam, who is designated a נביאה, ‘prophetess,’ in Exod 15:20.”¹⁹⁴ One woman, in particular, was not only a prophet but a judge that led Israel at one time. On this, the Bible says, “Now Deborah, a prophet, the wife of Lappidoth, was leading Israel at that time. She held court under the Palm of Deborah between Ramah and Bethel in the hill country of Ephraim, and the Israelites went up to her to have their disputes decided” (Judg. 4:4-5, NIV). Other women prophets in the Bible include Anna (Luke 2:36), Huldah (2 Kings 22:14), and the evangelist Philip’s four daughters who prophesied (Acts 21:8-9).

Priscilla – An Overseer

The Apostle Paul also worked with a married couple, Priscilla and Aquila, who oversaw churches in Corinth and Ephesus and considered them co-workers in the ministry. The Bible says, “Greet Priscilla and Aquila, my co-workers in Christ Jesus. They risked their lives for me. Not only I but all the churches of the Gentiles are grateful to them” (Rom. 16:3, NIV). Payne notes,

¹⁹⁴ L. Juliana Claassens and Irmtraud Fischer, eds, *Prophecy and Gender in the Hebrew Bible* (New York, NY: Society of Biblical Literature, 2020), 6.

Paul ministered extensively with Priscilla and Aquila. He lived and worked with them for at least one and a half years in Corinth (Acts 18:1–3, 11, 18) before traveling with them to Ephesus (Acts 18:18), where a church met in their house (1 Cor 16:19). Paul left them in Ephesus to oversee the work there, where “Priscilla and Aquila . . . explained [plural verb] to [Apollos] the way of God more accurately” (Acts 18:26). Priscilla’s name is listed first before her husband’s, contrary to Greek and Hebrew custom, as it is in every context mentioning their active ministry (Acts 18:18, 26; Rom 16:3). This makes it virtually certain that she played a significant, if not the dominant, role in these actions.¹⁹⁵

Priscilla – A Teacher

Priscilla not only oversaw churches, but she also taught the ways of God to other men.

The Bible says in Acts 18:24-26, NIV:

Meanwhile a Jew named Apollos, a native of Alexandria, came to Ephesus. He was a learned man, with a thorough knowledge of the Scriptures. He had been instructed in the way of the Lord, and he spoke with great fervor and taught about Jesus accurately, though he knew only the baptism of John. He began to speak boldly in the synagogue. When Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they invited him to their home and explained to him the way of God more adequately.

Apollos accepted the instruction from Priscilla and Aquilla, and they corrected his teachings of Jesus. The fact that this event is included in Scripture demonstrates that Apollos or Paul did not have an issue with women teaching men, let alone God. Scripture commentator David Garland states:

Christians are to “weigh carefully what is said” in a teaching and worship context (1 Cor. 14:29), and Priscilla and Aquila spotted a flaw in Apollos’s teaching. They do not silently stew over his deficiency, attempt to undercut his ministry, or publicly rebuke him to embarrass him. Instead, they communicate their concerns privately to him. To his credit, he willingly accepts their instruction and mentoring. Since he knows the Scripture well, he must conclude that what they teach tallies with Scripture.¹⁹⁶

¹⁹⁵ Payne, *Man and Woman, One in Christ*, 62.

¹⁹⁶ David E. Garland, *Acts*, Teach the Text Commentary Series (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2017), 198.

Junia – An Apostle

Junia, a woman, is an apostle that Paul introduced to the church, even admitting that she was a believer before him. The Bible shares, “Greet Andronicus and Junia, my fellow Jews who have been in prison with me. They are outstanding among the apostles, and they were in Christ before I was” (Rom. 16:7, NIV). There has been much debate on whether Junia was male or female. However, through much scholarly interpretation, it has been concluded that Junia was indeed a woman. On this, author Elizabeth McCabe shares:

Romans 16:7 has a long history of convoluted interpretation, often reflecting gender discrimination. Recently, NT scholars such as John Thorley, Linda Belleville, Eldon Jay Epp, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, Ray R. Schulz, and others have studied ancient use of the Greek language in manuscripts as well as interpretation from the last 600 years to answer those questions. Once all of the evidence for the case of Junia’s femininity and apostleship is sifted through, it can be concluded that Junia was the first and only woman to be called an apostle in the NT.¹⁹⁷

Phoebe – A Deacon

The Bible shares the account of another woman who held a position in the church as a deacon. Payne says, “In Rom. 16:1, Paul commends ‘our sister Phoebe, who is [οὐσαν] a deacon [διάκονον] of the church of Cenchrea.’”¹⁹⁸ The Bible says, “I commend to you our sister Phoebe, a deacon of the church in Cenchreae. I ask you to receive her in the Lord in a way worthy of his people and to give her any help she may need from you, for she has been the benefactor of many people, including me” (Rom. 16:1-2, NIV).

¹⁹⁷ Elizabeth A. McCabe, ed., *Women in the Biblical World: A Survey of Old and New Testament Perspectives* (city, state: Blue Ridge Summit: UPA, 2009), 121.

¹⁹⁸ Payne, *Man and Woman, One in Christ*, 62.

King Lemuel's Mother – Her Instruction Recorded in Canon of Holy Scripture

Proverbs 31 is a popular chapter of Scripture that is still referenced today by both men and women alike when seeking the description of a virtuous woman and the conduct of a king. The Bible makes it clear that these words included in Scripture are that of a woman, a mother, to her son, the king. Author Lindsay Wilson shares, “Verse 1 describes this section as the words or ‘sayings’ (niv) of King Lemuel, but explains that he is not the originator of these words, for he is passing on what his mother had taught him.”¹⁹⁹ The Bible says:

The sayings of King Lemuel—an inspired utterance his mother taught him. Listen, my son! Listen, son of my womb! Listen, my son, the answer to my prayers! Do not spend your strength on women, your vigor on those who ruin kings. It is not for kings, Lemuel—it is not for kings to drink wine, not for rulers to crave beer, lest they drink and forget what has been decreed, and deprive all the oppressed of their rights (Proverbs 31:1-5, NIV).

King Lemuel's mother's words can be heard in the New Testament's qualifications of overseers and deacons in 1 Timothy 3. King Lemuel respected his mother's teachings, and God accepted her words as authoritative as they are recorded in Scripture.

