

Liberty University

School of Music

**Embedding the Theology and Principles of Worship  
in Pastoral Training and Sermon Preparation**

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the Faculty of the School of Music  
in Candidacy for the Degree of  
Ph.D. in Christian Worship

by

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**Ph.D. IN CHRISTIAN WORSHIP**  
**DISSERTATION DEFENSE DECISION**

The committee has rendered the following decision concerning the defense for

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## **Declaration**

I declare that this dissertation presented for the degree of Ph.D. in Christian Worship has been composed entirely by myself, has been solely the result of my own work, and has not been submitted for any other degree, diploma, or professional qualification.

I have attempted to identify all the risks related to this research that may arise in conducting this study, obtained the relevant ethical and/or safety approval (where applicable), and acknowledged my obligations and the rights of the participants.

I have clearly referenced in accordance with departmental requirements, in both the text and the bibliography, all sources (either from a printed origin, internet source, or any other electronic source) used in the work. I have honored the principles of academic integrity and have upheld Liberty University's Student Code of Academic Conduct in completing this work.

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## **Abstract**

A current literature investigation exposes a deficit in encouraging pastors and preachers to embed theology and principles of worship in their sermon preparation and pastoral training. This presents a concern when churchgoers gather in person or virtually to hear a sermon to strengthen their Christian walk each week. In addition, each year, seminary students and local church organizations graduate ministry leaders trained and prepared to deliver sermons designed to meet the spiritual needs of churchgoers. Yet, upon closer examination, there exist underpinning issues. Churchgoers are lacking in their understanding of worship. The Association of Theological Schools exposes a noticeable gap in the education and preparation of individuals seeking pastoral responsibilities in our churches for the subject of worship. Pastors and preachers are not usually formally trained in worship beyond a connection to liturgy or music. This presents a challenge for pastors and preachers who desire their congregations to grow in their understanding of reverencing God in their daily life. This qualitative study provides a rationale for the importance of pastors, preachers, and churchgoers to understand worship theology and principles. This study further delineates how pastors and preachers can deepen their churchgoers' knowledge of worship theology and principles. In summation, the intentionality of pastors and preachers embedding worship theology and principles in their sermon planning and the delivery of their sermons is vital to the spiritual formation of church leaders and churchgoers who have an ultimate desire to live an authentic lifestyle of worship.

*Keywords:* worship, worship theology, worship principles, worship planning, pastoral training, seminary, sermon writing, sermon preparation, sermon delivery, spiritual growth, spiritual formation, church leadership, church growth, liturgy

## **Dedication**

The Lord is my God and the Lord is one. I love the Lord my God with all my heart, with all my soul, and with all my strength!

The work of this dissertation is dedicated to my mom, Evelyn Washington Newbill. She encouraged my passion for learning when I was three years old; her influence continues today.

The work of this dissertation is also dedicated to every Christian believer who desires to fulfill their calling and follow the leading of the Lord feverishly being obedient as one who knows without doubt, they were created for worship.

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Thank you, Dr. Scott Connell, for ensuring I successfully complete the Ph.D. process as my dissertation chair. Your laser focus and academic prowess safeguarded the preparation and stamina I needed to cross the finish line and achieve this goal. Your grace and understanding through many late nights did not go unnoticed. You listened to every idea and unknowingly allowed the Lord to ensure this project reflected His will for me as a psalmist, teacher, worship leader, and preacher with a heart laced with reverence for God.

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This research study stands on the shoulders of every pastor, elder, minister, and deacon who participated in this research. I truly appreciate how each of you gave your time and effort to commit to this work. I listened to every sermon, and one thing that became evident is that God has truly gifted each of you to preach the Word in and out of season. I had to remind myself while listening to each of your messages that I was engaged in research versus listening and being spiritually fed. However, I could not separate the two because every message, all forty-four, was for me too in order to continue growing in this “thing” called life! Thank you for your commitment and dedication to the universal church. May the Lord continue to enlarge your territories and spiritually endow each of you with everything you need to keep spreading the gospel and fulfilling the Great Commission.

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## Chapter 1: Introduction

### Background

When researching pastoral training and sermon preparation, both areas are virtually void of ensuring that pastors have a clear understanding of worship and the role pastors and preachers have in their congregations growing in their knowledge of the theology and principles of worship. This often is due to the training received by the pastor or person who preaches. For example, if a pastor or preacher chooses to attend a theological seminary, their coursework and preparation for writing sermons will include exegesis, theology, and homiletics training. They are required to take courses on biblical content and knowledge, leadership, and spiritual formation. However, a course on worship is not typically required even though there is biblical precedence to ensure followers of God understand the theology and principles of worship (e.g., Moses, Jesus Christ, and the Apostles). Pastors and preachers at a theological seminary tend to have to select a worship course as an elective if any at all are required. This is concerning given that according to the Pew Research Center, churchgoers in the U.S. have “a lot” of confidence in their religious leaders to provide guidance in the areas of growing closer to God (68%) and in the interpretation of Scripture (60%) with 7 in 10 churchgoers being very confident.<sup>1</sup>

With such a significant trust factor in leadership, the inclusion of theology and principles of worship in the training and sermon preparation of a pastor or preacher becomes essential to the spiritual development of their congregants. I Timothy 3:16–17 (New King James Version) states, “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly

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<sup>1</sup> “Americans Have Positive Views About Religion’s Role in Society, But Want It Out of Politics,” Pew Research Center, November 15, 2019, <https://www.pewforum.org/2019/11/15/most-congregants-trust-clergy-to-give-advice-about-religious-issues-fewer-trust-clergy-on-personal-matters/>.

equipped for every good work.” Churchgoers need correction and instruction regarding worship—its connection to righteousness and being complete and equipped as Christians. An approach to address this need is for pastors and preachers to embed the theology and principles of worship in their sermon preparation and pastoral training.

At least 167 million Christians in America make a weekly decision to attend a church service either in person or online via the Internet.<sup>2</sup> According to a 2017 Gallup poll, sermon content appeals to most churchgoers when they gather for corporate worship to hear a sermon delivered by the church pastor or minister assigned to preach on a given Sunday. Churchgoers are interested in sermons that teach more about Scripture and help them connect religion to life.<sup>3</sup> This is interesting because worship is all of life for a Christian believer.

While there are millions of Christians in America, and three out of four Christians attend a weekly church service, many are confused or lacking in their knowledge about God, which connects to their understanding of worship. For example, only 65% of participants responding to a 2020 State of Theology survey believe God is a perfect being and cannot make a mistake.<sup>4</sup> This is interesting when Psalm 18:30 states, “As for God, His way is perfect, the word of the Lord is proven; He is a shield to all who trust in Him.” Numbers 23:19 affirms that God does not change His mind, and James 1:13 states that God cannot even be tempted, all of which support the biblical truth that God is perfect.

For believers to spiritually mature, grow in their faith, and increase their knowledge of God, Christians need to understand theology and principles of worship. “The glorification of

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<sup>2</sup> “In U.S., Decline of Christianity Continues at Rapid Pace,” Pew Research Center, October 17, 2019, <https://www.pewforum.org/2019/10/17/in-u-s-decline-of-christianity-continues-at-rapid-pace/>.

<sup>3</sup> Lydia Saad, “Sermon Content Is What Appeals Most to Churchgoers,” Social & Policy Issues, Gallup, Gallup, Inc., <https://news.gallup.com/poll/208529/sermon-content-appeals-churchgoers.aspx>.

<sup>4</sup> Ligonier Ministries, “The State of Theology,” State of Theology, 2020, <http://thestateoftheology.com/>.

God and [the] sanctification of humans belong together ... Our praying, meditating, singing, reflecting, acting, and serving [as worship] must provide the opportunity for the holy God to speak and bless as he responds, so that we become more like him in who we are and in what we do.”<sup>5</sup> More churchgoers need guidance in connecting Christian worship and their ultimate relationship and purpose as being created for worship. A. W. Tozer writes, “This is taught throughout the entire Bible, that God created man to worship Him. Man is the darling of the universe, the centerpiece of God’s affection.”<sup>6</sup> Also, the phrase “worship is a lifestyle” is touted often, but many individuals in a Sunday morning service may not understand this concept. Churchgoers may not clearly understand personal and corporate worship and the alignment with their beliefs and practices as a Christian. This is due to their varying levels of spiritual growth and their lack of knowledge about the foundations of Christian worship.

With this in mind, pastors and preachers must lead the way for today’s Christians to develop their understanding of the foundations of Christian worship and worship as a lifestyle. They can lead by designing and delivering sermons that explicitly address worship and ensure they receive training on worship theology and principles. Through the planning, preparation, and delivery of their sermons, preachers can intentionally expose their congregation to the topic of Christian worship concerning personal and corporate worship. The optimal approach for this to occur is for pastors and preachers to embed the theology and principles of worship in their sermon preparation and pastoral training.

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<sup>5</sup> Manfred Waldemar Kohl, “Theological and Philosophical Understanding of Church Liturgy/Worship,” *International Congregational Journal* 9, no. 2 (Winter 2010): 74, ESBCOhost.

<sup>6</sup> A. W. Tozer, *The Purpose of Man: Designed to Worship*, ed. James L. Snyder (Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House, 2009), 43.

## **Thesis**

While most events that occur in weekly church services are examples of worship, pastors and preachers need to embed worship theology and principles in the delivery of their sermons to their congregations. There are three benefits to sermons including the theology and principles of worship. One, the training of pastors and preachers will include the subject of worship. Two, there will be an increase in the spiritual maturity of churchgoers and their understanding of the theology and principles of worship. Lastly, the relationship between pastors and those who support the pastor in planning worship services will be strengthened.

## **Statement of the Problem**

This study addresses a two-fold problem. Pastors and preachers plan and deliver weekly sermons that may not include specific principles which shape the hearer's theology of worship. If pastors and preachers do not receive adequate training in the area of worship, then their sermon preparation may not explicitly connect with the study of God and worship that is biblical, central, and significant in Scripture. Furthermore, churchgoers are lacking in their knowledge of God and the expectations of God's desire for believers to live a daily lifestyle of worship. If church members lack in their understanding of God and the theology and principles of worship, then their spiritual growth and overall relationship with the Lord may be hampered. Both issues can be addressed with pastors and preachers being intentional about preparing and delivering sermons that include worship theology and principles, and the practical application of worship to lives of believers.

### **Research Framework**

The framework for this research is a biblical worldview based on the Word of God. The Word of God is His words, the Truth, and His instructions for humanity. As the Creator of heaven and earth, the Word of God reveals His nature and connection to humankind (Gen. 1:26). God is omniscient (Luke 8:17), omnipresent (Ps. 139:8), and omnipotent (Ps. 115:3). Also, through God and His established Word, the purpose of human life is to establish a loving relationship with Him, serve God and one another, and prepare for eternal life. John 4:23–24 states, “But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.” The framework of this research reflects a philosophy that is consistent with and undergirded by the Word of God.

### **Statement of the Purpose**

The purpose of the research is to identify what pastors and preachers communicate through their sermons that includes the theology and principles of worship to share with their congregations. The research determines if there is a lack of theology and principles of worship present in sermon preparation and pastoral training, as well as how often the pastors’ congregations are granted opportunities to potentially connect the topic preached to the development of a lifestyle of worship.

### **Research Question and Sub Questions**

The central question of the research is, “What do pastors and preachers communicate about the theology and principles of worship to their congregations in their sermons?” The sub-questions for the research are the following:

1. What seminary courses/training for sermon preparation do pastors and preachers receive?
2. How do the seminary courses/training for sermon preparation reflect the theology and principles of worship?
3. What do the pastors and preachers understand about the theology and principles of worship?
4. How do pastors and preachers ensure the theology and principles of worship are shared with the congregation through sermon delivery?

### **Research Methodology Design and Process**

The method to acquire the answers to the research questions and address the thesis is a qualitative study utilizing methods recommended for gathering data through interviews and documents. Interviews with open-ended questions occurred with a cross-section of local pastors and preachers. The goal is to identify what training pastors and preachers receive to effectively plan and deliver sermons that include the theology and principles of worship to share regularly with their congregations.

The researcher developed an open-ended questionnaire for the data-gathering processes. The open-ended questionnaire allows for a semi-structured interview with follow-up questions to acquire descriptive answers from the participants. The open-ended questionnaire aligns with the research questions. The researcher created a matrix questionnaire form to ensure alignment with the research questions.

There are two parts to the qualitative study. For part one, after researching local churches, the researcher identified fifteen local preachers in Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania to participate in the research. After developing the interview protocol, the local preachers were contacted, scheduled, and interviewed using the developed, open-ended

questionnaire. The local preachers were interviewed face-to-face, individually in their church setting, or virtually via web-based options, due to COVID restrictions or regulations. The participants received an introduction during the interviews that provided basic information about the interview process. During the interviews, audiotaping occurred, with the researcher taking notes. After the interview, the researcher thanked the participants for their time and provided a timeline if follow-up clarifying questions were needed. The same interview process occurred for all participants. After each interview, the researcher organized the field notes into typed documents, and each interview was transcribed and analyzed for thematic responses through the use of coding.

Part two of the qualitative study involved the same fifteen local pastors and preachers interviewed in part one of the research. The local pastors and preachers who participated in the interviews provided their three sermons within a particular timeframe as documents in written form or as video links to the researcher. The researcher examined and analyzed the content of each sermon for common themes and direct correlation to the theology and principles of worship. After the interviews and the sermon analyses occurred, the local pastors and preachers received an abstract of the final study and a thank-you letter for their participation.

The researcher followed the suggested data analysis recommended by John Creswell and David Creswell, authors of *Research Design*. The raw data was organized and prepared for data analysis. After reading through all of the data, the researcher coded and analyzed the interviews and sermon documents and videos. Assigning code data of specific words occurred to categorize the information from the interviews and sermon documents. Then, narrative passages developed the discussion of the findings, and appropriate figures and tables provide visuals of the data analysis and findings.

To validate the findings, *member checking* through follow-up interviews with the fifteen pastors and preachers occurred. Each of the participants has the opportunity to provide feedback on the accuracy of the findings. Also, all evidence that supports and contradicts the themes is in the data findings. Furthermore, the researcher acquired a *peer debriefer* to review and ask questions about the qualitative study. Lastly, the researcher documented all steps and procedures to ensure the reliability of the study.

### **Significance of the Study**

Sermons that include the theology and principles of worship can shape weekly churchgoers' spiritual beliefs and lives. Pastors and preachers deliver sermons on many topics such as love, prayer, repentance, deliverance, trials, and tribulations. Yet, how often are the themes directly tied to worship principles? How often are the listeners granted opportunities to connect the topic preached to the development of a lifestyle of worship? These questions become pertinent, especially when congregants within the churches are not necessarily knowledgeable about the meaning of worship and its role in their lives as believers. However, if weekly worshipers, as members of a church, are going to have a clear understanding of the importance of worship, who better to guide congregants in their knowledge of developing a lifestyle of worship than their pastor?

## Definition of Key Terms

*Accredited* is defined as an educational institution recognized by an official accrediting agency for meeting accreditation standards.<sup>7</sup>

*Church Member* is defined as a person who belongs to a church; a member of the Christian community, or of a particular Christian denomination or congregation. The person is a member who professes the Christian faith, participates in the worship of the church, fosters Christian unity, engages in relationship with fellow believers, and shares the ideals and doctrines officially professed by the community.<sup>8</sup>

*Pastor* is defined as a shepherd who feeds, leads, and oversees a church congregation.<sup>9</sup> This includes the role of delivering a sermon to a church congregation to spiritually feed and lead a church congregation.

*Preacher* is defined as a person that will act and speak a particular word, a sermon, in the name of Christ; One who proclaims or shares the good news about the Kingdom of God with a church congregation.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> “Accreditation,” Association of Theological Schools The Commission on Accrediting, <https://www.ats.edu/Accreditation>.

<sup>8</sup> Avery Dulles, *Encyclopedia of Religion*, ed. Lindsay Jones, 2nd ed. (Farmington Hills, MI: Thomas Gale, 2005), 1778–79.

<sup>9</sup> Karen Dockery, John Godwin, and Phyllis Godwin, *The Student Bible Dictionary* (Uhrichsville, OH: Barbour Books, 2000), 176.

<sup>10</sup> Dockery, Godwin, and Godwin, *The Student Bible Dictionary*, 191.

*Seminary* is defined as an educational institution designed to provide systematic training in theology, doctrine, history, and rituals to equip pastors and preachers for ministry.<sup>11</sup>

*Sermon* is defined as an event of speaking and hearing performed by a preacher in Christ's name.<sup>12</sup>

*Theological Education* is defined as the essence of the church to help build up the church, lead the church to maturity in faith and lead the church to unity;<sup>13</sup> an education that is sound, grounded in Scriptures, Christ centered, and ministry and mission focused; helps people develop a theologically informed way of seeing the world, to develop Christian responses to life, and to develop Christian strategies and motivations for ministry.<sup>14</sup>

*Theology* is defined as the study of God; a person's beliefs about God. This includes God's works, His creation including human beings and their condition, and God's redemptive work in relation to humankind.<sup>15</sup>

*Worship Principles* is defined as principles that are the foundation for worship theology. Christian worship is biblical, dialogic, covenantal, Trinitarian, communal, in but not of the

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<sup>11</sup> Roger Finke and Kevin D. Dougherty, "The Effects of Professional Training: The Social and Religious Capital Acquired in Seminaries," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 41, no. 1 (March 2002): 108, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1387715>.

<sup>12</sup> Thomas G. Long, *The Witness of Preaching*, 2nd ed. (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2005), 16.

<sup>13</sup> David S. Dockery, *Theology, Church, and Ministry: A Handbook for Theological Education* (Nashville, TN: B & H Academic, 2017), 3.

<sup>14</sup> Dockery, *Theology, Church, and Ministry*, 3–4.