Mary, Tryphena, Tryphosa, and Persis – Leaders in the Church

The Apostle Paul takes great care to introduce his leadership team by name, which includes several women. Paul presents these women as hard workers in the Lord. The Bible says, “Greet Mary, who worked very hard for you. Greet Tryphena and Tryphosa, those women who work hard in the Lord. Greet my dear friend Persis, another woman who has worked very hard in the Lord” (Rom. 16:6;12, NIV). Payne clarifies, “Ridderbos notes that the Greek word for

¹⁹⁹ Lindsay Wilson, *Proverbs: An Introduction and Commentary* (Westmont, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2018), 315.

‘worked hard’ (κοπιᾶω) describing each of these four women is a ‘word that specifically denotes work in the gospel and in the church.’”²⁰⁰

The Bible provides several other examples of women working in ministry, helping to set up and lead churches along with the Apostle Paul and others. Based on this evidence, it is clear that church leadership is the joint responsibility of both men and women. On this, authors Linda Belleville and James Beck write:

Male leaders may have been more numerous, but virtually every leadership role that names a man also names a woman. In fact, there are more women named as leaders in the NT than men. Phoebe is a “deacon” and a “benefactor” (Rom. 16:1–2). Mary, Lydia, and Nympha are overseers of house churches (Acts 12:12; 16:15; Col. 4:15). Euodia and Syntyche are among “the overseers and deacons” at Philippi (Phil. 1:1; cf. 4:2–3).²⁰¹

While it was not the intent of this thesis to defend women leaders in the church, this action research surfaced a theme that is still being challenged in the church today. As evidenced by this research, women are still called to the fivefold ministry today in accordance with Scripture. The researcher has demonstrated with Scripture and commentary from several scholarly authors that there must be a balancing of Scripture not to place more emphasis on specific verses while disregarding others. All Scripture comes from God and is profitable for teaching all (2 Tim. 3:16). God created both men and women in His image. He clearly shows no favoritism between the two (Rom. 2:11). Authors Sue Edwards and Kelly Matthews say, “Leaders who are spiritually and emotionally mature can—and must—partner together effectively as they serve the church. This is true of both men and women. The church needs both in leadership in order to shepherd the church in all of her diversity.”²⁰²

²⁰⁰ Payne, *Man and Woman, One in Christ*, 67.

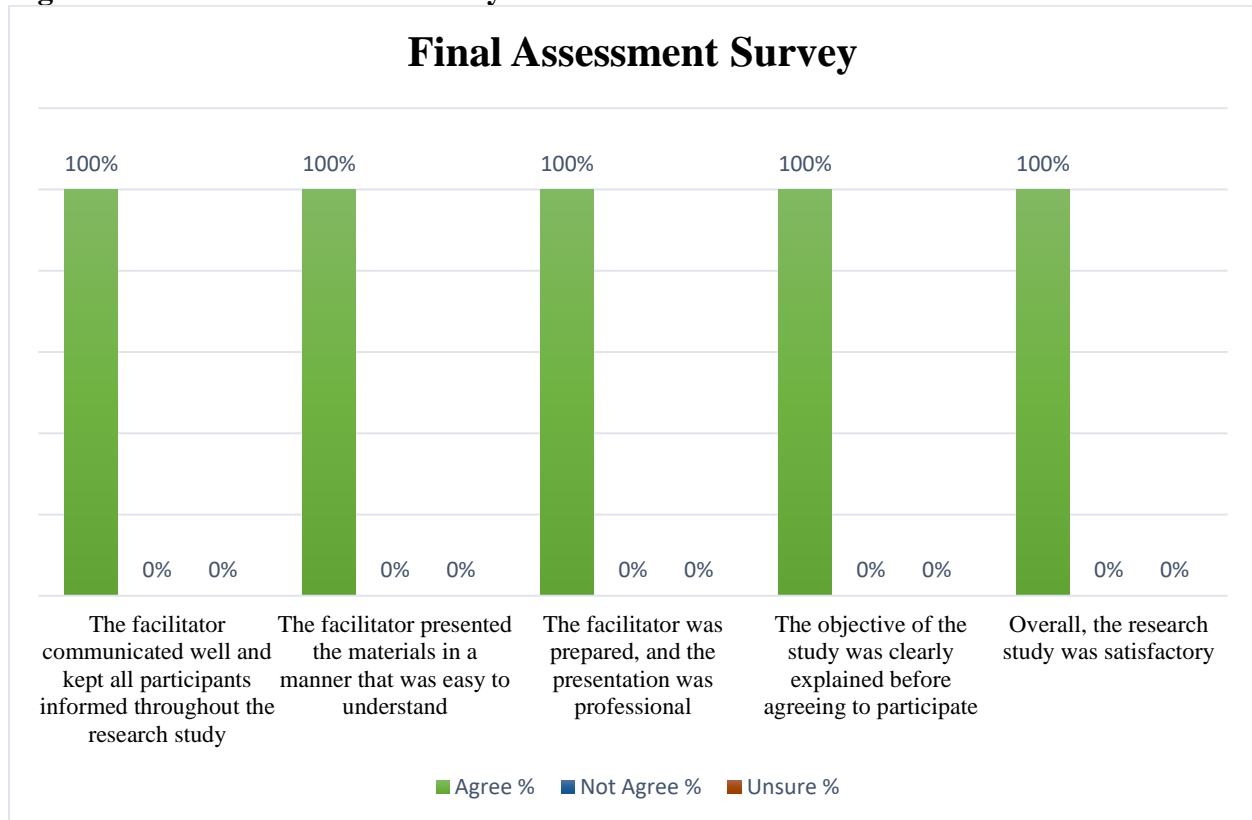
²⁰¹ Linda L. Belleville and James R. Beck, *Two Views on Women in Ministry*, rev. ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2005), 54.

²⁰² Sue Edwards and Kelly Matthews, *Organic Ministry to Women: A Guide to Transformational Ministry with Next Generation Women* (Chicago, IL: Kregel Publications, 2019), 179.

Summary of Results

Recognizing the dynamic and needs of theological training at Unity Gospel House of Prayer, this researcher designed this training specifically to address those needs. This mission included understanding the root cause of the lack of theological training and uncovering any other issues that may be limiting the effectiveness of the fivefold ministry. The results of this action research intervention plan at Unity Gospel House of Prayer determined that the majority of the participants believe that theological training is necessary to support its fivefold ministry and doctrinal teachings. The design of the post- and pre-interview questions and conversations revealed the themes addressed in the results. The workshop demonstrated to the participants the need for deeper study on topics they may have thought they had a solid grasp on but actually needed to understand the theological foundation. One participant wrote on the final survey, “The information given us in this workshop helped me understand things better than I thought I knew. I now also realize the responsibility of it all.” Another participant wrote, “The information you provided on the topics was well supported with Scripture and helped me to understand each doctrine well.” The post-survey results demonstrate the intervention shifted the belief that theological training is not suited for the church to believing it is absolutely necessary.

All participants rated the satisfaction survey with the highest ratings indicating the lesson plans were well presented (see Figure 4.9).

Figure 4.9. Final Assessment Survey.

This action research will impact Unity for many years to come. The positive feedback from the participants, attendees, and pastor agrees that formal theological training in the church is necessary and needs to continue in the future. According to Sensing, “The critical correlation or interpretation of data with theology is the primary subject of your final chapter. Your interpretation will not merely reflect upon your project but will also make pastoral proposals for the future life of the church.”²⁰³

²⁰³ Sensing, *Qualitative Research*, 231.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

Now that the research is complete, understanding this project's significance and usefulness is key to ensuring no questions about the investigation are left unanswered. This section aims to compare and contrast the research results to the information provided in the literature review chapter of this thesis project. Stringer aptly states, "This chapter describes the phase of a research project where 'the rubber hits the road.' It is the point at which we start moving and where action occurs; where we set out to do something about the problems that have been the driving force behind all the activity."²⁰⁴

The vocation of theological study significantly impacts the church and how it serves believers and the community. The primary aim of this thesis is to convince the participants that theological training is necessary for the church, especially as it relates to certain doctrines such as the fivefold ministry, baptism, counseling, prayer, and preaching. The researcher designed the content of this thesis so that content could serve the church in an authentic way. Desiring to serve the church in a tangible capacity, this researcher identified the problem of the lack of theological study in the church and set out to address it with action research.

The original goal of this DMIN action research project was to glean sufficient information from the participants, scholarly works, and the Bible to develop and implement a theology-focused training program at Unity Gospel House of Prayer to support its fivefold ministry. Demonstrating to the thirty participants the need for theological training by facilitating a workshop on topics familiar to the ministers proved successful and fulfilled this study's purpose. The pre- and post-interview questions and workshop pieces of training were all designed to achieve the overall objective of this DMIN action research. The researcher set out to

²⁰⁴ Stringer, *Action Research*, 183.

change the minds of the participants that hold negative beliefs about theological training in the church. Authors Mary Jalongo and Crystal Machado write, “More often than not, when one professional is presenting to another, the goal is to convince participants to change their behaviors in ways that will make their daily practice more effective.”²⁰⁵ The researcher focused on this project’s purpose throughout its entirety to ensure it could become a reality.

While the objective of this action research was to implement theological training at Unity Gospel House of Prayer, the thesis put forth by the researcher was that participation in this study would create an appreciation for theological research to support the church’s core beliefs. To test this thesis, the researcher exposed the participants to a theological analysis of the fivefold ministry, baptism, prayer, counseling, and preaching. The researcher identified a change in the participant’s pessimistic belief about theological training in the church in the results of the surveys and post-interviews. Evaluation of the impact of this study and comparison to the information gleaned from this project’s literature review will follow in the next sections.

Research Implications

The importance of this action research on Unity Gospel House of Prayer will benefit not only this church but others with similar needs and views of theological training. This intervention significantly improved the participant’s perspective on theology as well as increased their understanding of several church doctrines. The opportunities that surfaced because of this project will continue to be valuable to the church if implemented appropriately.

²⁰⁵ Mary Renck Jalongo and Crystal Machado, *Making Effective Presentations at Professional Conferences a Guide for Teachers, Graduate Students and Professors* (Cham, state/country: Springer, 2016), 8.

Impact of Theological Training in the Church

One of the qualifications of overseers and deacons, the Apostle Paul states, is that they are able to teach (1 Tim. 3:2). This is also true of those who are called to the fivefold ministry; they must be able to teach to spread the gospel. In order to teach God's salvific message correctly to the world, these teachers must have a sound theological background. As discovered in this project's literature review section, theology is a science that systematically discovers God's truths.²⁰⁶ This researcher facilitated a six and half hour workshop on the church's five core doctrines: fivefold ministry, baptism, prayer, counseling, and preaching. The workshop sessions demonstrated that more profound knowledge is gained by systematically studying each of these areas. God shares what He wants to be known about Him through Scripture. This information from God—theology—directly impacts how believers respond to Him and how they interact with others. An incorrect theology will cause believers to offend God and others and teach His Word incorrectly.

The theological training on the fivefold ministry helped the participants to comprehend the importance of these five giftings in the body of Christ. The researcher systematically unearthed the purpose of this ministry and its function of equipping the church. When the church's fivefold ministry is theologically informed, it thrives as Jesus intended. Clarifying the roles of the fivefold ministry to the participants allowed them to survey how they used their gifts in service to the church compared to Christ's mission. The group's performance on the fivefold ministry survey revealed that 97% understood that Jesus' purpose for the fivefold ministry was to build up and equip the church. At the same time, 90% of the participants were convinced that the fivefold ministry needs theological training. These results demonstrate that the training was

²⁰⁶ Putman et al., *Real-Life Discipleship Training Manual*, 3e.

effective in this area and that it positively influenced the majority of the group towards theological training in the church.

The theological training of baptism provided evidence to the participants that it represents a transformation on the inside of the believer after putting faith and trust in Christ. Baptism is not only a demonstration to the world and God that Jesus is a life changer but also an offering to God that His Word has penetrated the heart to the point of repentance. Systematically reviewing seven occasions of baptism in the Bible during the workshop revealed the connection to God's acts of salvation throughout history that continues today. One hundred percent of the participants agreed that baptism is an external presentation of an internal change in the believer's life. In comparison, ninety percent understood the connection to Christ and His plan of salvation for the believer. These high percentages from the baptism surveys demonstrate that the training session was highly effective in helping the participants understand from a theological perspective.

The theological training on prayer portrayed to the participants that prayer is more than making requests to God; it is communication with Him. Another point the researcher shared with the participants that was included in the literature review section is that prayer is a freedom that cannot be taken for granted that happens between God and His creation.²⁰⁷ Demonstrating different forms of prayer during the training session allowed the participants to understand that shaping prayers with the gospel ensure that they are not lofty or coming from a place of insincerity. The participants rated high on the prayer survey, demonstrating that the theological training on this doctrine was clear and powerful. However, 77% felt as though prayer could be taught as Jesus taught the disciples; the other 23% were not convinced on this point.