<sup>15</sup> Millard J. Erickson, *Christian Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 1998), 22.

world, a generous and excellent outpouring of one's self before God, and expressive and formative.<sup>16</sup> Worship is formational, transformational, relational, missional, and reproducible.<sup>17</sup>

*Worship Theology* is defined as the study of God and worship that is biblical, central, and significant in Scripture; intimately linked with all major areas of biblical theology such as creation, sin, covenant, redemption, the people of God, and a future hope.<sup>18</sup>

### **Assumptions of the Study**

For this research, the assumptions are the following:

1. Pastors and preachers have a general knowledge of worship and its relationship to personal and corporate worship.
2. Pastors and preachers are concerned about churchgoers being knowledgeable about worship as a lifestyle for the effectiveness of spiritual growth and developing a community of believers.
3. A churchgoer desires to be a part of a worshiping community and live their life dedicated to the Lord.
4. The participants in the research are truthful in their responses to the interview questions.

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<sup>16</sup> Faith Alive Christian Resources, *The Worship Sourcebook*, ed. John D. Witvliet (Grand Rapids, MI: Faith Alive Christian Resources, The Calvin Institute of Christian Worship, Baker Books, 2013), 16–17.

<sup>17</sup> David Wheeler and Vernon M. Whaley, *The Great Commission to Worship: Biblical Principles for Worship-Based Evangelism* (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2011), 53.

<sup>18</sup> David Peterson, *Engaging with God: A Biblical Theology of Worship* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1992), 17.

### **Delimitations of Research Samples and Sampling Technique**

The use of qualitative participant interviews and sermon content analysis is based on a purposive sampling, or a deliberate selection of a group of people because of their relationship to the research topic. Also, data is used from a purposive sample of fifteen pastors and preachers who have had at least three years of experience in delivering sermons to their local congregations to address the research questions. The participants in the research comprise local churches in Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania. The participants represent Baptist, Pentecostal, and Non-Denominational church denominations and deliver sermons to church congregations that are small (less than 50 members), medium (51 to 300 members), large (301 than 2000 members), and mega (more than 2000 members).<sup>19</sup>

The participants in this research are appropriate because, generally, pastors and preachers experience some form of training through their church organizations or attendance at an educational institution. Most pastors and preachers receive training in systematic theology, biblical studies, sermon preparation, and sermon delivery. For instance, in a survey conducted by The Association of Theological Schools, almost 8 out of 10 (77%) alums believe the education at an accredited seminary prepares them for preaching to congregations.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> USA Churches, "Church Sizes," [usachurches.org](http://www.usachurches.org/church-sizes.htm), <http://www.usachurches.org/church-sizes.htm>.

<sup>20</sup> Deborah H. C. Gin, "What Competencies to ATS Alums Need? Report of the Educational Models Mapping the Workforce Survey," Association of Theological Schools The Commission on Accrediting, 2018, <https://www.ats.edu>.

### **Limitations**

An element outside of the researcher's control is the scope of the formal training received by the participants through their church organization, seminary, or education institution. The topics and length of training vary for each participant. Another element outside the researcher's control is the participants' depth of knowledge and understanding of worship theology and its principles. Depending on the formal training, participants exhibit a working knowledge of worship as a lifestyle and its connection to the spiritual growth of a congregation. Lastly, beyond the researcher's control, there is a lack of previous studies on pastors and preachers embedding theology and principles of worship in their sermon preparation and delivery, which has given cause for this research topic.

The sample of pastors and preachers does not represent all United States pastors and preachers. This study does not include participants who have not received formal training from their church organization, an accredited seminary, or an educational institution. The data acquired through interviews and sermon content analysis does not include participants who seldom deliver sermons to a congregation.

### **Qualifications of the Researcher**

The researcher is an educator, worship leader, award-winning independent Christian recording artist, and songwriter. With her experience as a worship leader across Christian denominations and affiliations, she has traveled extensively, ministering the gospel through song with well-known Contemporary Christian and Gospel artists.

She is currently a Liberty University Online Adjunct Professor for the Department of Music and Worship, Thesis Mentor, and Subject Matter Expert, who recently developed the course, God's People and the History of African American Worship, for the newly implemented

African American cognate for the Master of Arts Worship Studies degree program. Besides course expansion, the researcher is competent in conducting research and making recommendations for future research due to experience gained from earning a Doctor in Worship Studies degree from Liberty University. This required submitting a thesis project and a defense presentation as a doctoral candidate. Her doctoral studies included the development of tools and strategies to integrate worship pedagogy into a church's new membership curriculum. This work enables her to consult and develop membership curricula rooted in worship principles with local churches.

Due to her work at Liberty University, the researcher is familiar with Liberty University's Internal Review Board and the process for research approval. She holds two active certificates from the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative Program for Institutional/Signatory Official: Human Subject Research and Social & Behavioral Research – Basic/Refresher.

The researcher has a Master of Arts degree in Worship: Leadership from Liberty Baptist Theological Seminary and Graduate School. In addition to a seminary degree, she has three years of ministerial training in sermon preparation and preaching clinics through the Enon Tabernacle Baptist Church Exploring Your Call Program – Ministers Track. Her training includes theological foundations for ministry and service, homiletics, and spiritual leadership.

Furthermore, the researcher is the Director of Special Projects in the Office of Academic Supports for the School District of Philadelphia, the 8th largest school district in the country. In this role, she oversees the Middle States Association accreditation process for the district's fifty-five high schools. The researcher is competent in the design and planning of the research due to twenty-nine years in the field of education. This includes understanding and analyzing quantitative and qualitative data for trends and making data-based decisions to improve gaps in

the field of education. With a Bachelor of Arts in Liberal Studies from William Paterson University and a Master of Education degree in School Leadership and Instruction from Wilmington University, her expertise in education has enabled her to consult and present on national platforms for educational leadership across the country.

### **Summary of Literature Review**

Some sources support the research topic of the education of preachers and worship. The examples of the sources in this summary are brief and expounded upon in greater detail in Chapter Two: Literature Review. Literature in the areas of theological education, worship, and sermon preparation help examine what influences exist for pastors and preachers to embed theology and principles of worship in their pastoral training and sermon preparation. For the sake of demonstrating the need to explore the research topic, a brief synopsis of a few sources highlights a gap in the literature.

### **Theology and Theological Education**

The first area of research relates to theology and theological education to address the topic. *Theology, Church, and Ministry: A Handbook for Theological Education* focuses on clear guidance and information to help ministers with their theological education. This source addresses developing a minister's belief in God and their overall spiritual development. The handbook provides details that address essential topics such as the Bible, Apologetics, preaching, and evangelism. David Dockery and contributing authors, such as Mark L. Bailey and Daniel Aiken, substantiate the importance of theology and its connection to sermon preparation based on biblical principles. Dockery states, "Theological education must be academically sound; it must be grounded in Scriptures; it must be Christ-centered; and it must be ministry and mission-

focused.”<sup>21</sup> This is true, yet the subject of worship, in *Theology, Church, and Ministry*, addresses the planning and the role of ministers in a given worship service, although worship is grounded in Scriptures, Christ-centered, and connected to ministry and mission.

In *Doxology & Theology: How the Gospel Forms the Worship Leader*, Matt Boswell, along with contributing authors, provides guidance on theology and its direct connection to doxology. There exist similarities in the topics discussed in *Theology, Church, and Ministry*, which also include preaching and evangelism. While *Doxology & Theology* is designed as a source of learning for worship leaders, Boswell and the contributing authors provide clear connections between the Bible, one’s theology, and worship that can be applied to ministers and preachers who deliver weekly sermons. In the chapter, “The Worship Leader and Scripture,” Michael Bleecker, writes, “A deficient view of the Word of God results in a deficient view of God. Do not neglect teaching it [Word of God] to your hearers, or showing it.”<sup>22</sup>

*The History of Theological Education* provides similar guidance and approaches as *Theology, Church, and Ministry* concerning theology and theological education. The author, Justo L. Gonzalez, also shares details concerning the influence of theologian and pastor, Friedrich Schleiermacher. Schleiermacher was influential in curriculum development in the areas of philosophical theology, historical theology, and practical theology.<sup>23</sup> Schleiermacher’s work is found within the curriculum design of many American seminaries today for ministers and pastors seeking a theological education. On the subject of worship as part of one’s theology and theological education, Gonzalez broaches the subject of worship as an area of spiritual formation

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<sup>21</sup> Dockery, *Theology, Church, and Ministry*, 3–4.

<sup>22</sup> Michael Bleecker, “The Worship Leader and Scripture,” in *Doxology & Theology: How the Gospel Forms the Worship Leader*, ed. Matt Boswell (Nashville: B&H Publishing Group, 2013), 53.

<sup>23</sup> Justo L. Gonzalez, *The History of Theological Education* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2015), 106.

for individuals seeking to grow in the development of their theology while receiving a theological education.

*A Curriculum Design Manual for Theological Education*, by Leroy Ford, offers clear suggestions in the areas of curriculum design as well as direction for institutions seeking accreditation. The author explores pathways for institutions to develop educational and program goals and the process for seminary institutions to achieve accreditation. Ford states, “The elements of curriculum design-institutional purpose, institutional educational goals and objectives for learners, scope, methodology, and particularly the contexts and the instructional and administrative models determine the approaches to theological education.”<sup>24</sup> Institutions are to develop programs and curricula to assist students with developing their biblical knowledge, ministry skills, and sermon preparation techniques. In the area of worship, the curriculum design and training relate to worship leading, and planning worship services, similar to *Theology, Church, and Ministry* and *The History of Theological Education*.

## Worship

Worship is the second area related to the research topic. In essence, a review of the literature reveals that defining worship is no easy task. For example, John D. Witvliet in his article, “On Three Meanings of the Term Worship,” shares that the term, “worship,” is one word with three concentric meanings. He divulges three definitions for worship. Witvliet states that all of life, services, and specific acts, such as praise, are worship.<sup>25</sup> Witvliet recognizes the existence of confusion with the term *worship* when he writes, “We have one word to refer to

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<sup>24</sup> Leroy Ford, *A Curriculum Design Manual for Theological Education: A Learning Outcomes Focus* (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1991), 39.

<sup>25</sup> John D. Witvliet, “On Three Meanings of the Term Worship,” *Reformed Worship* 56 (June 2000): 46, <https://www.reformedworship.org/article/june-2000/three-meaning-term-worship>.

three distinct meanings. Any entry on the term, *worship* for a new dictionary on modern Christian usage would need to have at least three definitions.”<sup>26</sup>

Author, Greg Scheer, acknowledges challenges with defining worship when he writes, “*Worship* is just as difficult a word to define as *love*. No definition will ever capture all facets... On the other hand, without reflection we may find ourselves going through motions week after week without any real vision of what we’re doing or why.”<sup>27</sup> In *Essential Worship: A Handbook for Leaders*, Scheer includes Witvliet’s three definitions for the term *worship* however, a theology of worship is introduced in connection with the term *worship*. Scheer explores the definition and theology of worship as encompassing the worship service (e.g., preaching, prayer, communion). He also connects the theology of worship to what he calls *life worship* (e.g., Bible study, vocation, evangelism).

Defining the term *worship* seems to be challenging in some cases. Both Witvliet and Scheer share in the challenge. Yet, “our understanding of worship... shouldn’t be primarily focused on how to separate life into tidy little boxes but rather on how all the facets of our life come together into a cohesive whole.”<sup>28</sup> The challenges further support the importance of pastors ensuring their congregations understand worship. This adds another layer to the development of theology and the theological education one receives along with the need to understand and define what is worship not just for the pastors delivering the sermons but for the congregations’ theological understanding of worship.

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<sup>26</sup> Witvliet, “On Three Meanings of the Term Worship,” 46.

<sup>27</sup> Greg Scheer, *Essential Handbook: A Handbook for Leaders* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2016), 20.

<sup>28</sup> Scheer, *Essential Handbook*, 26.

Michael J. Quicke, the author of *Preaching as Worship: An Integrative Approach to Formation in Your Church*, discusses worship and its relationship to the responsibilities of pastors. Similar to Scheer, Quicke introduces theology; however, he expounds on Trinitarian theology and its connection to worship. He introduces a model called *360-Degree Worship* with worship being central and preaching having a significant role in the process. His model demonstrates how God the Father, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit through preaching connect worship through Scripture, the preacher, and hearers of the delivered sermon. While Quicke does not explicitly encourage preachers to include worship theology and principles in their preaching, he does advocate for sermons to influence the worship experience for listeners and have an impact on the big picture of worship.

### Sermon Preparation

The final area connected to the research topic is sermon preparation. Thomas G. Long is the author of *The Witness of Preaching*. Long shares steps and examples of biblical exegesis, a sermon's basic form, and the delivery of the sermon as essential areas of sermon preparation. He introduces focus and function as they relate to an established theme and hearers of a sermon. He expresses that a sermon's goal is to ultimately incite spiritual change and growth for those who hear the sermon. Long states, "Preaching should intentionally seek a beneficial change in the hearers, should help people make sense of their lives, and should strive to be a catalyst for more responsible and ethical living on the part of those who hear."<sup>29</sup>

In "A Paradigm for Preaching," Timothy S. Warren discusses the preaching process as comprising four key areas: Exegesis, Theology, Homiletics, and Revelation. The preaching process needs to connect Scripture to the listeners, or the past to the present, and be based on

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<sup>29</sup> Long, *The Witness of Preaching*, 28–29.

Godly principles. Furthermore, how a sermon is prepared and delivered determines whether or not listeners receive a revelation from God. Similar to Long's goal of a sermon, a revelation on the part of the listener will incite a response or reaction in the life of the listener for spiritual growth. "Attitudes and behaviors will stop, start, or perhaps continue as those exposed to truth work to bring their lives into conformity with the truth. The goal is justification for the unbeliever and sanctification for the believer,"<sup>30</sup> states Warren.

*Shaping the Claim*, by Marvin A. McMickle, shares insight for preachers to develop their sermons with a theme or central message and connects this to Aristotle's word, *logos*. Preachers need to ensure an existential or experiential connection with the listeners, which connects to *pathos*. Lastly, preachers need to make sure listeners are given guidance for the next steps based on the message, or *ethos*. According to McMickle, "Sermons that are clear about the essential message that is being presented (*logos*), the experiential/existential import of the message for the listener (*pathos*), and the appropriate next steps that are being requested of the listeners (*ethos*) have an excellent chance of being heard and heeded by the listeners."<sup>31</sup>

Long, Warren, and McMickle share clear processes and steps for designing, preparing, and delivering a sermon. The authors all agree with a sermon ultimately impacting listeners to respond through choosing to enact in their personal lives spiritual Christian growth. Also, each author stresses the importance of creating biblical and theologically sound sermons. Yet, the authors, similar to those speaking on theology and theological education, do not address the inclusion of theology and principles of worship in sermon preparation.

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<sup>30</sup> Timothy S. Warren, "A Paradigm for Preaching," *The Bibliotheca Sacra* 148, no. 592 (1991): 481.

<sup>31</sup> Marvin A. McMickle, *Shaping the Claim: Moving from Text to Sermon* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2008), 77.

After reviewing a portion of the literature, encouraging pastors and preachers to embed the theology and principles of worship in their sermon preparation and pastoral training is not something clearly and explicitly stated in the literature. There exist resources that relate to the training and education of ministers and pastors who deliver sermons. Yet, including the theology and principles of worship in the preparation of sermons and pastoral training seems to be implied, inferred, or missing altogether in literature. In several instances, the topic of worship relates to the role of pastors and preachers planning a church service or their own spiritual formation. This presents a concern with regard to pastors and the theological principles of worship. Pastors have a direct role and impact their congregants' understanding of worship and the connection to developing a lifestyle of worship. How they prepare and deliver sermons to include the theology and principles of worship can shape how congregants eventually understand worship to be all of life as a Christian.

### **Research Goal**

The research aims to encourage pastors and preachers to intentionally deliver sermons on worship or make explicit connections of their sermons to fundamental worship principles. This study is also an opportunity to encourage accredited seminaries to consider requiring a course on worship as part of the coursework and degree completion plans for pastors and preachers. This would help create a more well-rounded pastoral leader who knows the history and application of biblical content and the role of worship from a biblical perspective to the present day. Through preparation and sermon delivery, pastors, preachers, and congregants would better understand that worship, or the reverence of God, encompasses all of the biblical practices and beliefs of Christianity.

## Chapter 2: Literature Review

### Introduction

This chapter approaches the literature review with a focus on examining key areas that directly relate to the subjects of theology, theological education, worship, and sermon preparation. Approaching the literature review in this manner is necessary because there is little to nothing on the topic of embedding the theology and principles of worship in pastoral training and sermon preparation. However, scholarly materials exist which discuss the training and preparation a person needs when their vocation or calling connects directly to preparing and preaching sermons. There are also several scholarly materials on the topic of worship that seek to define what is worship, the significance of worship for spiritual growth, and the direct impact worship has on the church body.

For example, Matt Boswell, author and compiler of *Doxology & Theology: How the Gospel Forms the Worship Leader*, explores the importance of theology and shares that the chief end of theology is doxology.<sup>1</sup> While addressing worship leaders, Boswell and the companion authors explore theology through the topics of Scripture, evangelism, discipleship, the gospel, and a pastor's relationship with worship leaders. Through Boswell, one begins to comprehend the relationship between theology, the Word of God, and worship. Though not explicitly stated, readers can draw some conclusions about theology and worship when, according to Michael Bleecker, "Where the Word of God is taught correctly, the opportunity exists for informed worshippers to respond to God with their heart *and* mind, with affection *and* thought."<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Matt Boswell, *Doxology & Theology: How the Gospel Forms the Worship Leader* (Nashville: B&H Publishing, 2013), 12.

<sup>2</sup> Michael Bleecker, "The Worship Leader and Scripture," in *Doxology & Theology: How the Gospel Forms the Worship Leader*, ed. Matt Boswell (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2013), 45.

However, eventually one discovers a literature gap in explicitly influencing pastors and ministers to intentionally connect their Christian theology, theological education, and worship with sermon preparation. The connections are indirect with stressed importance conveyed to pastors and ministers, such as when Boswell writes, “The church is in desperate need of worship that is biblical, theological, and pastoral.”<sup>3</sup> To address the church’s desperate need, pastors and ministers must intentionally embed the theology and principles of worship in their pastoral training and sermon preparation. With that said, examining literature related to theology, theological education, sermon preparation, and the direct connection to worship is necessary.

### **Theology and Theological Education**

Theology and theological education are the initial areas to explore and address the research topic. Pastors and ministers who deliver sermons to Christian congregations on Sunday mornings tend to have some formal Christian education or training to prepare them for their role in designing and delivering sermons for the spiritual benefit of weekly churchgoers. The sources related to this area of research provide an overview of what scholarly materials and some accredited theological institutions present as crucial to the development of a pastor’s belief in God and in an education that supports preparing a pastor or minister to lead in the spiritual growth of their congregation. Also, the focus of the selected sources and the review of theological institutional degree completion plans form the basis for discovering whether the theological education or training of pastors and ministers intentionally includes the theology of worship. Furthermore, the highlighted sources help address the question, “If the theological education or training does not include the theology of worship, then what are the recommended

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<sup>3</sup> Boswell, *Doxology & Theology*, 3.

topics that pastors and ministers need to experience to help form the basis of their preparation as one who will ultimately lead congregations in their understanding of their relationship with God?”

Compiled by several scholars, *Theology, Church, and Ministry: A Handbook for Theological Education* introduces the importance of a theological education to prepare God-called ministers for service in the church.<sup>4</sup> This source addresses ministry calling and spiritual formation, creating three main sections. For instance, one section within the book delves into preparation by discussing the Old Testament, the New Testament, the Bible and Theology, Systematic Theology, and Apologetics. Another section called “Theological Education: Church and Ministry,” explores theology and its relationship to preaching, evangelism, missions, worship, and the global church.

In this text, the contributing authors provide a clear understanding of theology and its importance to the theological education of ministers and pastors. “Theology is the discipline of speaking a word about God ... We know God through his self-revelation.”<sup>5</sup> A strong background in theology enables a minister or pastor to deliver a biblically sound sermon that is based on a revelation from God. This is because, “Theology does not primarily exist to teach what to believe but rather to equip and enable us to articulate why we believe and what we believe.”<sup>6</sup> In *Theology, Church, and Ministry*, theological education and its connection to worship focus on the design or events in a church service.

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<sup>4</sup> David S. Dockery, ed., *Theology, Church, and Ministry: A Handbook for Theological Education* (Nashville, TN: B & H Academic, 2017), xv.

<sup>5</sup> Robert R. Smith, “Theology, Preaching, and Pastoral Ministry” in *Theology, Church, and Ministry: A Handbook for Theological Education*, ed. David S. Dockery, (Nashville, TN: B & H Academic, 2017), 340.

<sup>6</sup> Smith, “Theology, Preaching, and Pastoral Ministry,” in *Theology, Church, and Ministry*, 340.

In the chapter, “The Foundation and Shape of Theological Education,” Mark L. Bailey provides principles that are the foundation of theological education. He spends two paragraphs on a section called Doxologically Focused, and states, “All theological study is a means to a greater end, that end is worship.”<sup>7</sup> It is also interesting to note that he mentions, “The focus of all study and service should be directed toward God for his honor and glory,”<sup>8</sup> but he does not specifically state that theological education needs to include the study of worship as a means toward pastoral preparation.

Daniel Akin authors the chapter, “Theology for Church, Worship, and Ministry,” and provides fifteen axioms for faithful and effective theological schools. For instance, axiom one is that theological schools can and should produce ministers who are pastor-theologians.<sup>9</sup> The axioms address the gospel, biblical preaching, discipleship, and the great commission. However, none of the axioms address theological schools producing ministers as leading or guiding the understanding of worship for their congregations.

Justo L. Gonzalez, the author of *The History of Theological Education*, presents information on theology and theological education. His chapter on “Modern Theological Education” provides information on Friedrich Schleiermacher, a pastor, theologian, and professor, who developed a curriculum for the study of theology. Many American seminaries pattern their study of theology after Schleiermacher’s suggested areas of study: philosophical theology, dogmatic theology (historical theology), and pastoral theology (practical theology).

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<sup>7</sup> Mark L. Bailey, “The Foundations and Shape of Theological Education” in *Theology, Church, and Ministry: A Handbook for Theological Education*, ed. David S. Dockery, (Nashville, TN: B & H Academic, 2017), 30.

<sup>8</sup> Bailey, “The Foundations and Shape of Theological Education,” in *Theology, Church, and Ministry*, 31.

<sup>9</sup> Daniel L. Akin, “Theology for Church, Worship, and Ministry” in *Theology, Church, and Ministry: A Handbook for Theological Education*, ed. David S. Dockery, (Nashville, TN: B & H Academic, 2017), 390.

Philosophical theology is based on the Christian faith—the person’s absolute dependence on God even when addressed or compared to other non-Christian beliefs or feelings. Historical theology involves the examination of the Christian faith from biblical times to the present. Historical theology aims to “understand how the life of the church, expressing its feeling of absolute dependency on God, has developed to the present, and how in consequence of this the present church lives and expresses that feeling.”<sup>10</sup>

The final pattern, practical theology, deals with the function of a leader within a given community. Practical theology builds upon both philosophical and historical theology and puts into action a leader’s beliefs centered on the absolute dependence on God. From a practical sense, the feeling and absolute dependence on God is expressed and actionable within a specific community and takes into account how that feeling or belief is nourished and expressed where a leader serves.<sup>11</sup>

In addition to Friedrich Schleiermacher’s theology patterns for education, Gonzalez shares how those seeking a theological education may discover deficiencies. By identifying a specific deficiency, the subject of worship gains attention. Seminaries know the need to offer specializations in theological and pastoral studies. However, this presents a challenge for seminaries because they risk the theological curriculum becoming compartmentalized and the overall formation of future ministry leaders becoming stagnant. Protestant universities, schools of theology, and seminaries need to balance theological education and spiritual formation. Gonzalez emphasizes, “Since clergymen have to be teachers, priests, and pastors, their training has to be directed toward those functions. As prospective teachers, students must study and learn

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<sup>10</sup> Justo L. Gonzalez, *The History of Theological Education* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2015), 107.

<sup>11</sup> Gonzalez, *The History of Theological Education*, 107.

how to proclaim the word of God. As future priests, they must know how to direct worship and how such worship relates to the process of sanctification. And as pastors in formation, they must know how to lead the faithful and how to serve others.”<sup>12</sup>

*A Curriculum Design Manual for Theological Education* by Leroy Ford provides clear guidelines and suggestions for curriculum designers, revisers, and institutions seeking accreditation. One chapter in particular called, “Develop Program Purpose, Educational Goals, and Objectives,” deals with the “upper echelon of the hierarchy of educational goals and objectives from the institutional level through [the] program and department goals.”<sup>13</sup> In this chapter, readers review examples of objectives from institutions such as The International Correspondence Institute’s college division and the Seminary Extension of the Southern Baptist Seminaries. For instance, objectives such as, “acquire knowledge of the Bible content,” “understand the Christian message and how to communicate it,” and “develop leadership and ministry skills” are examples from the International Correspondence Institute’s college division. Three examples from the Southern Baptist Seminaries are a “growing understanding of the Bible and the ability to use Bible study skills,” “skill in preparing and delivering sermons,” and “the ability to motivate and lead people.” Author Leroy Ford lists thirty-six typical institutional goals for learners. The list contains areas related to bible teaching, theology, missions, ministry, and the role of music in worship. Also, the chapter shares outcomes for students to demonstrate their understanding of a particular educational goal. The goals include principles of basic sermon preparation, the fundamentals of sermon construction, and varieties of biblical preaching. The

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<sup>12</sup> Gonzalez, *The History of Theological Education*, 114.

<sup>13</sup> Leroy Ford, *A Curriculum Design Manual for Theological Education: A Learning Outcomes Focus* (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1991), 14.

suggested goals that relate to worship include students demonstrating an understanding of the doctrine, worship, traditions, and polity of Roman Catholics and understanding the responsibility of the pastor in planning and leading in worship.<sup>14</sup>

In *C(H)AOS Theory: Reflections of Chief Academic Officers in Theological Education*, Bruce P. Powers utilizes information from The Association of Theological Schools (ATS) standards and the expectations of member schools in the ATS to allow for seminary students to experience a curriculum that is balanced in formation, academic learning, and ecclesiastical goals. Powers shares that in seminary education, there can exist two models of education: the classic model and the formation model. The classic model of theological education is “derived from the traditional, content-oriented courses, primarily in the biblical, historical, and theological fields.”<sup>15</sup> The formation model is based on primary values, and educational experiences to generate knowledge, skills, and convictions, which ultimately blends biblical, historical, and theological content with a school’s ethos along with students’ personal callings and spiritual journeys to shape their theological references.<sup>16</sup>

Similar to Leroy Ford, Powers provides examples of content that a seminary’s curriculum needs to contain in order to prepare students’ knowledge, skills, and values. One area is biblical, theological, and historical studies, which include the students’ understanding, interpreting, and teaching of the Bible. This area also includes students being able to relate biblical teachings to doctrinal, ethical, philosophical, and practical issues.<sup>17</sup> The second area is spiritual formation

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<sup>14</sup> Ford, *A Curriculum Design Manual for Theological Education*, 104.

<sup>15</sup> Bruce P. Powers, “Developing a Curriculum for Academic, Spiritual, and Vocational Formation,” in *C(H)AOS Theory: Reflections of Chief Academic Officers in Theological Education*, ed. Kathleen D. Billman and Bruce C. Birch (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2011), 307.

<sup>16</sup> Powers, “Developing a Curriculum for Academic, Spiritual, and Vocational Formation,” 307–8.

<sup>17</sup> Powers, “Developing a Curriculum for Academic, Spiritual, and Vocational Formation,” 317.

studies which include students demonstrating a commitment to the Bible as a source of faith and practice and to Bible study, prayer, meditation, and congregational worship as a personal means for spiritual growth.<sup>18</sup> The third area is leadership development studies which include students being able to “understand, explain, and practice a philosophy and style of leadership compatible with the teachings of Jesus Christ.”<sup>19</sup> The final area is ministry skills studies where students should “understand, appreciate, and be able to perform effectively the appropriate ministry tasks and duties required for the context of ministry in which one serves. This will include but not be limited to proclamation, teaching, worship, evangelism, missions, counseling, care-giving, and administration.”<sup>20</sup> Ministry skills studies also prepare students to integrate biblical, theological, historical studies, spiritual formation studies, and leadership development studies in the practice of ministry.<sup>21</sup>

To address the subject of worship, Powers provides a sample formation in ministry sequence that could be used as a part of a student’s theological education. As a part of the foundational formation studies, there are two areas for students: Introduction to Theological Education and Worship and Spiritual Formation. Worship and Spiritual Formation focuses on four essential areas: Developing narratives: My story, God’s story, and our story; Significant markers in each student’s spiritual journey; Finding acceptance in the community of faith; and Precept groups. Powers ties worship to the spiritual and personal development of students acquiring a theological education through a curriculum addressing formation in ministry.

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<sup>18</sup> Powers, “Developing a Curriculum for Academic, Spiritual, and Vocational Formation,” 307.

<sup>19</sup> Powers, “Developing a Curriculum for Academic, Spiritual, and Vocational Formation,” 307.

<sup>20</sup> Powers, “Developing a Curriculum for Academic, Spiritual, and Vocational Formation,” 318.

<sup>21</sup> Powers, “Developing a Curriculum for Academic, Spiritual, and Vocational Formation,” 318.

Authors Dockery, Bailey, Akin, Gonzalez, Ford, and Powers provide clear topics, training, and curriculum guidance to support pastors' and ministers' theological and spiritual development as part of their education. Their content and suggestions for building a pastor's or minister's Biblical knowledge and developing a pastor's or minister's spiritual formation are explicitly encouraged. The education of pastors and ministers must include Biblical theology and clear guidance for developing biblically sound doctrine and sermons. Pastors and ministers are strongly encouraged to connect biblical principles to the gospel and evangelism and be vested in their spiritual development as leaders in the church body. Yet, the suggested and supported theological education topics and training are void of explicitly including the theology and principles of worship. Worship is depicted more as educating pastors and ministers on how to plan a worship service that exhibits biblical doxology or on connecting worship to their spiritual formation. Similar to Matt Boswell's implications, when Bailey and Gonzalez broach the subject of worship, they imply the importance of developing a theology of worship. Among the reviewed sources chosen for the explicit and specific guidance on theology and theological education, there is a need to directly encourage pastors and ministers to ensure their theological education includes the study of biblical worship theology and principles.

#### The Association of Theological Schools

The Association of Theological Schools (ATS) has more than 270 schools of theology that "educate persons for the practice of ministry and for teaching and research in the theological disciplines. These schools differ from one another in deep and significant ways but, through their membership in ATS, they demonstrate a commitment to shared values about what constitutes

good theological education.”<sup>22</sup> ATS accredits more than 250 degree programs including the Master of Divinity and a master’s in the following areas: religious education, church music, pastoral studies, theological studies, theology, and sacred theology. The accreditation of advanced programs includes Doctor of Ministry, Doctor of Musical Arts, Doctor of Missiology, Doctor of Educational Ministry, Doctor of Theology, and Doctor of Philosophy.<sup>23</sup> In 2020, 54,104 people were enrolled in ministerial leadership and general theological master’s-level studies, and 15,563 were enrolled in advanced ministerial leadership and theological research programs for doctorate-level studies.<sup>24</sup> More than 69,000 students experienced coursework designed to meet the accredited standards of ATS.

There are some primary requirements when reviewing the ATS standards for program accreditation. The Master of Divinity must address four main areas:

a) Religious heritage, including understanding of scripture, the theological traditions and history of the school’s faith community, and the broader heritage of other relevant religious traditions; (b) cultural context, including attention to cultural and social issues, to global awareness and engagement, and to the multi-faith and multicultural nature of the societies in which students may serve; (c) personal and spiritual formation, including development in personal faith, professional ethics, emotional maturity, moral integrity, and spirituality; and (d) religious and public leadership, including cultivating capacities for leading in ecclesial or denominational and public contexts and reflecting on leadership practices.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> The Association on Theological Schools, “About ATS,” ATS, 2021, accessed December 12, 2021, <https://www.ats.edu/About-ATS>.

<sup>23</sup> The Association of Theological Schools, “Annual Data Tables 2020-2021,” Appendix A ATS Approved Degree Programs, ATS Resources, 2020-2021, accessed December 12, 2021, <https://www.ats.edu/Annual-Data-Tables>.

<sup>24</sup> The Association of Theological Schools, “Annual Data Tables 2020-2021,” Table 2.10-B Head Count Enrollment by Degree Category and Program United States, 2020-2021, accessed December 12, 2021, <https://www.ats.edu/Annual-Data-Tables>.

<sup>25</sup> Commission on Accrediting, *Standards of Accreditation for the Commission on Accrediting of The Association of Theological Schools* (Pittsburgh, PA: Association of Theological Schools, 2020), 5, <https://www.ats.edu/files/galleries/standards-of-accreditation.pdf>.

The Doctor of Ministry must address six main areas:

(a) The ability to thoughtfully interpret scripture and the theological tradition of one's ministry context, (b) the capacity to understand and adapt one's ministry to the cultural context, (c) a basic self-understanding of one's ministerial identity and vocational calling, (d) a readiness to engage in ongoing personal and spiritual formation for one's ministry, (e) an accredited master's degree (or its educational equivalent) in an area related to one's ministry setting or vocational calling, and (f) significant ministerial experience that enables the applicant to engage as a ministry peer with other students in this advanced professional doctorate.<sup>26</sup>

Moody Theological Seminary,<sup>27</sup> Fuller Theological Seminary,<sup>28</sup> Princeton Theological Seminary,<sup>29</sup> and Westminster Theological Seminary<sup>30</sup> are four top U.S. institutions accredited by The Association of Theological Schools. When reviewing the degree completion plans of the four institutions (appendices A-D), the required courses include topics on the study of church history, the Old Testament, the New Testament, and Systematic Christian Theology Courses, while the option to study worship is an elective. Furthermore, courses that have *worship* as part of their title relate more to planning church services, music, or corporate services designed for worshipping together. Overall, in alignment with the degree standards set forth by ATS, seminaries prepare pastors and preachers in leadership, spiritual formation, and biblical content and knowledge.

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<sup>26</sup> Commission on Accrediting, *Standards of Accreditation for the Commission on Accrediting of The Association of Theological Schools*, 7.

<sup>27</sup> "Graduate and Seminary Programs," Academics / Graduate Programs, Moody Bible Institute, 2021, accessed September 3, 2021, <https://www.moody.edu/academics/grad-programs/>.

<sup>28</sup> "Fuller 2021–22 Academic Catalog," Academic Catalogs, Fuller Theological Seminary, 2021, accessed September 3, 2021, <https://www.fuller.edu/registrar/catalogs/>.

<sup>29</sup> "Academics," Master's Programs, Princeton Theological Seminary, accessed September 3, 2021, <https://www.ptsem.edu/academics/masters-degrees>.

<sup>30</sup> "2021–2022 Academic Catalog Westminster Theological Seminary," Academic Catalog, WTS Info Center, August 16, 2021, accessed September 3, 2021, <https://info.wts.edu/en/articles/1193358-academic-catalog>.