Nevertheless, the participants benefited from the session on prayer and thought it particularly

²⁰⁷ Prevot, *Thinking Prayer*, 2.

important to improve in this area to be in line with the name of the church. The church's name, Unity Gospel House of Prayer, implies this is where God hears and answers prayer and where substantial earnest prayer is going on.

The theological session on counseling provided the participants with a deeper understanding of how God's Word is sufficient to counsel those who may be experiencing challenging times. The participants rated the survey favorably, demonstrating that counseling is critical in the church. However, once the participants understood the definitions of Christian counseling and biblical counseling, the survey results showed that 77% preferred biblical counseling over Christian counseling. This is a significant finding in the church and may provide the church counselors with additional tools or strategies when providing this vital service.

The in-depth preaching training provided valuable insight into this vocation that the participants had never considered. Providing several forms of preaching methods allowed the participants to understand that preaching is not a "one size fits all" task. The survey questions on the necessity of historical and cultural study and theological understandings for preaching scored high, revealing a shift to take preparing a message for a congregation seriously from a biblical contextual perspective.

Overall, the implications of this action research will allow the church to fine-tune its core doctrines with theological training. The implementation of the proposed theological training program at the church will increase the overall quality of the ministry as its spiritual offerings will be based on a solid biblical foundation.

Research Applications

This action research intervention allowed the participants to be the voice for the outcome of this thesis project. As a result, the researcher ascertained that the participants desired formal theological training in the church. The stakeholders of this live research provided valuable information for the development of a theological training program to support Unity Gospel House of Prayer's fivefold ministry. As a result of this live-action research, this researcher is tasked with developing a theological training plan for both current and future ministers at the church. Sensing says,

Carefully consider the appropriate actions that will enhance the project's value, your growth as a minister, and the congregation's health. No one is in a better position than you to begin planning again for the next phase of work. I am not talking about your vacation plans. The DMin project thesis has positioned you to envision the next horizon and to lead the congregation over it.²⁰⁸

The researcher will create a theological training system from the information this action research provided. The training system will be a series of studies constructed at competency levels. For example, the introductory training level will consist of topics like the Bible (Canon), theology, prayer, baptism, counseling and preaching. The intermediate level of training will consist of the fivefold ministry, the Trinity, Holy Spirit, exegesis of Scripture, studying in biblical context, and developing a sermon. The advanced level of theological training will include the creation, the resurrection of Jesus Christ, eschatology, apologetics, and theodicy.

The data from this research is far-reaching and will impact not only Unity Gospel House of Prayer but other churches that need theological training. The themes uncovered in this project are not isolated to Unity but are experienced at other churches as well, which is why there is interest in this training outside of the church. While some churches may feel it is not necessary to

²⁰⁸ Sensing, *Qualitative Research*, 232.

go to seminary for training, they may still provide theological training in the church with this program.

Research Limitations

The methods used in this action research were unique to Unity Gospel House of Prayer. While there have been training classes in the past, none included obtaining feedback from those in attendance. The participants were eager to share their experiences during the interviews and focus group setting and frequently went off-topic. While this may be considered positive, the researcher had to sift through collected data and disregard information that was not representative of the larger group but was isolated personal events. This discarded information was not representative of the entire ministerial staff or reflective of the congregation.

While the one-day seminar was beneficial for this action research project, the researcher will only facilitate this type by request in the future. The researcher understands that ongoing theological training must be scheduled on a continuing basis to instruct the new and current ministerial staff. However, those present during the workshop who were members of other churches have already requested this researcher to present this one-day seminar at their church.

A specific area of improvement for the surveys would have been to conduct pre- and post-surveys to better capture the participant's knowledge before and after the workshop. While this was done for those participants who were interviewed, the post-workshop surveys could not be contrasted with pre-knowledge results, which would have allowed the researcher to see which areas needed more focus. Apart from this, this research will support the future development of the church's theological training that will strengthen its fivefold ministry.

Further Research

Several items surfaced from this live-action project that may benefit from further research. First, it may be beneficial to develop a plan to evaluate the long-term impact of having theological training to support Unity's fivefold ministry. Once the training program is in place, it would be advantageous to understand if the ministerial staff improved in their giftings of the fivefold ministry. Having this kind of information will inform the church of the efficacy of the theological training program.

Another area that would benefit from further research is understanding how specific gifts are used in the church and if they are appropriately aligned for the minister to be effective. This research uncovered that several ministers felt they were misaligned with their calling and the work they were doing in the church. The information provided to the participants challenged them to search themselves and understand if they were fulfilling the vocation to which they were called. It is not clear how this study will be carried out at this time, but it may include utilizing the fivefold ministry test that this researcher used for this action research. However, such an investigation would be beneficial overall to the ministry.

The next area that may require additional research comes from the topic of counseling in the church. The results of the counseling survey uncovered that the participants were more in favor of Christian counseling than biblical counseling. It would be interesting to understand why. The difference between the two is that biblical counseling only uses the Bible to counsel, while Christian counseling uses a combination of biblical and secular methods. It would also be helpful to understand what secular methods the church would be willing to institute in its counseling program. It would also be beneficial to research which of the two is more effective in the church.

Conclusion

The researcher learned how dire theological training is to the church and believes she conveyed this same urgency to the participants and the pastor. Often referring to this project's problem, purpose, and thesis statements allowed the researcher to prepare targeted pre- and post-interview questions that allowed the conversations to remain focused. The researcher became a co-participant in this research, as she has labored in this church alongside these ministers and understood the ministry's needs. Sensing says, "DMin students engage in the project thesis, hoping to effect change through the specific plans of action they have in mind, like training teachers, improving their preaching, initiating a new social justice program, or addressing issues of inclusivity."²⁰⁹ This action research produced more than was anticipated as themes surfaced that were never conceptualized in the beginning stages. This researcher also learned how vital it is to investigate ministry issues with action research involving participants who are doing the work and hold the most valuable information.

The themes that were discovered and addressed in the results section of this thesis project demonstrate the consequence of this live research. Without the pre- and post-interviews, it may not have been discovered that those called by Jesus to do specific work were not in their gifted vocation in the church. The interviews and workshop helped change the minds of the majority of the participants that theological training is essential in the church. It also would not have been discovered that several women ministers, who tested as pastors in this action research, still felt the impact of being taught that women could not be overseers in the church. The researcher addressed each of these issues with exegesis and theological study so that the participants would know of a surety what God has to say on the matters.