However, seminary preparation is not without its challenges, which can directly impact a church congregation's understanding of worship as a lifestyle. Six prominent theological schools—Lutheran Theological Seminary, Princeton Theological Seminary, Catholic Theological Union, Luther Seminary, Duke Divinity School, and Fuller Theological Seminary—participated in a project called The Christians' Callings in the World. They discovered that seminary students need to learn more about practical skills and theological frameworks to help equip them as pastors and leaders for congregational life and the formation of Christian identity for life today.<sup>31</sup> Seminary educators intend to prepare students for what they will face and encounter in real-life roles as church leaders. Yet, the project revealed and supported Barbara Walvoord's suggestion that there is a "gap between teachers' intended outcomes and their students' actual experiences."<sup>32</sup>

Participants in the project discovered that "Pastors think that the ministerial actions they lead are equipping their congregants to live out the faith in daily life. But, in fact, this is not happening—congregants are not being well equipped to live out their faiths in daily life or to draw on their faith as a resource for the immense challenges of sense-making and identity construction in the twenty-first century."<sup>33</sup>

Also, as part of the project, seminary students interviewed professional religious leaders and people who go to church. They asked clergy, "What is one way in which you think the weekly worship service connects with your parishioners' daily lives?" They asked non-clergy people, "What is one way in which the weekly worship service connects with your daily life?"

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<sup>31</sup> David J. Lose et al., "Equipping the Equippers: The Pedagogical and Programmatic Implications of The Christians' Callings in the World Project," *Teaching Theology & Religion* 18, no. 4 (October 2015): 398, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/teth.12309>.

<sup>32</sup> Lose et al., "Equipping the Equippers," 398.

<sup>33</sup> Lose et al., "Equipping the Equippers," 398.

As a result, 24% of the non-clergy participants said the experience of being in a community with other Christians is the most significant way weekly worship connects with their daily lives. Secondly, 17% said worship provides them with a time to refocus/recharge/slow down, followed by 16% who mentioned sermons as the most prominent point of connection. Considering how worship most significantly connects with their parishioners' lives, 23% of clergy responded with sermons and proclamation; 14% indicated being in community with other Christians; and 10% with the Lord's Supper.<sup>34</sup> Based on the results, the challenge is for clergy to foster worship that "engages parishioners in the task of making meaning in light of a Christian identity that is actively being formed through their experience."<sup>35</sup>

As part of the same project, Ralf Jacobson concludes that seminary students need to shift from being performers of the faith to being formers of the faith with their congregants. Seminary students are experiencing lectures and readings, which tend to be passive. Yet, there is a need for seminary students to experience the rewards of learning by doing and having their own discovery of the power of active faith formation.<sup>36</sup> With a lens on seminary education as part of the project, David J. Lose summarizes one of the realizations of the project when he writes:

We realized that congregations are no longer spiritual destinations for those already well versed in the faith and motivated by practice and culture to come [and] seek inspiration. Rather, congregations are more like training grounds or way stations where people come for rest and renewal, certainly, but also for formative training in ways to connect the faith they profess on Sunday with their daily lives throughout the week. This shift in congregational identity demands, in turn, a different kind of leader, one valued not simply for what he or she can do but for what he or she can train and equip others to do. We need to shift, that is, from a performative to [a] formative model of ministry. Making that kind of shift will involve fundamental changes in how we educate emerging leaders at our seminaries and divinity schools.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> Lose et al., "Equipping the Equippers," 399.

<sup>35</sup> Lose et al., "Equipping the Equippers," 399.

<sup>36</sup> Lose et al., "Equipping the Equippers," 400.

<sup>37</sup> Lose et al., "Equipping the Equippers," 407.

The realizations are helpful, especially when the priority of developing one's Christian identity is directly tied to understanding worship. Interestingly, faith and Christian identity need to be a part of daily life throughout the week. While the project includes assessing the impact of a weekly worship service on everyday life, the authors stopped short of acknowledging the need for emerging leaders to receive education on how to assist churchgoers with developing their faith and Christian identity to produce a daily lifestyle of worship.

### **Worship**

The second area to address the research topic relates to worship. There are many sources authored on the subject. To differentiate the applicable sources, the selection of authors in this literature review sheds light on pastors' and ministers' understanding of the subject of worship with regard to the theology and essential principles of worship. Sources that primarily speak to developing spiritual disciplines, one's personal worship lifestyle, improving worship teams with regard to music, or addressing worship wars relating to style and preference are not highlighted for discussion. In this section, worship is examined in the purview of the following: leadership understanding the definition of worship; how the role of church leaders is important in encouraging churchgoers' understanding of worship for spiritual growth; and the significance of worship theology impacting church growth relate to the research topic for this literature review.

### **Defining Worship**

The initial step is to define or norm the definition of *worship*. With regard to the research topic, four authors tackle the issue of explicitly defining the term *worship* to assist a novice preacher or an expert preacher in their understanding of worship. For pastors and ministers to embed the theology and principles of worship in their pastoral training and sermon preparation,

they must first understand the definition of worship and its relationship to their role as leaders preparing sermons and overseeing the spiritual growth of their congregations.

Zac Hicks, author of *The Worship Pastor: A Call to Ministry for Worship Leaders and Teams*, seeks to define the term *worship*. According to Hicks, there are three layers to describing worship, representing three circles layered together from biggest to smallest. Layer 1 is called worship, the fundamental orientation of humanity. Everyone worships someone or something.<sup>38</sup> Layer 2, inside layer 1, is called Christian worship, which is the holistic worship that is responsive and whole-life giving to God through Jesus Christ by the Holy Spirit. Layer 3, inside layer 2, is called gathered Christian worship: responsive, whole-life giving to God, through Christ, by the Spirit, enacted with people of God through certain practices (see fig. 2.1).<sup>39</sup> Hicks advises worship pastors to take up their Bibles and, while keeping in mind the local and universal church, to answer some thought-provoking questions based on the three layers. One question in particular asks, “Is preaching a nonnegotiable element?”<sup>40</sup> The list consists of more than thirty questions, with a sermon question related to the elements of worship. Two other questions include, “What role does Scripture play?” and “How does the Bible inform worship?”<sup>41</sup> Both relate to the form and content of gathered worship.

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<sup>38</sup> Zac M. Hicks, *The Worship Pastor: A Call to Ministry for Worship Leaders and Team* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2016), 44.

<sup>39</sup> Hicks, *The Worship Pastor*, 44.

<sup>40</sup> Hicks, *The Worship Pastor*, 47.

<sup>41</sup> Hicks, *The Worship Pastor*, 46.



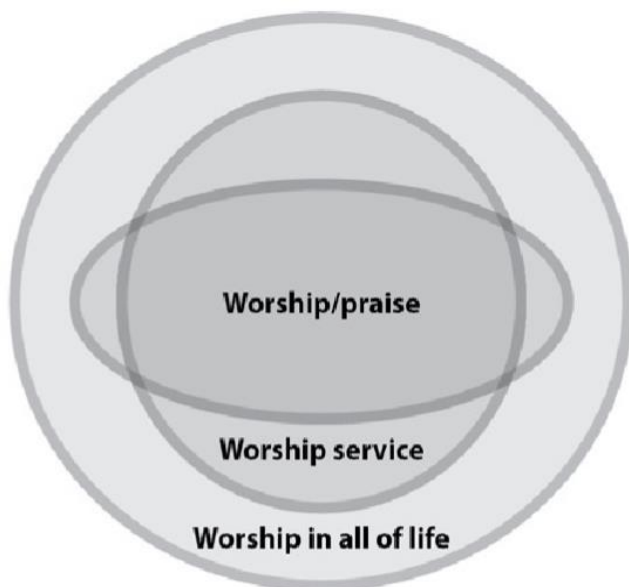
**Figure 2.1. Hicks' Three Layers to Describe Worship**

John D. Witvliet provides three definitions for worship in his article, “On Three Meanings of the Term Worship.” Witvliet acknowledges there is confusion with the term *worship*. According to Witvliet, “Worship is all of life ... Second, we gather for events, ritual practices, or liturgies called ‘worship services.’ Third, we engage in specific acts of adoration and praise, which we also call worship.”<sup>42</sup> Witvliet describes the three terms for worship as concentric circles. The broadest meaning is worship as all of life, worship service is the middle meaning, and worship, in the narrow sense, involves acts of worship during the worship service (see fig. 2.2). Witvliet shares, “I would prefer to have three different words to speak of these three meanings. But we’re stuck with one. All we can do is bear witness to each other about how

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<sup>42</sup> John D. Witvliet, “On Three Meanings of the Term Worship,” *Reformed Worship* 56 (June 2000): 46, <https://www.reformedworship.org/article/june-2000/three-meaning-term-worship>.

important all three senses really are and about how we need to keep all of them distinct yet related. We want to ensure that our life before God includes lots of all three!”<sup>43</sup>



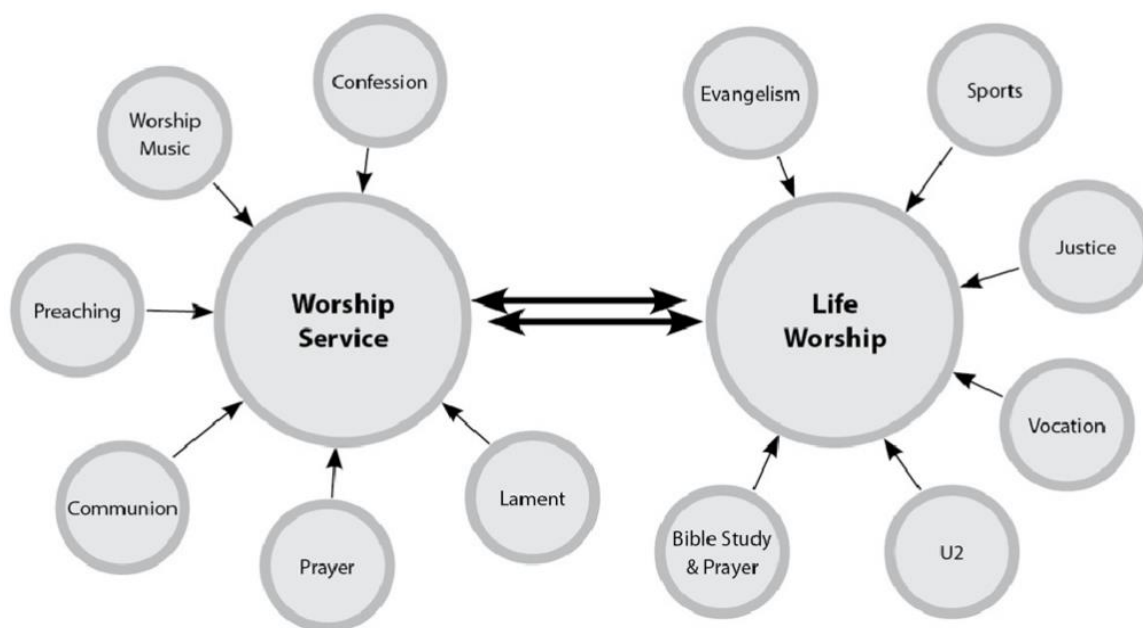
**Figure 2.2. Witvliet’s Three Terms for Worship as Concentric Circles**

Greg Scheer, author of *Essential Worship: A Handbook for Leaders*, includes Witvliet’s three definitions for the term *worship*, extends the concentric circles to demonstrate the experience of worship, and introduces a theology of worship. Scheer presents a diagram with worship service as a large circle and smaller circles (lament, prayer, communion, preaching, worship music, confession) with arrows pointing to worship service. The second diagram is life worship as a large circle with smaller circles (evangelism, recreation, entertainment, justice, vocation, Bible study, and prayer) with arrows pointing to life worship. Then both diagrams are pictured side-by-side with two long arrows flowing in both directions (see fig. 2.3). Scheer shares:

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<sup>43</sup> Witvliet, “On Three Meanings of the Term Worship,” 47.

The two arrows in the diagram below are the most important part of the diagram—and the most important part of any theology of worship. They show that life worship and the worship service flow back and forth in a symbiotic relationship. What we do in church spills out into our everyday lives and what we experience in our everyday lives flows back into worship.<sup>44</sup>



**Figure 2.3. Scheer's Diagram of the Theology of Worship**

As one of the authors of the *Leadership Handbook of Preaching and Worship*, Ralph P. Martin acknowledges specific dangers associated with understanding biblical worship. In the chapter, “The Purpose and Meaning of Worship,” he shares, “First, we face the great enemy, overfamiliarity. We have become so tied to a regular round of church meetings that we understand worship to refer to any religious or social exercise done on church premises. Second, we face the peril of defining the quality of worship solely by reference to our feelings.”<sup>45</sup>

<sup>44</sup> Greg Scheer, *Essential Handbook: A Handbook for Leaders* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2016), 8.

<sup>45</sup> Ralph P. Martin, “The Purpose and Meaning of Worship,” in *Leadership Handbook of Preaching and Worship: Practical Insight from a Cross Section of Ministry Leaders*, ed. James D. Berkley (Grand Rapids, MI: Christianity Today, and Baker Book House, 1992), 139.

To help address the identified dangers, Martin provides the following definition by writing, “A more comprehensive definition might run like this: Worship is the dramatic celebration of God in his supreme worth in such a manner that his worthiness becomes the norm and inspiration of human living.”<sup>46</sup> Martin further expands the definition and provides theological characteristics for biblical worship. According to him, true worship is God-directed, focuses on divine worthiness, recognizes God’s holiness at all times, exerts a claim on the worshiper, and requires utter seriousness.<sup>47</sup>

Authors Zack Hicks, John D. Witvliet, Greg Scheer, and Ralph P. Martin, demonstrate a need to define the term *worship* because it presents some challenges to the church body. As each author seeks to define and establish distinct areas and meanings of worship, there is a need to encourage pastors to have a role in ensuring their congregations understand worship. Leaders are responsible for ensuring that members understand the elements and distinctions of worship within the church body and in all of life.

In *The Dynamics of Corporate Worship*, Vernon Whaley, shares dynamic elements related to corporate worship such as The Dynamics of Genuine Worship, The Dynamics of Biblical Worship, The Dynamics of Music and Worship, The Dynamics of Preaching and Worship, and The Dynamics of Practical Worship. According to Whaley, worship is more than service, reverence, and submission.<sup>48</sup> “Worship, yea, even corporate worship, is seeing God as God, loving genuinely, adoring affectionately.”<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> Martin, “The Purpose and Meaning of Worship,” 140.

<sup>47</sup> Martin, “The Purpose and Meaning of Worship,” 140–42.

<sup>48</sup> Vernon M. Whaley, *The Dynamics of Corporate Worship* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2001), 20.

<sup>49</sup> Whaley, *The Dynamics of Corporate Worship*, 20.

Whaley provides specific characteristics that describe genuine worship as designed to exalt the Lord and edify worshipers. A congregation's spiritual growth development depends on understanding biblical and historical worship. Whaley introduces a term called *ministering worship*, which defines the service (ministry) that a person does unto the Lord (worship, love, exalt, and adore him) and God and allows a person to provide for and to his people (leading, teaching, and practicing principles of worship with the congregation).<sup>50</sup> In connection to the term, *ministering worship*, Whaley writes, "We as worship leaders in the twenty-first century need to focus on the purpose for which we have been called—to engage God's people in worship... We need to capture a vision for teaching and admonishing, instructing and training, and nurturing and maturing people as worshipers."<sup>51</sup>

To accomplish what Whaley suggests, church leadership and congregations need to be aware of more than just the definition of *worship*. They also need to be knowledgeable about crucial biblical worship principles. Understanding both the meaning of worship and biblical worship principles aids in the spiritual growth of Christian worshipers in personal worship. Understanding both also supports the spiritual development of the church body in corporate worship, especially when sermons reflect pertinent worship principles applicable to the life of a worshiper. Overall, comprehending God's definition and expectations for worship and its principles shape and deepen both the church's leaders' and the congregation's theology of worship.

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<sup>50</sup> Whaley, *The Dynamics of Corporate Worship* 160.

<sup>51</sup> Whaley, *The Dynamics of Corporate Worship*, 160.

## Worship Principles

Worship principles are the foundation for developing one's worship theology. Knowing and understanding principles regarding worship can aid pastors and ministers in intentionally embedding the theology and principles of worship into their pastoral training and sermon preparation. Three main sources explicitly introduce, explain, and identify essential worship principles that directly relate to the research topic.

Staff members of the Calvin Institute of Christian Worship including Joyce Berger, Mark Rice, Robert Hosack, Carrie Steenwyk, and John Witvliet collaborate to provide *The Worship Sourcebook* to assist pastors, leaders, and planners with planning for congregations who gather together as a corporate assembly for worship. According to the team, there are specific norms or principles that worship leaders need to consider when planning for corporate worship. The principles are the following:

- Christian worship is biblical.
- Christian worship is dialogic and relational.
- Christian worship is covenantal.
- Christian worship is Trinitarian.
- Christian worship is communal.
- Christian worship is hospitable, caring, and welcoming.
- Christian worship is in but not of the world.
- Christian worship is expressive and formative.
- Christian worship is generous and an excellent outpouring of ourselves before God.<sup>52</sup>

The presented norms are essential because those who plan, prepare, and lead in worship services, such as pastors and preachers, are “called to a task that is part priestly and part prophetic. These roles are formative roles in Christian congregations. They shape people’s view of God and the kinds of responses that are appropriate to God. While theologians write the books

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<sup>52</sup> Faith Alive Christian Resources, *The Worship Sourcebook*, ed. John D. Witvliet (Grand Rapids, MI: Faith Alive Christian Resources, The Calvin Institute of Christian Worship, Baker Books, 2013), 16-17.

that shape the theology of the educated Christian, worship leaders plan the services that shape the theology of all God's people."<sup>53</sup>

In *Called to Worship*, Vernon Whaley provides biblical context for defining worship and encouraging a lifestyle of worship with the ultimate outcome of experiencing eternal worship with God. He closely examines Old Testament, New Testament, and heavenly principles of worship. The principles shared throughout *Called to Worship* are revealed across major biblical sections, such as Worship Before the Fall, Worship in the Books of History, Worship in the Gospels, and Worship in the Epistles, to provide direction, instruction, and clarity about what the Bible says about worship and God's expectations for worship.