²⁰⁹ Sensing, *Qualitative Research*, 63.

Overall, this action research concluded that the church should be concerned about proper theological training for its ministers and members. Equipping the church was so important to Jesus that He structured His church with a team with the sole purpose of doing just that. Apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers have a charge to keep and a church to build up in preparation for Christ's return. This action research accomplished enlightening how critical these roles are to the church in reaching its goal of maturity and unity. There is much work to do in the church, and it is vital that ministers are equipped theologically before they can set out to bring others to Christ. Allen says, "The end to which the minister labors is the proclamation of the gospel and the furtherance of the Great Commission. Fulfilling the Great Commission necessitates a burden for the lost, a passion for the glory of God in the salvation of sinners, and an equipped mind to reason, teach, and persuasively present the gospel."²¹⁰

²¹⁰ Allen, *Discerning Your Call to Ministry*, 73.

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APPENDIX A

LESSON PLAN COURSE CURRICULUM

This appendix contains an example lesson plan with teaching notes and presentation slides for the study on the fivefold ministry. This sample is one of the lessons out of the six consecutive sessions of action research study on supporting a fivefold ministry with theological training. The six classes consist of the following:

- 1) Fivefold Ministry
- 2) Prayer
- 3) Baptism
- 4) Preaching
- 5) Counseling
- 6) Bringing the Seminary to Church Focus Group

Supporting a fivefold ministry with theological education

Lesson One – Fivefold Ministry

Objective: To understand the theology behind the fivefold ministry

Scripture: Ephesians 4:11-13 “And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.”

- I. Introduction
 - a. The fivefold ministry was put in place by Jesus Christ Himself.
 - b. The fivefold ministry model stems from Ephesians 4:11, which says, “Now these are the gifts Christ gave to the church: the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, and the pastors and teachers.” Author Matthew Green provides the goal for these giftings, saying, “According to Ephesians 4:12, the role of those in the fivefold ministry is “for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry.”²¹¹
- II. Purpose of the fivefold ministry
 - a. For the equipping of the saints – perfect
 - b. For the work of ministry – servants, service
 - c. For edifying the body of Christ – build up or promote growth
- III. How long will this ministry be in effect?
 - a. Until we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God
 - b. Until we all come to be perfect
 - c. Until we all achieve the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ
- IV. Responsibility of the fivefold ministry
 - a. Apostles
 - i. The one called and sent by Christ
 - ii. Hold the church to its true foundation
 - iii. Modern-day apostles have specific duties, similar to the Apostle Paul, of spreading the gospel and planting churches. Authors Hirsch and Catchim write, “The apostle is tasked with the overall vigor, as well as extension of Christianity as a whole, primarily through direct mission and church planting. As the name itself suggests, it is the quintessentially missional ministry, as “sentness” (Latin *missio*) is written into it (*apostello* ε sent one).”²¹²
 - b. Prophets
 - i. Reveal God’s heart to people

²¹¹ Matthew D. Green, *Understanding the Fivefold Ministry: How do these five leadership gifts work together* (Lake Mary, FL: Charisma House, 2015), 151.

²¹² Alan Hirsch and Tim Catchim, *The Permanent Revolution: Apostolic Imagination and Practice for the 21st Century Church* (Somerset, state: John Wiley & Sons, Incorporated, 2012), 8.

- ii. Warns the people of what's to come according to Scripture
 - iii. One who declares God's truths and speaks on His behalf to His people. Prophets reveal the secrets of God as they receive revelation. A prophet is one who speaks directly from God and is committed to not straying from what God has revealed. Hirsch and Catchim write, "The prophet is called to maintain faithfulness to God among the people of God. Essentially prophets are guardians of the covenant relationship."²¹³
- c. Evangelists
 - i. The soul winner for the kingdom
 - ii. One who travels from place to place spreading the gospel. An evangelist may also be considered a missionary. The office of the evangelist is critical to the church, especially for outreach purposes and will be needed until Christ returns for His church. "The evangelist is the recruiter to the cause, the naturally infectious person who is able to enlist people into the movement by transmitting the gospel."²¹⁴
- d. Pastors
 - i. Keepers of the flock
 - ii. Ready to lay down their lives for the flock
 - iii. One who leads and oversees the church and may also manage the day-to-day activities of the ministry. The pastor ensures the members and leaders of the church receive the necessary training and nourishment to grow spiritually. "The shepherd (pastor) is called to nurture spiritual development, maintain communal health, and engender loving community among the people of God."²¹⁵
- e. Teachers
 - i. Edify the church by teaching
 - ii. Make members hungry for the Word
 - iii. Those who commit to teaching the Word of God to His people correctly and not straying away from the Scripture. Teachers continuously study the Bible to show themselves approved unto God (2 Tim 2:15). Teachers are gifted with knowledge from the Holy Spirit and have the ability to impart that knowledge to others in the church and community as needed. "The teacher mediates wisdom and understanding. This philosophical type brings comprehensive understanding of the revelation bequeathed to the church."²¹⁶

V. Characteristics of the fivefold ministry (see chart below)

a. Apostles

²¹³ Chase R. Kuhn and Paul Grimmond, *Theology Is for Preaching: Biblical Foundations, Method, and Practice* (Ashland, state: Lexham Press, 2021), 33.

²¹⁴ Heath Lambert, *A Theology of Biblical Counseling: The Doctrinal Foundations of Counseling Ministry* (Grand Rapids, MI: HarperCollins Christian Publishing, 2016), 31.

²¹⁵ Bruce Riley Ashford and Heath A. Thomas, *The Gospel of Our King: Bible, Worldview, and the Mission of Every Christian* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2019), 13.

²¹⁶ Hirsch and Catchim, *The Permanent Revolution*, 8.

- b. Prophets
 - c. Evangelists
 - d. Pastors
 - e. Teachers
- VI. Jesus modelled the fivefold ministry
- a. Apostle – Hebrews 3:1 says, Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, Christ Jesus, who was faithful to Him who appointed Him, as Moses also was faithful in all His house.
 - b. Prophet - He is spoken of in Deut 18:15 “The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your brothers—it is to him you shall listen”
 - c. Evangelist – In Luke 4:18, Jesus said, “The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me, to bring good news to the afflicted; He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to captives and freedom to prisoners.”
 - d. Pastor - In John 10:11, Jesus said of Himself: “I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep”
 - e. Teacher - John 13:13 “You call Me Teacher and Lord; and you are right, for so I am.
- VII. Benefits of the fivefold ministry
- a. “According to Paul, a fully functioning fivefold APEST (Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Shepherd, Teacher), ministry is the Christ-given defense mechanism against heresy and false doctrine. There is something about APEST as a whole that moves the church past theological naiveté and anchors it in a more integrated understanding of its central message and core doctrines.”²¹⁷
 - b. When the church is thriving in a functioning fivefold ministry, there is a greater chance for correct application of Scripture in the lives of believers and protection from those who spread false teachings in the church.
 - c. In his contemporary book, *Understanding The Fivefold Ministry*, author Matthew Green defines the fivefold ministry gifts by writing, “the fivefold ministry gifts are ultimately not titles but activities. For instance, an evangelist is not an evangelist unless he or she preaches the gospel and wins souls for the kingdom. Ultimately, your gift will be authenticated, not by the title that you are assigned, but by the evidence of God’s anointing on your life as He empowers you to build up His people and bring His message to those who are lost.”²¹⁸
- VIII. Conclusion

²¹⁷ Hirsch and Catchim, *The Permanent Revolution*, 16.

²¹⁸ Green, *Understanding the Fivefold Ministry*, 151.

Fivefold Ministry Characteristics

Apostles

- * Church planter
- * Visionary
- * Flow in Spiritual gifts
- * Endure persecution

Prophets

- * Correct in love
- * Speak words in season
- * Speaks God's will not religion

Evangelists

- * Love people
- * Active
- * Travel to spread the gospel
- * Encouraging the lost

Pastors (Shepherds)

- * Have a heart for people
- * Protective
- * Return love for hate
- * Counsellor

Teachers

- * Organized
- * Teachable
- * Love God's Word
- * Desire Truth

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APPENDIX B

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE

Title of the Project: Implementing and Supporting a Fivefold Ministry with Theological Education to Defend and Uphold Biblical Doctrines in the Church

Principal Investigator: Kara Harris, Doctoral Candidate, Liberty University School of Divinity

Invitation to be Part of a Research Study

You are invited to participate in a research study. In order to participate, you must be 18 years of age or older, and currently walk in one of the fivefold ministry gifts: Apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor, or teacher. Taking part in this research project is voluntary.

Please take time to read this entire form and ask questions before deciding whether to take part in this research project.

What is the study about, and why is it being done?

The purpose of this DMIN action research project is to develop and implement a theology-focused training program at Unity Gospel House of Prayer to support its fivefold ministry. This objective will be accomplished by creating a solid theology program on five central core areas that the church desires to develop: fivefold ministry, prayer, counseling, baptism, and preaching.

What will happen if you take part in this study?

If you agree to be in this study, you would be asked to do the following things:

1. Participate in course surveys after each session. Each survey will be given at the end of each session. Each survey is five questions and should only take five to ten minutes to complete.
2. Participate in six one-hour theological training sessions to be held on Saturday, July 30, 2022, at 10:00 am. Each session will be audio recorded to assist the researcher with post-program evaluation only.

How could you or others benefit from this study?

Participants will directly benefit from expanding their theological knowledge of their specific gifting by taking part in this study. Others will benefit from the participant's feedback which will be used to develop a solid theological training program for future fivefold ministry ministers.

What risks might you experience from being in this study?

The risks involved in this study are minimal, which means they are equal to the risks you would encounter in everyday life.

How will personal information be protected?

The records of this study will be kept private. Research records will be stored securely, and only the researcher will have access to the records. All participant responses will be anonymous but

may be used for future training and development. Data will be stored on a password-locked computer and may be used in future presentations. After three years, all electronic records will be deleted.

Is study participation voluntary?

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision on whether to participate will not affect your current or future relations with Unity Gospel House of Prayer. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.

What should you do if you decide to withdraw from the study? “How to Withdraw from the Study”

If you choose to withdraw from the study, please do not complete the survey. Your responses will not be recorded or included in the study.

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

The researcher conducting this study is Kara Harris. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact her at [REDACTED]. You may also contact the researcher’s faculty sponsor, Dr. Phillip McFarland, at [REDACTED].

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

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

Your Consent

Before agreeing to be part of the research, please be sure that you understand what the study is about. You can print a copy of the document for your records. If you have any questions about the study later, you can contact the researcher/study team using the information provided above.

I have read and understood the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers. I consent to participate in the study.

Printed Participant’s Name

Signature and Date

APPENDIX C
PROGRAM SURVEYS

Fivefold Ministry Survey

Please respond to each question honestly

Keeping your responses confidential is important. Your comments and responses are welcome and needed to gain the best results from this action research. Thank you for your participation.

The fivefold ministry still exists and is necessary for the maturity of the church.

Not agree ☐

Agree ☐

The Apostles and Prophets are the foundation of the church and no longer exist.

Not agree ☐

Agree ☐

The purpose of the fivefold ministry is to equip and mature the church.

Not agree ☐

Agree ☐

The fivefold ministry will be active in the church until the church has attained the full measure of Christ.

Not agree ☐

Agree ☐

Theological training is necessary for the fivefold ministry to thrive as Jesus intended.

Not agree ☐

Agree ☐

Prayer Survey

Please respond to each question honestly

Keeping your responses confidential is important. Your comments and responses are welcome and needed to gain the best results from this action research. Thank you for your participation.

Prayer is direct communication with God.

Not agree ☐

Agree ☐

God is delighted to answer prayers.

Not agree ☐

Agree ☐

Understanding the theology behind prayer helps believers formulate them to be meaningful and not lofty.

Not agree ☐

Agree ☐

Jesus trained the disciples to pray; therefore, believers today should also be trained to pray.

Not agree ☐

Agree ☐

Prayers should be made according to the will of God.

Not agree ☐

Agree ☐

Baptism Survey

Please respond to each question honestly

Keeping your responses confidential is important. Your comments and responses are welcome and needed to gain the best results from this action research. Thank you for your participation.

Baptism is an external presentation of an internal change in the life of the believer.

Not agree ☐

Agree ☐

Jesus instituted baptism for the church.

Not agree ☐

Agree ☐

It is not the water washing of baptism that saves believers; it is the spiritual reality behind the immersion in water.

Not agree ☐

Agree ☐

Baptism demonstrates that believers are united with and have clothed themselves with Christ.

Not agree ☐

Agree ☐

The display of Christ does not end after baptism; it is a continual and consistent walk for the rest of the believer's life.

Not agree ☐

Agree ☐

Preaching Survey

Please respond to each question honestly

Keeping your responses confidential is important. Your comments and responses are welcome and needed to gain the best results from this action research. Thank you for your participation.