In the first chapter, "Creation: A Call to Worship," Whaley states, "Our examination of Creation is essential to the study of worship. Through Creation, God established a precedent for building relationships with people and showing them how to worship Him."<sup>54</sup> Following this statement, Whaley explicitly provides four principles that affect a worshiper's obligation and desire to worship. The principles are the following relating to obligation and desire:

- The wonder of God demands our worship of Him.
- The work of God demands our worship of Him.
- The wisdom of God demands our worship of Him.
- The wishes of God demand our worship of Him.<sup>55</sup>

Following this pattern, Whaley further provides essential principles and supportive elements throughout the remaining chapters. Table 2.1 summarizes the biblical principles for worship and spiritual formation when compiled together.

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<sup>53</sup> Faith Alive Christian Resources, *The Worship Sourcebook*, 19.

<sup>54</sup> Vernon M. Whaley, *Called to Worship: The Biblical Foundations of Our Response To God's Call* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2009), 12.

<sup>55</sup> Whaley, *Called to Worship*, 12-14.

David Wheeler and Vernon Whaley, co-authors of *The Great Commission to Worship*, explore the biblical mandate to be a Great Commission Worshiper. The idea is to be authentic in one's approach as a worshiper and eventually be a catalyst through evangelism to reproduce more biblical worshipers. The authors shed light on what it means to be a worshiper of Christ and live as a participant of the Great Commission.<sup>56</sup> The authors also address some misconceptions about worship. For instance, one fallacy is that private worship and public (corporate) worship are essentially the same.<sup>57</sup> Other misconceptions include worship being all about music and the notion that worship does not include preaching.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> David Wheeler and Vernon M. Whaley, *The Great Commission to Worship: Biblical Principles for Worship-Based Evangelism* (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2011), 7.

<sup>57</sup> Wheeler and Whaley, *The Great Commission to Worship*, 17.

<sup>58</sup> Wheeler and Whaley, *The Great Commission to Worship*, 18.

**Table 2.2. Called to Worship Principles**

<b>End of Chapter Principles</b>	<b>Supporting Chapter Principles within the Chapters</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Worship involves a routine.</li> <li>• Worship brings God’s revelation of His presence.</li> <li>• Worship begins with obedience.</li> <li>• Worship involves and equals submission.</li> <li>• God wants worship from repentant hearts.</li> <li>• Worship involves service.</li> <li>• Worship requires a living sacrifice.</li> <li>• Jesus is our eternal object of worship.</li> <li>• The Holy Spirit augments our worship.</li> <li>• Preaching is an act of worship.</li> <li>• Singing is worship.</li> <li>• Worship worthily with Communion.</li> <li>• Corporate worship, though collective, is deeply personal.</li> <li>• Authentic worship requires Holiness.</li> <li>• Brokenness is a prerequisite for genuine worship.</li> <li>• Worship is our response to God’s revelation, and God reveals Himself in His Word.</li> <li>• Real worshipers demonstrate personal integrity.</li> <li>• Our multifaceted God loves multifaceted worship.</li> <li>• Genuine worship transcends time and culture.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Worship is a part of God’s cycle of life.</li> <li>• Worship is a process.</li> <li>• Worship as a practice takes time.</li> <li>• Worship requires order.</li> <li>• Worship requires growth.</li> <li>• Authentic worship requires a sacred space</li> <li>• Obedience is central to worship.</li> <li>• True worshipers keep His Word, seek Him, hide the Word, proclaim His truth, rejoice in His statutes, meditate on His precepts, consider His ways, and delight in His Word.</li> <li>• Authentic worship includes right actions toward others.</li> <li>• Authentic worship embraces love for the people of God.</li> <li>• Worship is a lifestyle.</li> <li>• God is all about a worshipful relationship.</li> </ul>

In the chapter “Living a New Model for Worship,” Wheeler and Whaley introduce their blueprint and model for Great Commission worship. There are essential outcomes or principles that directly relate to the life of a worshiper. At the heart of winning souls and encouraging believers to develop a lifestyle of worship, one must fully understand that worship includes basic fundamentals. The authors write, “We have discovered that God has called each of us to be a Great Commission Worshiper. The Great Commission is formational, transformational,

relational, missional, and reproducible. All of these areas essentially serve as performance outcomes for those of us in ministry.”<sup>59</sup>

### Worship and Preaching

A *preacher* is defined as a person that will act and speak a particular word, a sermon, in the name of Christ; One who proclaims or shares the good news about the Kingdom of God with a church congregation.<sup>60</sup> When a pastor or minister delivers a sermon or speaks a particular word in a corporate worship setting, the speaker engages in worship. In light of this study, there is a need to examine what essential authors like John Piper, Abraham Kuyper, and Michael J. Quicke have to say on the topic of preaching as worship and whether or not they encourage and advise those who deliver sermons to embed worship principles and theology in the preached Word of God.

John Piper, author of *Brothers, We are Not Professionals: A Plea to Pastors for Radical Ministry*, dedicates an entire chapter to worship called, “Brothers, Focus on the Essence of Worship, Not the Form.” Piper provides scriptural background and examines Old Testament and New Testament worship in his chapter to pastors. He distinguishes how worship was localized and primarily seen as an external event in the Old Testament. While in the New Testament, worship is essentially an internal and spiritual experience. He writes, “Worship is being significantly deinstitutionalized, delocalized, de-externalized. The whole thrust is being taken off

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<sup>59</sup> Wheeler and Whaley, *The Great Commission to Worship*, 60–61.

<sup>60</sup> Dockery, Godwin, and Godwin, *The Student Bible Dictionary* 191.

of ceremony and seasons and places and forms and is being shifted to what is happening in the heart-not just on Sunday but every day and all the time in all of life.”<sup>61</sup>

Similar to Piper, Abraham Kuyper warns ministers to remember the purpose of coming together in worship as an assembly of believers. In *Our Worship*, he writes:

There are times when in the house of prayer your love for your fellow members vibrates in your heart, you are able to separate yourself from worldly things, you feel a tug of your soul for the things that are above. Then you feel a release from yourself while praying and singing hymns and listening to the admonitions and the preaching; you are led into the fellowship and the meeting with God so that your heart drinks from the overflowing brook that intoxicates the soul with spiritual love...you will feel the note of love and praise vibrating through your heart all day. Such an experience shows that only in this way is the purpose for the coming together in the assembly of believers fulfilled, and shows what worship should be: “A coming together with the congregation of Christ, in order to meet, together, the Eternal Being.” The result also shows that ministers, who know how to lead worship in a way that makes such an impact, feel personally blessed while they enrich the congregation. And contrarily, ministers who lose sight of this lofty and beautiful goal and perform their calling perfunctorily leave their congregation impoverished.<sup>62</sup>

Kuyper makes a strong case for ministers to remember the goal of fellowship with God. This is vital when people gather together for worship. He states there may be “learnedness, there may be profundity, there may be deep earnestness, but there is no religion and therefore no divine worship if people do not experience an encounter with God as a gathered assembly.”<sup>63</sup> He further advises ministers to constantly ask themselves how they will accomplish the purpose of their congregations experiencing fellowship with God. Kuyper warns, “Whoever loses sight of this goal remains barren and cannot make the congregation fruitful.”<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> John Piper, *Brothers We Are Not Professionals: A Plea to Pastors for Radical Ministry* (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2002), 232.

<sup>62</sup> Abraham Kuyper, *Our Worship*, ed. Harry Boonstra (Grand Rapids MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2009), 15.

<sup>63</sup> Kuyper, *Our Worship*, 15.

<sup>64</sup> Kuyper, *Our Worship*, 16.

In *Preaching as Worship: An Integrative Approach to Formation in Your Church*, Michael J. Quicke shares with pastors clear guidance, principles, and responsibilities as a preacher to their congregations related to worship. According to Quicke, “Preachers worship when they preach, hearers worship as they listen, and all participants worship as they respond.”<sup>65</sup> Furthermore, he shares the connection of Trinitarian theology to worship through a model he created called 360-Degree Worship, where worship is dominant and preaching is significant.

The 360-Degree Worship model includes a circle labeled with God the Father at the top, Jesus Christ in the middle of the circle, and the Holy Spirit at the bottom. Quicke provides a visual of how preaching connects to 360-Degree Worship. The words, “Scripture” (above Jesus Christ), “Preachers and Hearers” (to the left of Jesus Christ), “Preacher” (to the right of Jesus Christ), and “Hearers” (below Jesus Christ) are positioned around the circle and have arrows flowing back and forth to the center. Outside of the circle are four critical areas labeled “Response,” “Call,” “Serve,” and “Bow Down.”

He further expounds on 360-Degree Worship and makes another connection to community transformation becoming larger than sermon preparation. Quicke mentions big-picture worship and six ways preachers can magnify worship. One, preachers have to view themselves as worshipers first and foremost, which is their highest calling. Two, they need to see that preaching is worship. Three, preachers need to know that worship proclaims, and people respond to God’s glory. Four, worshipful preachers must help hearers of the Word learn their role in God’s purpose and mission. Five, worshipful preachers must be intentional about community transformation, and six, preachers cannot conduct their role separate from worship.<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>65</sup> Michael J. Quicke, *Preaching as Worship: An Integrative Approach to Formation in Your Church* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2011), 88.

<sup>66</sup> Quicke, *Preaching as Worship*, 97–98.

Quicke expounds on the focus and function of examining Scripture and preparing a sermon for preaching in *Preaching as Worship: An Integrative Approach to Formation in Your Church*. Quicke encourages preachers to examine focus and function in two stages: the text's original setting and today's setting. He strongly advocates that "Not only should the sermon say and do what the text says and does, but worship should also say and do what the text says and does ... God gives clear directions through Scripture about which particular worship outcomes he desires. Directive Scripture should therefore be the single greatest influence on designing big-picture worship."<sup>67</sup> Yet, Quicke falls short of clearly stating that preachers need to ensure their sermons include worship theology and principles when preaching to congregations.

Piper, Kuyper, and Quicke strongly encourage preachers to understand their role in worship in a gathered church setting. They urge preachers to deliver sermons that will significantly impact the worship experience and foster spiritual growth for congregants. All of this is good and helpful. The authors believe there is a need to acknowledge that preaching in corporate worship is essential to the health and mission of the church. God has appointed preaching in worship as one excellent means of accomplishing his ultimate goal in the world.<sup>68</sup> Bearing this in mind, with preaching recognized as worship, it would seem reasonable for pastors and ministers to intentionally embed worship theology and principles in delivering their sermons. However, authors on the topic of preaching as worship need to acknowledge and advise preachers to do so expressly.

### **Sermon Preparation**

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<sup>67</sup> Quicke, *Preaching as Worship*, 116.

<sup>68</sup> John Piper, *Expository Exultation: Christian Preaching as Worship* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2018), 15.

Sermon preparation is the third area of research connected to the topic. The sources available to support pastors and preachers in preparing their sermons are many. Most sources advocate starting with the Bible as the major resource for beginning sermon preparation. Experienced authors provide step-by-step instructions and illustrations to support novice preachers as well as expert preachers assigned to deliver Sunday sermons to congregations. Although there are virtually no instructions or illustrations to foster or encourage preparing sermons to include theological principles of worship explicitly, it is worth exploring what is advised as best practices for sermon preparation. This literature review section answers the question, “If pastors are not explicitly being encouraged to prepare sermons that specifically share worship theological principles, what instructions are those who prepare sermons receiving?”

“To preach is to join our human words with the word that God in Christ in the power of the Spirit is already speaking to the church and to the world, and to speak in Christ’s name is to claim Christ’s own promise, ‘Whoever listens to you listens to me’ (Luke 10:16),”<sup>69</sup> writes Thomas G. Long, author of *The Witness of Preaching*. Long provides precise details on sermon preparation that include three specific areas. The first area is biblical exegesis, which is a systematic plan for understanding a biblical text. A brief outline of the exegetical method involves five main parts: Getting the Text in View, Getting Introduced to the Text, Attending to the Text, Testing What is Heard in the Text, and Moving Toward the Sermon.

The second area of sermon preparation addresses the basic form of a sermon. “A sermon’s form, although often largely unperceived by the hearers, provides shape and energy to

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<sup>69</sup> Thomas G. Long, *The Witness of Preaching*, 2nd ed. (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2005), 17.

the sermon and thus becomes itself a vital force in how a sermon makes meaning.”<sup>70</sup> When preparing the sermon, the preacher considers an organizational plan and sequence for what listeners will hear and understand about the message of the sermon. Long shares how the form of a sermon can involve Question/Response, Ancient Setting/Contemporary Setting, Ancient Word/New Word, and include strategies such as storytelling, a logical presentation, a historical account, and rhetorical questioning. He also shares examples for structuring the form of a sermon which include Fred Craddock’s form of problem-solving activity,<sup>71</sup> Eugene Lowry’s form of conflict-complication-sudden shift-unfolding,<sup>72</sup> and Paul Scott Wilson’s form of trouble in the biblical text, trouble in our world, grace in the biblical text, and grace in our world.<sup>73</sup> “Form is an essential part of a sermon’s content and can itself support or undermine the communication of the gospel ... if the form of the sermon is clear, lively, and respectful of the listeners, then clarity, life, and dignity become a part of the sermon’s word to the hearers.”<sup>74</sup>

The third area of sermon preparation is the delivery of the sermon. Long spends considerable time fleshing out the ultimate elements needed for delivering a sermon, which is a spoken event.<sup>75</sup> He shares a clear purpose for sermons to have a focus and a function. The focus of a sermon is the theme or what the whole sermon is about or aims to say. The function of a sermon is what the preacher hopes will happen for those who hear the sermon. He states, “Sermons make demands upon the hearers, which is another way of saying that they provoke

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<sup>70</sup> Long, *The Witness of Preaching*, 118.

<sup>71</sup> Long, *The Witness of Preaching*, 125.

<sup>72</sup> Long, *The Witness of Preaching*, 126.

<sup>73</sup> Long, *The Witness of Preaching*, 128.

<sup>74</sup> Long, *The Witness of Preaching*, 118.

<sup>75</sup> Long, *The Witness of Preaching*, 225.

change in the hearers ... the hoped-for change.”<sup>76</sup> However, with his discussion of biblical exegesis, the basic form of a sermon, and the delivery of a sermon, he does not provide instructions or details to support sermon preparation that includes worship theology and principles.

Timothy S. Warren, author of “A Paradigm for Preaching,” describes the process of preaching in detail. Exegesis, Theology, Homiletics, and Revelation are the four main sections that comprise this preaching process to help a preacher prepare and preach with the audience in mind. The Exegetical Process bridges the world of Scripture to the world of the listeners. The product developed through exegesis provides a “statement of the text’s meaning in terms of structure, proposition, and purpose.”<sup>77</sup> The Theological Process relates to Godly principles discovered by the preacher. The product generated from the Theological Process will yield a “statement of universal theological principles that the preacher has discovered in the text through the exegetical and theological processes.”<sup>78</sup> The Homiletical Process is the sermon delivered to the listeners. Lastly, the Revelational Process “involves not only the preacher but also the listeners, whose lives demonstrate change for having heard and responded to the sermon. The process is not completed until God’s people think and act differently from having heard the Word expounded.”<sup>79</sup>

Warren explains the vital role the exegetical, theological, homiletical, and revelational products have on the development and delivery of sermons. He shares that equal value must

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<sup>76</sup> Long, *The Witness of Preaching*, 108–9.

<sup>77</sup> Timothy S. Warren, “A Paradigm for Preaching,” *The Bibliotheca Sacra* 148, no. 592 (1991): 473.

<sup>78</sup> Warren, “A Paradigm for Preaching,” 473.

<sup>79</sup> Warren, “A Paradigm for Preaching,” 473.

occur in each process, and the products developed through each process stand alone. He states, “There must be no merging of sections and no elimination of sections.”<sup>80</sup> To do otherwise would risk such happenings as the audience influencing the exegetical process or the sermon preparer applying temporal or limited principles that do not align with proper theology.

Warren digs deeper into the theological process and product in his article, “The Theological Process in Sermon Preparation,” when he writes, “The theological process advances the exegetical conclusions (interpretive outline and proposition) through three modifying stages toward the homiletical process.”<sup>81</sup> The first stage is called *stylizing*, which involves moving from the use of technical, exegetical language to theological language. The technical terms include *poetic components*, *semantic force*, and *narrative elements*. Through examples such as parallelism and rhythm, which lead to semantic force such as purpose, means, or motive, followed by the use of a plot or a literary device, the process yields the development of short theological statements that are easy for listeners to understand.<sup>82</sup>

*Theologizing* is the second stage, which entails moving from specific and time-bound statements to universal and timeless truth. According to Warren, theologizing is a process that requires three theological movements. Biblical theology is the first theological movement that “seeks to identify and interpret the author’s world-view by attending to references to God (the transcendent One), creation (which has significance as God’s work), God and creation in relation with one another (in salvation and worship), and creation with creation (in face-to-face

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<sup>80</sup> Warren, “A Paradigm for Preaching,” 473.

<sup>81</sup> Timothy S. Warren, “The Theological Process in Sermon Preparation,” *Bibliotheca Sacra* 156 (July-September 1999): 337.

<sup>82</sup> Warren, “The Theological Process in Sermon Preparation,” 338.

community.)”<sup>83</sup> The second theological movement is canonical theology, where connections between biblical theology and biblical revelation occur for the sermon writer. The outcome is that the interpreter separates the substantive and permanent truth expressed in the Scriptures from particular historical contexts connected to various biblical texts that express that identified permanent truth.<sup>84</sup> The third theological movement is systematic theology, which systemizes all the biblical truth. This third movement aims for coherence, comprehensiveness, adequacy, and consistency for the preacher to conceptualize, shape, and express an accurate and inclusive theological proposition.<sup>85</sup>

*Organizing* is the final stage, which encompasses moving from textual structure to a logical and psychological flow. The preacher takes his exegetical outline and proposition and establishes a logical order. Warren notes that the stage of creating a logical order may not match the actual flow of a given biblical text. He concludes by stating, “Progressing through the stylizing, theologizing, and organizing states of the theological process should enhance the preacher’s ability to guard against misrepresenting and misapplying the divine intent of the Scriptures.”<sup>86</sup> Considering this research topic, Warren could have made an effort to include the theology of worship, especially since preaching is worship. However, his discussion does not directly mention connections between biblical and worship theology when preparing a sermon.