Preaching is declaring God's truths to an audience in a way that allows the hearers to understand and correctly apply biblical teachings to their lives.

Not agree ☐

Agree ☐

It is vital for the preacher to have a solid theological foundation in order to communicate God's Word effectively to the congregation.

Not agree ☐

Agree ☐

God is concerned with the accurate preaching of His Word.

Not agree ☐

Agree ☐

It is crucial that preachers of God's Word study from a historical and cultural perspective to ensure they are not changing the meaning of what God intended during their sermons.

Not agree ☐

Agree ☐

Preaching should signify the character of God and His Word to announce what God desires for believers to know to change their lives forever.

Not agree ☐

Agree ☐

Counseling Survey

Please respond to each question honestly

Keeping your responses confidential is important. Your comments and responses are welcome and needed to gain the best results from this action research. Thank you for your participation.

Attending a church service can be therapeutic when hearing the preached Word of God.

Not agree ☐

Agree ☐

It is critical for Christian counselors or ministers to have a sound theological foundation in God's Word to provide counseling to others.

Not agree ☐

Agree ☐

A theological foundation in Christian counseling assures that the minister is not providing misleading information and communicating God's truth and love with the authority of the Scriptures.

Not agree ☐

Agree ☐

God is concerned about His children's mental health, which is why He put ministering counselors in the church to comfort and demonstrate His love and grace.

Not agree ☐

Agree ☐

The Word of God is sufficient for counseling and does not require secular methods.

Not agree ☐

Agree ☐

Final Assessment Survey

Please respond to each question honestly

Keeping your responses confidential is important. Your comments and responses are welcome and needed to gain the best results from this action research. Thank you for your participation.

The facilitator communicated well and kept all participants informed throughout the research study.

Not agree ☐

Agree ☐

The facilitator presented the materials in a manner that was easy to understand.

Not agree ☐

Agree ☐

The facilitator was prepared, and the presentation was professional.

Not agree ☐

Agree ☐

The objective of the study was clearly explained before agreeing to participate.

Not agree ☐

Agree ☐

Overall, the research study was satisfactory.

Not agree ☐

Agree ☐

APPENDIX D

FIVEFOLD MINISTRY TEST

This test can be taken at www.FiveFoldMinistryTest.com

This is a simple questionnaire that will help you identify your top two spiritual giftings according to the kingdom strengths of Apostle, Prophet, Pastor, Teacher and Evangelist.

Answer all the questions below and give them a 1 to 10 rating. Rate 1 if the statement does not apply to you at all; give it a 10 if it very much applies to you.

1 = It does not apply to you at all - 10 = It very much applies to you

1. ____ I am able to help others have fun and relax. I am good at bringing people together.
2. ____ I am curious about a lot of things and enjoy learning new things.
3. ____ I believe the church needs to spend more time reaching outside of the church.
4. ____ I am particularly gifted at helping people hear the voice of God for the first time.
5. ____ I feel called to equip, train and lead others into maturity for ministry.
6. ____ I really feel people's pain when they are hurting. I must get myself involved.
7. ____ I can communicate complex ideas in ways people can understand.
8. ____ I am not shy about telling my story to people I have never met.
9. ____ When I pray for others, I can get easily distracted with random thoughts, words or pictures.
10. ____ I can see and identify people's strengths and giftings and help them find their place and calling.
11. ____ I am able to help people solve conflicts with others.
12. ____ I read the Bible almost every day. Reading is one of the most effective ways for me to learn.
13. ____ I can adapt to whatever my surroundings are. I am comfortable almost anywhere.
14. ____ I frequently get dreams and can see scenarios in my mind.
15. ____ When people have challenges, I clearly see what they need to do.
16. ____ I am very good at making people feel like they belong and are accepted.

17. ____ If I don't understand something, I spend time to figure it out.
18. ____ It's very important to me that I have friends who are not Christians.
19. ____ I am compelled to help the needy, broken and oppressed. I cannot stand by as injustice occurs.
20. ____ I often help people explore ideas and goals for their life. I help people reach their potential.
21. ____ While both are important, I feel I'm better at helping the needs inside the church vs outside the church.
22. ____ I strongly believe that people don't read the word enough.
23. ____ I believe Jesus is coming back soon, most likely in my lifetime.
24. ____ I am able to sense and understand the heart of God for people when I pray for them.
25. ____ It doesn't bother me to bend the rules. In fact I like it. Better say sorry than ask for permission.
26. ____ I am great with my words. Rarely do people take things I say the wrong way.
27. ____ I am compelled to correct someone if they are sharing incorrect information.
28. ____ If someone accomplishes something, I am quick to tell others about it and celebrate with them.
29. ____ I believe life is no accident. I believe people can choose their life's destiny in God.
30. ____ Other people's challenges become my mission. I make other people's journey part of mine. Their victories are my victories.
31. ____ I really have a heart for those who have had struggles and challenges in life.
32. ____ I am not afraid to share with other people what I have learned this week.
33. ____ I get excited when I have people's attention and love to share and talk.
34. ____ I frequently get a 'Gut Feeling' about things. I am usually right on my opinions.
35. ____ I don't sugar coat anything. I can offend people with my bluntness, but brutal truth is better in my opinion.
36. ____ I am a very patient person. Sometimes people can take advantage of my patience.
37. ____ If I am unsure of something in life, I first turn to reading the word.

38. _____ I believe in the urgency of life. We must be doing more now to change the world.
39. _____ I can distinguish between the works of God and the works of the Satan.
40. _____ I help people learn to live a life like mine and avoid the mistakes that I made.
41. _____ Drama is no big deal because I am never involved in it. I frequently help to diffuse drama.
42. _____ When I read the scriptures, I can clearly see my personal application for what I need to do.
43. _____ I am able to communicate the goodness of God and why people need Jesus.
44. _____ When I pray for someone, it is not uncommon for them to cry.
45. _____ I quickly know if something is a complete waste of time and don't bother getting involved.

To score your test, enter the numerical response in spaces below for each corresponding question.

Then total all the individual scores up for each section. The top two scores represent your top two strongest giftings.