*Shaping the Claim*, by Marvin A. McMickle provides guidance for preachers in developing their sermons based on Aristotle’s three principles of rhetoric or public speaking:

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<sup>83</sup> Warren, “The Theological Process in Sermon Preparation,” 340.

<sup>84</sup> Warren, “The Theological Process in Sermon Preparation,” 341.

<sup>85</sup> Warren, “The Theological Process in Sermon Preparation,” 342.

<sup>86</sup> Warren, “The Theological Process in Sermon Preparation,” 356.

*logos*, *pathos*, and *ethos*. According to McMickle, all preachers should begin their sermon preparation in the Word of God. This is similar to Long and Warren, who also advocate for sermon preparation starting with exegesis.<sup>87</sup> *Logos*, in sermon preparation, represents the content or claim of the sermon, has an intellectual appeal, and addresses the question, “What to preach?” With a theme or central message, the sermon claim reflects a central truth or teaching, whereas “A sermon ought to do one of the following things: assert something that is significant, ask for something that is substantial to the point of requiring personal or communal commitment, or advocate for something that is sacred and deeply spiritual.”<sup>88</sup>

The second principle, *pathos*, involves the emotional appeal of the sermon, where the sermon delivery ensures an existential or experiential connection with the listeners. Preachers are encouraged to have passion, enthusiasm, and conviction with a note of urgency in which the people experience the presence of God because the sermon is intentionally for them. McMickle addresses emotion in worship based on the *pathos* principle and explains:

We must remember that what we do and say as preachers is still part of a wider worship experience where the input and involvement of others is as important as anything we might say or do. It is the whole of the worship service—prayers, praise, and proclamation—that invites those in the pew to experience, emotionally and existentially, a level of involvement in the good news that is comforting or confronting, that is transformative.<sup>89</sup>

Similar to Long and Warren, McMickle acknowledges that listeners will respond with actions after hearing the sermon. The hope is that people will draw upon the emotions experienced when he states:

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<sup>87</sup> Marvin A. McMickle, *Shaping the Claim: Moving from Text to Sermon* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2008), 5.

<sup>88</sup> McMickle, *Shaping the Claim*, 6.

<sup>89</sup> McMickle, *Shaping the Claim*, 46.

To invite an emotional response is the intentional act of moving the listener beyond the immediacy of the feelings of the moment, and encouraging them to draw upon whatever emotions the sermon may have ignited to engage in some specific and appropriate next steps. The emotional response is not merely the feeling generated by the experience of hearing the sermon; it must also include some contextually appropriate way to respond to what has been said and heard. Some sermons can challenge people to call forth their untapped reservoirs of courage as they engage in a struggle for justice and social transformation. Other sermons can invite people to act upon their newly awakened sense of contrition and begin the quest for personal, spiritual transformation.<sup>90</sup>

The final principle, *ethos*, involves persuading listeners of a sermon to action with a focus on the question, “Now what?” Prior to this point, text selection, biblical exegesis, sermon design, and sermon delivery with a sermon claim have occurred. McMickle presents two models of behavioral responses when shaping the claim of a sermon. He shares Robert McCracken’s model in which the outcome of a sermon should kindle the mind, energize the will, disturb the conscience, or stir the heart.<sup>91</sup> He then shares Cleophus LaRue’s model of human life experiences in which a sermon is devoted to personal piety, care of the soul, social justice, corporate concerns (community life), and maintenance of the institutional church.<sup>92</sup> McMickle summarizes the processes of shaping the claim by stating, “As we should preach about a wide variety of themes and topics (what) and offer a range of emotional experiences of the gospel (so what), we must equip and empower people to take all of the necessary next steps (now what) that can result in their becoming mature Christians.”<sup>93</sup>

Marvin McMickle further expresses the importance of sermon preparation through his step called, *Life Application*, as a model for the creative phase of preaching in his book, *Living*

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<sup>90</sup> McMickle, *Shaping the Claim*, 51.

<sup>91</sup> McMickle, *Shaping the Claim*, 64.

<sup>92</sup> McMickle, *Shaping the Claim*, 72.

<sup>93</sup> McMickle, *Shaping the Claim*, 74.

*Water for Thirsty Souls: Unleashing the Power of Exegetical Preaching*. He uses alliteration with eight words: *exegetical*, *evangelical*, *environmental*, *evocative*, *emotional*, *experiential*, *epigrammatical*, and *ethical*. *Exegetical* takes into account what the biblical text says and means, and the creative process of an evangelical sermon takes into account the following questions:

Does your preaching regularly engage people around the major doctrines and themes of the Bible? Do you speak about the sovereign power of God, the love of Christ as revealed by his death on the cross, or the power and promise of the resurrection? Do you challenge people to understand properly the role that the sacraments and ordinances play in the life of a Christian? Do you speak about Christian discipleship, the outreach and mission of the church, and the regular practice of stewardship as an authentic act of worship and obedience? Do you challenge people to “love one another” across or despite differences in race, culture, language, and gender? Finally, does your sermon ever present people with the challenge of personal salvation through faith in the atoning work of God in Jesus Christ?<sup>94</sup>

He then concludes the list of sermon evangelical questions by stating, “The first challenge in designing and delivering a sermon is to be sure that it is an evangelical message.”<sup>95</sup>

While preparing a sermon and planning to deliver the message, preachers need to consider the social, cultural, theological, and ideological settings in order to understand and allow the hearers of the Word to connect to the sermon. They also need to ensure their sermon is evocative and emotional, from which listeners respond to the emotional delivery of a sermon because of what they heard, which directly ties to his discussion of *pathos* and *ethos* in *Shaping the Claim*.

Preachers preparing sermons need to consider the experiential aspect of the design and delivery of their sermons, and this directly relates to the preacher sharing their personal experiences with God. McMickle states:

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<sup>94</sup> Marvin A. McMickle, *Living Water for Thirsty Souls: Unleashing the Power of Exegetical Preaching* (King of Prussia, PA: Judson Press, 2001), 173.

<sup>95</sup> McMickle, *Living Water for Thirsty Souls*, 173

Part of the passion and enthusiasm of that we bring to our preaching is due to the fact that the Good News of the gospel that we present to others was initially Good News in relation to our own sin and salvation saga ... Preachers will want to be highly selective in the ways they share their personal experiences in the context of preaching ... if the illustration or episode shows how God has worked for the good in the life of the preacher ... then that is a story worth sharing. If we are willing to allow the congregation to see that the sins abhorred by God left their marks upon our own bodies, souls, and lives, our people might listen to us willingly.<sup>96</sup>

McMickle also shares the importance of sermons that appeal to the five senses of taste, feel, smell, hear, and see, which is an *epigrammatical* preaching style. When using this preaching style, “This means that the preacher makes use of word pictures, engages in storytelling, and makes the biblical text and the biblical world come alive in the mind of the listeners through character development and commentary on the actions being discussed in the text.”<sup>97</sup> Then he concludes with preachers being ethical both intellectually and in their personal lives. McMickle encourages preachers to handle the Scriptures and their character with integrity as leaders in the community and with their congregation. He writes, “Let the truth and clarity of our message, the power and conviction of our delivery, and the ethical conduct of our lives work together in such a way that the people of God are nourished, the church of God strengthened, and the name of God glorified.”<sup>98</sup>

McMickle’s discussions on logos, pathos, ethos, life application, and appealing to the five senses all lend themselves toward implying the need to acknowledge worship theology and principles in the preparation process. However, this is often implied instead of directly stated for those charged with preparing sermons.

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<sup>96</sup> McMickle, *Living Water for Thirsty Souls*, 187.

<sup>97</sup> McMickle, *Living Water for Thirsty Souls*, 188.

<sup>98</sup> McMickle, *Living Water for Thirsty Souls*, 191.

Gerrit Immink, author of “Homiletics: The Current Debate,” shares similar sentiments as Long, Warren, and McMickle on the sermon’s influence on a listener when discussing what is called, “New Homiletics.” According to Immink, twenty-first-century sermon preparation is moving away from modernist logos to post-modern poetics, which means “a further turn to the listener: how is faith enacted by the listener?”<sup>99</sup> In the last half of the twentieth century, preachers preparing sermons considered, “What exactly does the listener hear, and what does he or she expect to happen in the church? This resulted in hearer-centered models in homiletics.”<sup>100</sup> Eventually, moving into the twenty-first century, a paradigm shift occurred in North America called, “New Homiletics,” which describes *homiletics* as poetic, narrative, imaginative, creative, and transformational.

Through quoting several authors on the topic of “New Homiletics,” Immink deepens the discussion about the listeners of sermons. When one prepares a sermon, “an evaluation of the sermon should focus on the question, What happened in this sermon?”<sup>101</sup> Similar to Thomas Long, Immink cites Fred Craddock, who supports inductive preaching that is respectful to the hearer and allows listeners to complete the sermon. Using Eugene Lowry, he shares how sermon preparation includes an intersection between an identified need and theme or a sensed problem with a thematic answer. Immink further addresses the topic by referencing Lucy Atkinson Rose,

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<sup>99</sup> F. Gerrit Immink, “Homiletics: The Current Debate,” *International Journal of Practical Theology* 8, no. 1 (2004): 89, ProQuest Central.

<sup>100</sup> Immink, “Homiletics: The Current Debate,” 96.

<sup>101</sup> Immink, “Homiletics: The Current Debate,” 101.

who purports that “Sermonic language should be poetic, evocative, and performative so that it is able to invite to the sermonic roundtable the experiences, thoughts, and wagers of all those present and even those absent.”<sup>102</sup>

Immink acknowledges the role of preaching and its impact on the listener. The ultimate goal is to elicit growth and change in response to hearing the Word of God. He states:

We have observed that preaching as the proclaiming of the new existence in Christ has strong evidence in scripture and in the history of preaching. Further, we saw that contemporary homiletics rightly claims that preaching as a communicative act is a dialogue and conversation with the gathered community of faith. An often disregarded and even neglective dimension, however, is the edifying and instructional dimension of preaching. To preach is to teach and to instruct. Preaching aims at the formation and development of faith. And faith is not a quality we possess once and for all, but rather a quality that needs to mature.<sup>103</sup>

Author Dan Baumann in the chapter, “Preparing a Sermon” in the *Leadership Handbook of Preaching and Worship*, states, “Quality preaching does not happen by accident. It is the result of hard work, creative thinking, careful research, and a dependence on the Holy Spirit.”<sup>104</sup> He encourages preachers to implement seven steps that can support sermon preparation in a manner reflective of homiletical excellence. Step one is preparing the preacher with devotional time and reading a wide array of sources that include not just the Bible, but biographies; historical, contemporary, social, and psychological studies; and periodicals. Step two involves choosing the subject and text. For this step, Baumann presents three questions a preacher should ask when planning their sermons: 1) What do people need to hear this week? 2) What parts of God’s Word

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<sup>102</sup> Immink, “Homiletics: The Current Debate,” 104.

<sup>103</sup> Immink, “Homiletics: The Current Debate,” 105.

<sup>104</sup> Dan Baumann, “The Purpose and Meaning of Worship,” in *Leadership Handbook of Preaching and Worship: Practical Insight from a Cross Section of Ministry Leaders*, ed. James D. Berkley (Grand Rapids, MI: Christianity Today and Baker Book House, 1992), 81.

need to be expounded now? and 3) What has God laid upon my heart?<sup>105</sup> Step three is to study the text, and step four involves shaping the material. To shape the material, he provides five sermon components: form, illustrations, applications, conclusions, and an introduction. Step five pertains to writing the sermon, step six involves soaking in the material, and lastly, step seven is preaching the Word.

Bauman's three questions and five sermon components are opportunities to directly encourage preachers to embed worship theology and principles into the sermon preparation process. He does not mention the importance of expounding on worship theology and principles. He does not discuss or provide examples of how illustrations and applications can help grow a listener's understanding of worship as a lifestyle. Bauman has salient points; however, similar to the previous authors, making the connections to worship theology and principles are implied versus explicitly addressed in the sermon preparation process.

Thomas G. Long, Timothy S. Warren, Marvin A. McMickle, Gerrit Immink, and Dan Baumann are all clear about pastors and preachers preparing sermons that engage in distinct processes to meet the needs of the listening congregation and remain faithful to the Word of God. They each place importance on the sermon engaging and moving listeners to action because sermon preparation and delivery include a demand upon the hearers that will create or cause a change to happen in the life of the listener.<sup>106</sup> In addition, the authors speak clearly about preachers ensuring their sermons are based on biblical theology and principles when preparing sermons. Still, the resources are devoid of encouraging sermon preparation and delivery to

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<sup>105</sup> Baumann, "The Purpose and Meaning of Worship," 83.

<sup>106</sup> Long, *The Witness of Preaching*, 108–9.

include aspects of the theology and principles of worship. This is even true for John Piper's source, whose chapters address pastors and ministry leaders.

### **Literature Review Summary**

After reviewing the literature, the task for pastors and preachers to embed the theology and principles of worship in their sermon preparation and pastoral training is not without its challenges. Based on a literature review on pastors and training, pastors and seminaries, and pastors and worship, there are specific resources about pastoral training and seminary education. However, the research does not reveal writings and material on the need for pastors to include the theology and principles of worship in the preparation of sermons and pastoral training. For senior pastors, it seems as if the topic of worship is absorbed within key subjects (e.g., church history, systematic theology, spiritual formation) as part of the training received by pastors, but not explicitly explored as a "must-have" in the development of pastoral leaders. This gives cause for concern and a need to fill this gap in the literature because pastors have a spiritual responsibility to assume an active role in developing their congregants' understanding and practice of personal and corporate worship. Their influence as spiritual leaders can have a long-term impact on their personal leadership, the spiritual walk of believers, and the complete assimilation of believers into the church body as authentic worshipers of God.

The issue of pastors and preachers being encouraged to embed the theology and principles of worship in their sermon preparation and pastoral training is further compounded when considering the Association of Theological Schools' standards for accreditation. The examination of the Association of Theological Schools in this study reveals a noticeable gap in the education and preparation of those seeking pastoral roles in our churches. The gap involves the education and preparation of pastors and preachers on the subject of worship. It seems the

reputation of worship is primarily associated with music or the planning of church services. Pastors or preachers receive instruction on biblical content and knowledge, leadership, and spiritual formation. This may include references to living Godly, being devoted to God as a Christian, or living a life of sacrifice, all of which are examples of worship in action. However, they are not intentionally receiving education on the subject of worship concerning theology and principles. This is interesting because pastors and preachers must study the Word of God thoroughly, and there are clear examples of biblical leaders ensuring that followers of God understand the theology and principles of worship.

For example, considering the worship principles of Witviliet and Whaley that directly shape this research topic, the principle that worship begins with obedience was established when God provided the Ten Commandments. He gave clear instructions relating to worshipping other gods and being holy. Another example is in Deuteronomy chapter 4 when Moses strongly encourages the Israelites to keep God's statutes and commandments. Moses' words support the principles that worship requires holiness and involves and equals submission. In Romans chapter 1 and Ephesians 2, the principles of worship being formational, transformational, relational, and covenantal are fleshed out through living by faith, walking in godliness, acknowledging Jesus Christ as the chief cornerstone, and believers being a temple for the Holy Spirit.

There is a need for training and sermons to include the theology and doctrines of worship and biblical theology to achieve spiritual growth and balance for the congregation. By fulfilling this need, those hearing the sermon gain a better understanding of their relationship with God and being a Christian who lives a life in response to God and their purpose as worshipers.

From reviewing the research on the term *worship*, a person can understand why sermons that include worship theology and principles do not often occur on Sunday morning services. To

prepare sermons that include the theology and principles of worship, a pastor or preacher must have a firm understanding of a basic definition of worship and the reality that worship is defined in three distinct areas, with all having an interdependent relationship. Also, it becomes evident that the context of worship needs to be precise to address the research topic. Manfred Waldemar Kohl, author of “Theological and Philosophical Understanding of Church Liturgy/Worship,” summarizes it best when he states:

When we ask, “What is worship?” “What is liturgy?” we must begin by developing a clear understanding of the basic principles, or theological foundations; and, secondly, how these principles can be expressed (that is, practiced or demonstrated) in our various forms of worship and liturgy. The key question is how we, as human beings, can effectively combine principles and practice in worshipping a holy, eternal God.<sup>107</sup>

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<sup>107</sup> Manfred Waldemar Kohl, “Theological and Philosophical Understanding of Church Liturgy/Worship,” *International Congregational Journal* 9, no. 2 (Winter 2010): 71, EBSCOhost.

## **Chapter 3: Methodology**

### **Introduction**

Training and encouraging pastors and ministers to embed worship theology and principles in their sermon preparation is a new concept altogether. Yet this is needed to increase the churchgoers' understanding of worship and the implications of living in a worshipful relationship with God. The subject of worship has profound implications for believers and those who deliver weekly sermons.

The implications are the following: Without adequate training in the area of worship, pastors and preachers may not regularly plan and deliver weekly sermons that include specific principles to shape a hearer's theology of worship. Thereby, hearers may experience weekly sermons that do not explicitly connect with both the study of God and worship that is biblical, central, and significant in Scripture. And, if church members lack in their understanding of God and the theology and principles of worship, then their spiritual growth and overall relationship with the Lord is impacted.

Pastors and ministers who deliver weekly sermons have the opportunity to spiritually influence what congregations hear and ultimately choose to do based on the inspiration of a biblically preached sermon. Because of their influence, it is necessary to examine the training and preparation in which pastors and ministers engage while preparing for a lifelong ministry of developing and delivering their sermons to church congregations.

As a result, the research aims to identify what pastors and preachers communicate through their sermons that include the theology and principles of worship to share with their congregations. This research explores if there is a lack of theology and principles of worship present in sermon preparation and pastoral training. Lastly, the research determines how often

the pastors' congregations are granted opportunities to potentially connect the topic preached to the development of a lifestyle of worship.

Explanations and outlines of the objectives and the research methodology form the basis for this chapter. A description of the participants, along with the research procedures which address the dissertation topic, is also discussed in this chapter. How the data is gathered and analyzed for the research concludes this chapter by addressing the topic of embedding the theology and principles of worship in pastoral training and sermon preparation.

### **Research Questions**

In a qualitative study, inquirers state research questions that assume two forms: (a) a central question and (b) associated sub-questions.<sup>1</sup> To address the research topic, the central question of the research is, "What do pastors and preachers communicate about the theology and principles of worship to their congregations in their sermons?" The sub-questions in the research to support the inquiry process and the central question are as follows:

1. What seminary courses/training for sermon preparation do pastors and preachers receive?
2. How do the seminary courses/training for sermon preparation reflect the theology and principles of worship?
3. What do the pastors and preachers understand about the theology and principles of worship?
4. How do pastors and preachers ensure the theology and principles of worship are shared with the congregation through sermon delivery?

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<sup>1</sup> John W. Creswell and J. David Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*, 5th ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2018), 133.

Based on the literature review, there is a need to explore what type of training pastors and preachers receive and to determine if their training has a role in the sermon content delivered each week to their congregations. Furthermore, exploring the participants' understanding of worship in the area of theology and principles supports the central research question to determine whether their understanding is a determining factor in designing or creating sermons that embed worship theology and principles.

The researcher uses the following instruments to gather data to address both the central research question and the research sub-questions: (1) an interview protocol for notetaking; (2) an interview reflection tool; (3) a follow-up interview protocol; (3) three sermons from each participant in the study; (4) a sermon analysis tool; and (5) audio recordings from conducting virtual interviews with each participant in the study.

### **Research Methodology**

The research method to address this research topic and gather data related to the research's central question is a qualitative study. A qualitative study explores, explains, or describes a phenomenon and provides an opportunity to build rich descriptions of complex circumstances that are unexplored in the literature.<sup>2</sup> Selecting a qualitative study approach enables the researcher to explore and achieve the objective of identifying the training pastors and preachers receive to effectively plan sermons that include the theology and principles of worship to share with their congregations.

To address the research question, research sub-questions, and the data gathering methods, conducting a quantitative study by an observation study, implementing a correlational study, or

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<sup>2</sup> Catherine Marshall, Gretchen B. Rossman, and Gerardo L. Blanco, *Designing Qualitative Research*, 7th ed. (Thousand Oaks: Sage College Publishing, 2022), 93.

systematically surveying pastors and preachers is not applicable. An observation study is “a type of quantitative research in which a particular aspect of behavior is observed systematically and with as much objectivity as possible.”<sup>3</sup> The researcher is not seeking to quantify a specific behavior through counting or frequency. A correlational study is a “statistical investigation of the relationship between two or more variables.”<sup>4</sup> The researcher is not determining a correlation between variables involving knowledge or behavior to make accurate predictions. Lastly, survey research is a “study designed to determine the incidence, frequency, and distribution of certain characteristics in a population.”<sup>5</sup> The researcher acknowledges that systematically surveying pastors and preachers is an option. This approach would capture a brief moment of responses; however, the researcher is interested in an expansive opportunity to explore more deeply the reasonings and justifications that pertain to identifying the training pastors and preachers receive to effectively plan sermons that include the theology and principles of worship to share with their congregations.

### **Research Design**

The research design of a qualitative study involves exploratory research in supporting the research topic and questions. Exploratory research seems best for this research because the research topic of embedding the theology and principles of worship in pastoral training and sermon preparation is new. The selected design enables the researcher to explore and acquire data specific to the research questions.

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<sup>3</sup> Paul D. Leedy and Jeanne Ellis Ormrod, *Practical Research Planning and Design*, 12th ed. (New York, NY: Pearson, 2019), 93.

<sup>4</sup> Leedy and Ormrod, *Practical Research Planning*, 92.

<sup>5</sup> Leedy and Ormrod, *Practical Research Planning*, 93.

The researcher considered additional qualitative study designs: case study, ethnography, phenomenological study, and narrative inquiry. “In a case study—sometimes called idiographic research—a particular individual, program, or event is studied in depth for a defined period of time.”<sup>6</sup> The researcher is not studying a particular individual, program, or event but a particular group of people and their relationship and training on a specific topic. An ethnographic study is not applicable because the participants do not reflect a common culture. The researcher acknowledges that the participants have a shared belief system, which is Christianity; however, the defining characteristic is too broad to meet the requirements of an ethnographic study.

“A phenomenological study is a study that attempts to understand people’s perceptions and perspectives relative to a particular situation.”<sup>7</sup> The researcher considered phenomenological study as part of the qualitative study design; however, the research questions, though open-ended, are not designed to collect data based on the perceptions and perspectives of the participants. Furthermore, the researcher determined that conducting a narrative inquiry design did not apply to the purpose of the research. The narrative inquiry qualitative design focuses on the recollections of stories of individuals who have had experiences related to a particular phenomenon.<sup>8</sup> The research topic and questions do not elicit stories about a particular phenomenon. Overall, the researcher believes exploratory research as a qualitative design supports the research methodology.

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<sup>6</sup> Leedy and Jeanne Ellis Ormrod, *Practical Research Planning*, 230.

<sup>7</sup> Leedy and Jeanne Ellis Ormrod, *Practical Research Planning*, 233.

<sup>8</sup> Leedy and Jeanne Ellis Ormrod, *Practical Research Planning*, 234.

“Qualitative researchers typically rely on four primary methods for gathering information: (1) participating in the setting, (2) observing directly, (3) interviewing in depth, and (4) analyzing documents and material culture, with varying emphases.”<sup>9</sup> Considering the four primary methods, the researcher determines the best method for gathering information for the qualitative study involving a primary source and a secondary source to address the research topic. The primary source of gathering information occurs through in-depth semi-structured interviews of participants. The data collected during the interviews include an interview protocol with open-ended questions, the “Local Preachers Initial Interview Protocol,” developed by the researcher, and a virtual audio recording of the participants interviewed to be transcribed by the researcher.

The secondary source for gathering information is analyzing transcripts of recorded sermons submitted by the participants. The data collected is represented by an analysis of the written sermons using a sermon analysis tool, “Local Preacher Sermon Analysis Tool,” developed by the researcher. Analyzing participants’ written sermons provides additional data to address the research topic and questions.

### **Population and Sample Selection**

The researcher considers that participants for the research need to represent a specific population with experience in a common activity. This means the researcher needs to sample participants directly related to individuals with Christian and biblical beliefs actively involved in their local church with experience preparing and delivering sermons. In *Designing Qualitative Research*, the authors share that researchers need to set logic and parameters for choosing a

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<sup>9</sup> Catherine Marshall, Gretchen B. Rossman, and Gerardo L. Blanco, *Designing Qualitative Research*, 7th ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage College Publishing, 2022), 153.

sampling of participants.<sup>10</sup> This study concerning the sampling of participants applies to local preachers. The minimum number of local preachers in the sampling of participants is fifteen. For the research, the participants need to reflect the following parameters:

- A Christian believer
- A local preacher that resides in Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey, or Pennsylvania
- Formal training and preparation for writing and delivering sermons to church congregations (e.g., seminary courses, church organization training)
- At least three years of experience delivering sermons to a local church congregation during the main weekly service (e.g., for most local churches, this occurs on Sunday mornings)

Overall, the participants represent a purposive sampling because (1) the purpose of the research is aimed at a very finite, specific, well-defined group; (2) the researcher recognizes only certain people have the knowledge and expertise related to the research topic, and (3) most of the population of interest is small in size and feasible to study.<sup>11</sup>

### Recruitment of Participants

Participants are recruited for the research by a purposive sampling. The recruitment technique for the study involves leveraging the researcher's church network and snowball sampling. According to *Designing Qualitative Research*, researchers can build on insights and connections, which includes identifying cases of interest from people who know people who

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<sup>10</sup> Marshall, Rossman, and Blanco, *Designing Qualitative Research*, 128.

<sup>11</sup> Margaret R. Roller and Paul J. Lavrakas, *Applied Qualitative Research Design: A Total Quality Framework Approach* (New York, NY: Guilford Press), 2015, 197.

know what cases are rich with information.<sup>12</sup> The cases in this research are local preachers selected based on their ability to provide rich information related to the research topic on worship, pastoral training, and sermon preparation.

Recruitment of local preachers as participants occurs through the following steps:

Step 1: An initial email recruitment message, recruitment flyer, and research consent form are sent via email to the researcher's network of pastors and preachers that fit the research criteria for participants (see Appendix E, F, and G).

Step 2: Potential participants responding to the initial email and/or recruitment flyer contact the researcher via email or by telephone for further information to participate in the study. The researcher responds to potential participant inquiries via email and telephone.

Step 3: Participants who confirm their willingness to participate in the study complete a research consent form before participating in the actual research (see Appendix G).

Step 4: Participants can recommend a pastor/preacher who may have an interest in participating in the study. Participants who make a recommendation do not receive additional compensation.

Step 5: A recommended pastor/preacher receives a snowballing recruitment email and a recruitment flyer (see Appendix E and F).

Step 6: The researcher asks participants to gently pass along a recruitment flyer to local pastors or preachers who may be interested in participating in the study (see Appendix F). Participants have the right to decline gently passing along the recruitment flyer about the study.

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<sup>12</sup> Marshall, Rossman, and Blanco, *Designing Qualitative Research*, 126.

Step 7: The researcher emails potential participants who respond to the recruitment flyer a recruitment response message along with the research consent form (see Appendix G, I).

### Setting

Ideal sites are ones where (1) access is possible; (2) there is a high probability that a rich mix of the processes, interactions, and structures of interest is present; (3) the researcher is likely to be able to build trusting relations with the participants in the study; (4) the study can be conducted and reported ethically; and (5) the data quality and credibility of the study are reasonably assured.<sup>13</sup> Participant interviews occur in a private setting online/virtual due to COVID restrictions or regulations, with no one else present in the researcher's or participant's virtual environment. The location for the virtual interaction is at the discretion of the participant. To foster trust, the researcher does not use a virtual background. Some participants use a virtual background, and some participants do not use a virtual background revealing that they are either in their personal homes or at their church's office. Both the researcher and participants ensure the environment is free of noise and distractions to allow for uninterrupted interaction in response to the research questions and a clear recording of the virtual setting and interview.

### Sources of Data

“Qualitative researchers collect data themselves through examining documents, observing behavior, or interviewing participants. They may use a protocol—an instrument for recording data—but the researchers are the ones who actually gather the information and interpret it. They do not tend to use or rely on questionnaires or instruments developed by other

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<sup>13</sup> Marshall, Rossman, and Blanco, *Designing Qualitative Research*, 123.

researchers.”<sup>14</sup> The researcher is a key instrument in the study to gather data, examine documents, and interview participants.

“Qualitative researchers typically gather multiple forms of data, such as interviews, observations, documents, and audiovisual information, rather than rely on a single source of data.”<sup>15</sup> The researcher uses more than one source of data. Additional instruments for data-gathering include the following: (1) an interview protocol for notetaking; (2) an interview reflection tool; (3) a follow-up interview protocol (4) three sermons from each participant; (5) a sermon analysis tool; and (6) audio recordings from the virtual interviews.

The interview protocol for notetaking is used during the initial virtual interviews to record participants’ answers, write brief notes, and capture salient quotes. The interview protocol, labeled as the “Local Preacher Interview Protocol,” contains an outline for the interview, participant information (e.g., date of the interview, virtual location, and time of interview), scripts for the introduction and closing, and the eight initial interview questions (see Appendix I).

The interview reflection tool is used after the initial virtual interviews to reflect on the participants’ responses shared during the interviews. The reflection tool, labeled as the “Local Preacher Initial Interview Reflection Tool,” contains specific statements that refine the open-ended initial interview questions into a concise *yes* or *no* response to foster reflection for the researcher. The tool also includes a section for the researcher to scribe additional notes to capture visual observations and spontaneous feedback provided by participants (see Appendix J).

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<sup>14</sup> Creswell and Creswell, *Research Design*, 181.

<sup>15</sup> Creswell and Creswell, *Research Design*, 181.

An additional interview protocol is used during the follow-up virtual interviews to record participants' feedback regarding the accuracy of the research findings. The follow-up interview protocol labeled "Local Preacher Follow-Up Interview Protocol," contains an outline for the follow-up interview, participant information (e.g., date of follow-up interview, virtual location, and time of follow-up interview), scripts for the introduction, review of critical findings, participant feedback, and the closing (see Appendix K).

The sermon analysis tool analyzes the three written sermons submitted by each participant to the researcher. The sermon analysis tool labeled "Local Preacher Sermon Analysis Tool" contains criteria for sermon biblical content, worship content, and worship principles. The criteria created by the researcher reflect the content areas discussed explicitly in the Literature Review chapter of this study. The tool indicates if the biblical and worship are *evident*, *partially evident*, or *not evident* when examining each submitted sermon (see Appendix L).

### **Validity**

"Validity is one of the strengths of qualitative research and is based on determining whether the findings are accurate from the standpoint of the researcher, the participant, or the readers of an account."<sup>16</sup> The researcher validates the findings with more than one approach. The first approach includes *member checking*. Using the "Local Preacher Follow-Up Interview Protocol," the researcher shares the interview findings and sermon analysis results with participants. The researcher also shares general themes that emerge from the interviews and sermon analysis with participants. Participants review the information and provide feedback to indicate accuracy and comment on the findings. The researcher records participants' comments on the "Local Preacher Follow-Up Interview Protocol."

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<sup>16</sup> Creswell and Creswell, *Research Design*, 199.

The second approach to sustain validity involves clearly distinguishing between data and reflections while conducting the virtual interviews, reflecting on the interviews, and transcribing the audio-visual recorded interviews. Descriptive data and the researcher's interpretations or reflections pertaining to the interviews are labeled clearly in the notes sections in the "Local Preacher Interview Protocol," "Local Preacher Follow-Up Interview Protocol," and on the transcriptions of the recorded interviews.

The third approach to maintaining validity pertains to further transparency conducted by the researcher. When analyzing the data, the researcher documents all evidence that supports and contradicts any identified patterns and themes. The researcher includes this information in the data findings.

The final approach to address the validity of the research involves peer debriefing. The qualifications of the peer debriefer are the following:

- A graduate degree from a higher learning institution;
- Experience with conducting a qualitative or quantitative research study; and
- Experience as a thesis/dissertation chair or reader for graduate students.

The researcher acquires a peer debriefer to do the following:

- Ask the researcher questions related to the research methods and findings;
- Critique the researcher's data collection method and interview transcripts;
- Review elements of the researcher's coding processes; and
- Review and evaluate the researcher's data and analytical techniques

Overall, the peer debriefer's efforts help the researcher avoid vague descriptions, address any appearance of biased assumptions, and uncover any errors with the data and the research process

conducted by the researcher.<sup>17</sup> The researcher takes notes and documents the questions posed by the peer debriefer and the responses to the questions. The study's research findings include peer debriefing notes, documented questions, and responses.

### **Reliability**

Qualitative researchers seek to ensure their approaches are reliable or consistent.<sup>18</sup> To ensure the reliability of the study, the researcher does the following:

- Ensures all transcribed audio recordings are accurate;
- Ensures the procedures for coding each interview are consistent;
- Implements a qualitative codebook with definitions of the codes assigned to specific data; and
- Records all the steps of the research procedures.

### **Data Collection and Management**

Data collection for the qualitative research involves two parts. "Qualitative researchers rely quite extensively on in-depth interviewing. Qualitative interviews are, in effect, constructed as two (or more) individuals discuss a 'theme of mutual interest.'"<sup>19</sup> The first part of the data collection process involves interviews with the following steps:

Step 1: Local pastors and preachers as participants electronically sign an IRB-approved consent form before participating in the initial interview. Participants email the researcher

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<sup>17</sup> Delve, "What is Peer Debriefing in Qualitative Research," Delvetool.com, accessed January 25, 2023, <https://delvetool.com/blog/peerdebriefing#:~:text=Peer%20debriefing%20is%20the%20process,transcripts%2C%20methodology%2C%20and%20findings.>

<sup>18</sup> Creswell and Creswell, *Research Design*, 201.

<sup>19</sup> Creswell and Creswell, *Research Design*, 160.

their electronically signed consent forms before a scheduled, in-depth interview to confirm their participation in the study.

Step 2: The researcher provides participants with a copy of the signed consent form for their records. The researcher keeps a copy of the consent form with all electronic study records before the scheduled interview.

Step 3: The researcher schedules local pastors and preachers for their in-depth interviews, which occur through the virtual online application Zoom.

Step 4: Before speaking in the Zoom application, the researcher enables transcription on the application.

Step 5: During the 45–60 minutes interview, the researcher follows the detailed initial interview protocol, “Local Preachers Interview Protocol,” utilizing the script’s opening, interview questions, and closing details (see Appendix I).

Step 6: When participants respond to each open-ended interview question (eight in total), the researcher types their responses onto the “Local Preachers Interview Protocol” document using a computer. The researcher indicates a label for any brief additional notes and observations on the protocol. Also, the researcher captures salient points on the protocol and highlights the points.

Step 7: After the interview, the researcher reviews the interview’s virtual recording and the Zoom application’s transcript. The researcher plays the virtual recording and makes edits to the transcript to ensure the words spoken by the participants are accurate and match the virtual recorded responses to the open-ended interview questions.

Step 8: After reviewing the virtual recordings, the “Local Preachers Interview Protocol,” and the transcripts, the researcher uses a computer to complete a “Local Preacher Initial

Interview Reflection Tool” for each participant’s initial interview (see Appendix J). The researcher notes any visual observations and spontaneous feedback on the reflection tool and clearly labels visual observations and spontaneous feedback on the document.