PASTOR	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
	Q1	Q6	Q11	Q16	Q21
	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
	Q26	Q31	Q36	Q41	TOTAL
TEACHER	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
	Q2	Q7	Q12	Q17	Q22
	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
	Q27	Q32	Q37	Q42	TOTAL
EVANGELIST	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
	Q3	Q8	Q13	Q18	Q23
	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
	Q28	Q33	Q38	Q43	TOTAL

PROPHET	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
	Q4	Q9	Q14	Q19	Q24
	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
	Q29	Q34	Q39	Q44	TOTAL
APOSTILE	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
	Q5	Q10	Q15	Q20	Q25
	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
	Q30	Q35	Q40	Q45	TOTAL

My Top Two Giftings Are: 1) _____ 2) _____

For more information and resources on the Five Fold Ministry, visit [FiveFoldMinistryTest.com](https://www.fivefoldministry.com/five-fold-ministry-test.pdf)

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APPENDIX E

FOCUS GROUP SWOT ANALYSIS

Bringing the Seminary to Church


Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
How does the fivefold ministry strengthen the church?	What does the church continue to struggle with?	If this church could be known for one thing, what would that be?	What could the church do to equip its members better?
1			
2			
3			
4			
What does the ministry do well to build ministers in the church?	What are the major complaints about this church's ministerial staff?	What are the opportunities for having a theological program in the church?	What external factor has the most negative impact on your church?
1			
2			
3			
4			
What do you consider the strong qualities or characteristics of a called minister?	What are the implications of not having theologically trained ministers?	What are the benefits of having Christian counselors in the church?	If you could change one thing about your church, what would it be?
1			
2			
3			
4			

APPENDIX F

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT CHURCH

This appendix includes the researcher's letter requesting permission to conduct the action research thesis intervention at Unity Gospel House of Prayer. Also included is the formal letter from Unity Gospel House of Prayer granting the researcher permission to conduct the proposed action research thesis intervention within the church facility and approval to contact members and attendees of the church for voluntary participation.

April 26, 2022

Marlon Lock
Senior Pastor
Unity Gospel House of Prayer


Dear Pastor Lock,

As a graduate student in the John W. Rawlings School of Divinity at Liberty University, I am conducting research as part of the requirements for a Doctor of Ministry degree in Apologetics and Theology. The title of my research project is “Implementing and Equipping a Fivefold Ministry with Theological Education to Defend and Uphold Biblical Doctrines in the Church.” The purpose of my research is to develop a theological training plan at Unity Gospel House of Prayer to support its fivefold ministry.

I am writing to request your permission to conduct my research at Unity Gospel House of Prayer and contact members and attendees of your church to invite them to participate in my research study.

Participants will be asked to complete surveys throughout the six and half hour workshop and participate in a focus group session. Participants will also be presented with informed consent information prior to participating. Taking part in this study is completely voluntary, and participants are welcome to discontinue participation at any time.

Thank you for considering my request. If you choose to grant permission, please provide a signed statement on official letterhead indicating your approval. An example permission letter document is attached for your convenience.

Sincerely,

Kara Harris
Graduate Student
John W. Rawlings School of Divinity
Liberty University



July 29, 2022

Mrs. Kara Harris
Graduate Student
John W. Rawlings School of Divinity
Liberty University
1971 University Boulevard
Lynchburg, VA 24515

Dear Kara:

Thank you for submitting your research proposal "Implementing and Equipping a Fivefold Ministry with Theological Education to Defend and Uphold Biblical Doctrines in the Church." After a careful review of your research proposal, I have decided to grant you permission to conduct your study at Unity Gospel House of Prayer.

I further grant you permission to contact and invite members and attendees to participate in this research study. We are praying for your success in this endeavor and are excited to see the results.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, which appears to be "Marlon Lock", is written over a solid black rectangular redaction box.

Pastor Marlon Lock
Senior Pastor
Unity Gospel House of Prayer

APPENDIX G

PULPIT ANNOUNCEMENT AND PROMOTIONAL FLYER

The following announcement will be made from the pulpit as a special announcement during Sunday morning and Tuesday evening services. This announcement will also be posted on the church website and bulletin board in the foyer.

Pulpit Announcement

Ephesians 4:11, “Now these are the gifts Christ gave to the church: the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, and the pastors and teachers.” Are you an Apostle, Prophet or Prophetess, Evangelist, Pastor, or Teacher? Have you been called into one of these offices and want to learn more about them? If so, then Jesus gave you a specific job to do, and that is to build up His church. You and your unique gift are needed to participate in a very important research study for Unity Gospel House of Prayer. This will be a six and half hour study on how theological training can help equip Unity’s fivefold ministry. These sessions will be conducted by Minister Kara Harris, who is conducting research as a doctoral candidate for Liberty University. This research will benefit the church, and the data gathered will be used to implement an ongoing theological program for current and future ministers of the fivefold ministry. The Apostle Paul reassured us that these gifts must continue to build up the church until it reaches the fullness of Christ. Let’s work together to develop a plan that will continue to mature the church just as Jesus intended.

If you want to help develop this plan, you must be called to serve as an elder, minister, apostle, prophet, prophetess, evangelist, pastor or teacher. You do not have to be currently active in one of these offices, only called to serve in one. Participation is entirely voluntary. If you are interested in helping develop this training plan for Unity, please see Kara Harris immediately

after service. There will also be a flyer with Kara's contact information in the foyer. We encourage you to participate and share the gift that the Holy Spirit gave you in a way that will impact others who are called into the fivefold ministry. You will be blessed!

Promotional Flyer

FIVEFOLD MINISTRY STUDY

EPHESIANS 4:11, "NOW THESE ARE THE GIFTS CHRIST GAVE TO THE CHURCH: THE APOSTLES, THE PROPHETS, THE EVANGELISTS, AND THE PASTORS AND TEACHERS."

Research Participants Needed

Are you 18 years or older?

Are you currently a minister gifted with any of the following?

Apostle

Prophet

Evangelist

Pastor

Teacher

Or have you been called into the ministry and are not sure of your gift yet?

If you answered yes to both questions, then you are needed for this one-day study.

Sunday mornings @ 8:30 am

Where: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Kara Harris, a doctoral candidate in the John Rawlings School of Divinity at Liberty University, is conducting this study. Please contact Kara Harris at [REDACTED]

APPENDIX H

IRB APPROVAL LETTER

LIBERTY UNIVERSITY

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

June 14, 2022

Kara Harris
Darren Hercyk

Re: IRB Application - IRB-FY21-22-1147 Implementing and Equipping a Fivefold Ministry with Theological Education to Defend and Uphold Biblical Doctrines in the Church

Dear Kara Harris and Darren Hercyk,

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 project 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(I).

Please note that this decision only applies to your current 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 [REDACTED].

Sincerely,

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