### Qualitative Documents

“During the process of research, the investigators may collect qualitative documents. They may be public documents or private documents.”<sup>20</sup> The second part of the data collection process involves analyzing sermons with the following steps:

Step 1: Participants email the researcher their three written sermons as Word documents or provide corresponding video links of three preached sermons. Participants email the researcher their sermons before the participant’s initial interview. (Note: This helps deter participants from submitting sermons edited after the initial interview.) The sermons represent preached sermons occurring within the last two years.

Step 2: The researcher analyzes each sermon using the sermon analysis tool, “Local Preacher Sermon Analysis Tool,” for biblical content, worship content, and worship principles (see Appendix M). The researcher uses a computer to complete the tool.

After completing the data collection for the process utilizing the protocols and tools, the researcher schedules a follow-up interview with each participant. The following steps occur:

Step 3: The researcher emails the research findings to each participant to allow participants time to review the information for accuracy. Participants have the option of giving the researcher feedback or responses in writing or through a follow-up interview,

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<sup>20</sup> Creswell and Creswell, *Research Design*, 187.

if desired (see Appendix O). If the participant chooses not to respond within ten days, the researcher assumes that the findings are deemed accurate.

Step 4: At the request of the participants, the researcher contacts participants via email to schedule a follow-up interview regarding the research findings related to the initial interview and the sermon analysis.

Step 5: The researcher conducts the follow-up interviews with the local pastors and preachers as virtual meetings through the Zoom virtual online application.

Step 4: Before speaking in the Zoom application, the researcher enables transcription on the application.

Step 5: During the 15–20 minute follow-up interview for each participant, the researcher follows the detailed follow-up interview protocol, “Local Preacher Follow-Up Interview Protocol,” utilizing the script’s introduction, review of key findings, and closing details (see Appendix K).

Step 6: During the follow-up interview, the researcher records the participant’s comments and feedback about the accuracy of the research findings on the “Local Preacher Follow-Up Interview Protocol.”

### Management of Data Collected

To manage the data collected from the initial interviews, the researcher saves all interview reflection protocols and sermon analysis tools for each participant in digital file locations on the researcher’s desktop computer. The researcher’s desktop computer is password-protected and equipped with a firewall, anti-virus software, and encryption. Only the researcher has access to the desktop computer and data from the interviews.

The researcher stores the data (the initial interviews, interview reflection protocols, and sermon analysis tools) on the researcher's desktop computer for a minimum of three years. After a minimum of three years, the researcher deletes all data from the desktop computer, destroying the information.

After the study, the researcher emails each participant an abstract of the final study along with a thank you letter recognizing their participation.

### **Data Analysis Procedures**

Data gathered addresses the central research question, "What do pastors and preachers communicate about the theology and principles of worship to their congregations in their sermons?" along with the following sub-questions:

1. What seminary courses/training for sermon preparation do pastors and preachers receive?
2. How do the seminary courses/training for sermon preparation reflect the theology and principles of worship?
3. What do the pastors and preachers understand about the theology and principles of worship?
4. How do pastors and preachers ensure the theology and principles of worship are shared with the congregation through sermon delivery?

### **Initial Interviews**

During the initial virtual interviews, specific questions enable the researcher to acquire the needed data for the research questions. As a reference, the researcher utilizes a cross-reference table between the central research questions and research sub-questions to categorize

the participant responses to the research questions. Table 3.1 provides an example of the cross-reference table.

**Table 3.1. Initial Interview Cross-Reference Table**

<b>Research Question</b>	<b>Initial Interview Question</b>
What do pastors and preachers communicate about the theology and principles of worship to their congregations in their sermons?	What principles of worship are regularly shared when you deliver your sermons to church congregations? What elements of your sermon support church congregations in developing a lifestyle of worship?
What seminary courses/training for sermon preparation do pastors and preachers receive?	Where did you receive formal training to prepare, write, and deliver sermons to church congregations? Describe the formal training you received to prepare, write, and deliver sermons to church congregations (e.g., topics, class titles).
How do the seminary courses/training for sermon preparation reflect the theology and principles of worship?	What specific seminary classes or church organization training did you receive on the theology and principles of worship?
What do the pastors and preachers understand about the theology and principles of worship?	Describe/Explain your understanding of the theology and principles of worship.
How do pastors and preachers ensure the theology and principles of worship are shared with the congregation through sermon delivery?	What resources do you presently utilize to support developing and delivering your sermons to church congregations? How do you ensure listeners of your sermons explicitly connect the essential elements or themes to the theology and principles of worship?

The researcher reviews the Zoom application's transcript for each participant's interview. To prepare for analyzing the data, the researcher assigns each participant a triple letter as identification (e.g., AAR, BEZ, CIR) and creates an intelligent verbatim transcript of each initial interview. To develop intelligent, verbatim transcripts, the researcher removes filler words and irrelevant or off-topic sentences unrelated to the initial interview questions and also removes references in the transcript that indicate pauses and background noises.

Inductive coding then occurs with the transcripts. "Qualitative researchers typically work inductively, building patterns, categories, and themes from the bottom up by organizing the data

into increasingly more abstract units of information.”<sup>21</sup> Because the research design is exploratory, the researcher utilizes *in vivo* coding to support the inductive coding process. The researcher reads through each participant’s transcript and assigns a code to specific words and phrases spoken by each participant.

Next, the researcher uses the transcript data and establishes codes to first group the data into themes. After identifying the first set of themes, where applicable, the researcher creates subcodes that represent additional themes and categories based on the data. Another round of reviewing the transcripts occurs to identify patterns among the participants’ responses. “A pattern is repetitive, regular, or consistent occurrences of action/data that appear more than twice.”<sup>22</sup> The researcher notes patterns among specific words and phrases that match the developed overarching codes and subcodes. The researcher develops a codebook to maintain consistency within the *in vivo* coding process and identified themes. Lastly, the researcher generates a narrative discussion and visuals of the data findings noting the interview responses and their connection with the research’s central question and sub-questions.

#### Initial Interview Reflect Tool

Using the “Local Preacher Initial Interview Reflection Tool” also enables the researcher to acquire the needed data for the research questions. As a reference, the researcher utilizes a cross-reference table to correlate the twelve criteria of the “Local Preacher Initial Interview Reflection Tool” with the central research questions and research sub-questions. Table 3.2 provides an example of the cross-reference table.

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<sup>21</sup> Creswell and Creswell, *Research Design*, 181.

<sup>22</sup> Johnny Saldana, *The Coding Manual for Qualitative Researchers* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2021), 8.

**Table 3.2. Reflection Tool Cross-Reference Table**

<b>Research Question</b>	<b>Reflection Tool Criterion</b>
What do pastors and preachers communicate about the theology and principles of worship to their congregations in their sermons?	<p>The participant stated at least three examples of explicitly connecting sermon themes to biblical theology &amp; principles.</p> <p>The participant stated at least three examples of explicitly connecting sermon themes to the theology &amp; principles of worship.</p> <p>The participant clearly articulated examples of elements in their sermons that support their congregation with developing a lifestyle of worship.</p>
What seminary courses/training for sermon preparation do pastors and preachers receive?	The participant received formal training to prepare, write, & deliver sermons.
How do the seminary courses/training for sermon preparation reflect the theology and principles of worship?	<p>The participant received seminary courses/training on biblical theology.</p> <p>The participant received seminary courses/training on worship theology.</p>
What do the pastors and preachers understand about the theology and principles of worship?	<p>The participant clearly articulated at least three biblical principles without prompting from the interviewer.</p> <p>The participant clearly articulated at least three worship principles without prompting from the interviewer.</p>
How do pastors and preachers ensure the theology and principles of worship are shared with the congregation through sermon delivery?	<p>The participant expressed intentionally developing sermons to include biblical principles.</p> <p>The participant utilizes resources that focus on Biblical principles to develop and deliver a sermon.</p> <p>The participant expressed intentionally developing sermons to include worship principles.</p> <p>The participant utilizes resources that focus on worship principles to develop and deliver a sermon.</p>

To determine clear and concise responses related to the initial virtual interviews, the researcher creates a Google form of the “Local Preacher Interview Reflection Tool” to capture the *Yes* and *No* representation of each criterion in the reflection tool. The researcher completes a Google Form to capture the data for each participant’s initial interview reflection tool. Each participant’s triple letter assigned to the intelligent verbatim transcripts remains the same within the Google Form reflection tool for consistency. Then, the researcher uses the data from the

Google Form reflection tool to summarize the participants' responses into data pie charts. The researcher reviews the data pie charts and generates a narrative discussion and visuals of the data analysis and findings, noting the criterion with the research central question and sub-questions.

### Sermon Analysis Tool

The "Local Preacher Sermon Analysis Tool" gathers data for the central research question, "What do pastors and preachers communicate about the theology and principles of worship to their congregations in their sermons?" To determine clear and concise responses related to the sermons submitted to the researcher by the participants, the researcher creates a Google Form of the "Sermon Analysis Tool" to capture the *Evident*, *Partially Evident*, and *Not Evident* representation of each criterion in the analysis tool. For each participant's sermon analysis tool, the researcher completes a Google Form to capture the data. The participant's triple letter assigned to the intelligent verbatim transcripts and the Google Form reflection tool remains the same to create the sermon analysis Google Form. Then, the researcher uses the data from the Google Form to summarize the sermon analysis criteria into data pie charts. The researcher reviews the data pie charts and generates a narrative discussion and visuals of the data analysis to reflect the sermon analysis findings in connection with the research's central question and sub-questions.

### Ethical Considerations

"First and foremost, the researcher has an obligation to respect the rights, needs, values, and desires of [research participants]." <sup>23</sup> To formally address the research participants' rights, needs, values, and desires, the researcher presents and applies for approval from the Liberty

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<sup>23</sup> Creswell and Creswell, *Research Design*, 207.

University Institutional Review Board (IRB) to use human research participants. The application includes the following major research areas for review by the IRB: (a) project information; (b) participant information; (c) recruitment; (d) consent; (e) procedures; (f) data security; and (g) risks & benefits. An IRB analyst conducts a cursory review of the researcher's application followed by preliminary and subsequent reviews of the application, documentation, and exemplar attachments of materials (e.g., recruitment flyer, messaging to participants, and research questions) designed for the study. The Liberty University Research Ethics Office Review Board approves the application (see Appendices G, N).

“Since it could be unethical, qualitative researchers seldom attempt to conduct experiments that could help establish cause-effect relationships.”<sup>24</sup> For this study, the researcher does not experiment with participants to determine cause-effect relationships. However, the researcher does acquire consent from participants in the study. Consent for participating in the study is a document attached to a recruitment email for participants. Individuals who express an interest and respond to the recruitment flyer receive an email thanking them for their interest along with details about the research with an attached consent form. Participants electronically sign the IRB-approved consent form before participating in the initial interview. Participants receive a copy of the consent form for their records via email, and the researcher keeps a copy of the consent form with all electronic study records.

The following procedures occur to address anonymity, confidentiality, and privacy:

- Interviews occur in a private setting online/virtual with no one else present in the researcher's or participant's virtual environment.

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<sup>24</sup> Marshall, Rossman, and Blanco, *Designing Qualitative Research*, 49.

- Participants are not asked or recorded to provide the following: name, location, or church affiliation.
- Participants can turn off their cameras for the virtual/online recordings.
- There is no display of the participant's name, location, or church affiliation for the virtual/online recording.
- Storage of the data from the interviews is on a password-locked computer equipped with a firewall, anti-virus software, and encryption. Only the researcher has access to the data from the interviews.

The researcher ensures the study is free of conflicts of interest. For example, the researcher does not have influence or academic/professional authority over the participants. Also, the researcher does not have a financial conflict or interest in the execution of the study. The researcher, the researcher's family members, and the research participants do not receive income or payments to benefit from the research. Lastly, the research does not benefit the researcher's relationship with any non-profit organizations.

### **Limitations and Delimitations**

#### **Limitations**

The researcher acknowledges that essential areas relating to the participants are outside of the researcher's control. There is no way to control the type or depth of formal training received by the participants. The researcher can only request participants who have satisfactorily identified their formal training through their church organization, seminary, or educational institution. The researcher has no control over the actual topics and length of training each participant received as part of their formal training.

The researcher acknowledges another element outside the researcher's control related to worship. The researcher cannot control the participants' depth of knowledge and understanding of worship theology and its principles. The participants' knowledge and understanding of worship theology and its principles may have been a part of their formal training or they simply have a working knowledge of worship as a lifestyle and its connection to the spiritual growth of a congregation.

The researcher acknowledges limitations related to the sample of participants. The sample of pastors and preachers does not represent all pastors and preachers in the United States. The interviewees from Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania are not a representation of all pastors and preachers in this particular region or other regions of the country. This study does not include participants who have not received formal training from their church organization, an accredited seminary, or an educational institution to ensure information and responses to the interview questions. The sermons submitted by the participants for analysis as part of the research are not necessarily a representation of all sermons preached by those or other pastors and preachers. To acquire the necessary data through interviews and sermon content analysis, interested participants who seldom deliver sermons to a congregation are not a part of this study.

### Delimitations

Purposive sampling occurs with qualitative participant interviews and the analysis of sermon content for the research. The selection of the group of people is intentional due to their relationship to the research topic. Purposive sampling occurred because (1) the purpose of the research is aimed at a very finite, specific, well-defined group; (2) only certain people have the

knowledge and expertise related to the research topic, and (3) most of the population of interest is small in size and feasible to study.<sup>25</sup>

A purposive sample of pastors and preachers with at least three years of experience in delivering sermons to their local congregations provides the necessary data. With their experience, the participants can give specific data to address the research questions. The purposive sampling of participants represents a specific area of local churches in the states of Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania. Local participants allow for the feasibility of the study and the gathering of the data. To further support feasibility, the sampling of participants represents Baptist, Pentecostal, and Non-Denomination church denominations with experience delivering sermons to small (less than 50 members), medium (51 to 300 members), large (301 than 2000 members), and mega-church (more than 2000 members) congregations.

### Summary

In *Expository Exultation*, John Piper writes:

Preaching shows God's supreme worth by opening Scripture to make the glories of God known, while treasuring them as supremely valuable... preaching—aiming at the same ultimate worship as Scripture does—explains God's glory and worth and exults over God's glory and worth... The preacher speaks as a humble, authentic agent of Scripture. What it aims to produce, he aims to become. He aims to embody the worship the Bible seeks (John 4:23). And then he seeks to open his mouth and make the glories of God in Scripture as clear and as beautiful as he can.<sup>26</sup>

Piper's words help substantiate the significance of preaching and delivering a sermon that embeds the theology and principles of worship. Conducting a qualitative study enables the researcher to explore and fill a present gap in the literature on the research topic. Executing an

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<sup>25</sup> Roller and Lavrakas, *Applied Qualitative Research Design*, 197.

<sup>26</sup> John Piper, *Expository Exultation: Christian Preaching as Worship* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2018), 71, 77–78.

exploratory research design allows the researcher to examine the efforts of pastors and preachers in sermon preparation and delivery and to determine how they engage their congregations with weekly sermons that connect explicitly to the hearer's understanding of worship. The instruments, which include the "Local Preacher Initial Interview Protocol" and the "Local Preacher Interview Reflection Tool," serve to determine if there is evidence of pastors and preachers embedding worship theology and principles in the preparation and delivery of their sermons. Moreover, the use of the "Local Preacher Sermon Analysis Tool" enables the researcher to gather additional data to encourage pastors and preachers to plan and deliver sermons that explicitly address worship theology and principles and aid their congregations in making direct connections with the sermon preached to God's expectations for a lifestyle of worship. The following chapter will provide the interpretation of the research findings.

## **Chapter 4: Research Findings**

### **Introduction**

The purpose of the research is to determine what pastors and preachers communicate through their sermons that includes the theology and principles of worship with their congregations. Based on the purpose of the study, a substantial emphasis of the data focuses on worship and its evidence in the pastors' and preachers' individual interviews and submission of sermons for analysis. By making this determination, individuals who plan and deliver weekly sermons to church congregations can be encouraged to include worship theology and principles when developing and delivering future sermons in their roles as preachers.

This chapter begins with a description of the participants included in the research. This chapter also provides an overview of the participants' interview responses. Then an overview of the sermon content delivered by preachers to congregations is included. Data shows how each participant's interview and sermon content address the research questions, biblical content, and worship content in relation to the subject of worship theology, worship principles, and the overall purpose of the study.

The data is descriptive in nature to reflect the "Local Preacher Initial Interview Protocol" along with percentages to reflect the criteria of the "Local Preacher Initial Interview Reflection Tool" and the "Local Preacher Sermon Analysis Tool." Based on the data from the interviews and instruments, emerging themes and patterns pertaining to worship are identified in this chapter. The chapter concludes with a summary of the researcher's pathways for gathering and analyzing the data.

### **Description of Local Participants**

Initially, thirty-three individuals who deliver sermons to congregations were contacted via email with invitations to participate in the research study. Fifteen individuals responded and confirmed their willingness to participate based on their current role as someone who delivers sermons to church congregations. Based on the individuals who responded to the invitations, the researcher has worked closely in church ministry with two individuals for more than twenty years, with one individual having been the researcher's pastor for three years. Six participants are simply acquaintances through the researcher's church network. Seven individuals are from snowball sampling derived from recommendations by participants or acquaintances aware of the study who shared the information with pastors and preachers who they thought would be interested in the research study.

To support gathering demographic and background data of the participants, each preacher answered preliminary questions that were not recorded through Zoom but manually documented by the researcher. The researcher assigned each preacher a number ranging from one to fifteen. The assigned numbers were used to complete a Google Form, "Local Preacher Interview Reflection Tool," designed by the researcher to include the demographic and background data of each participant. Each participant provided their age, the name of their current church, their church's denomination, and church size.

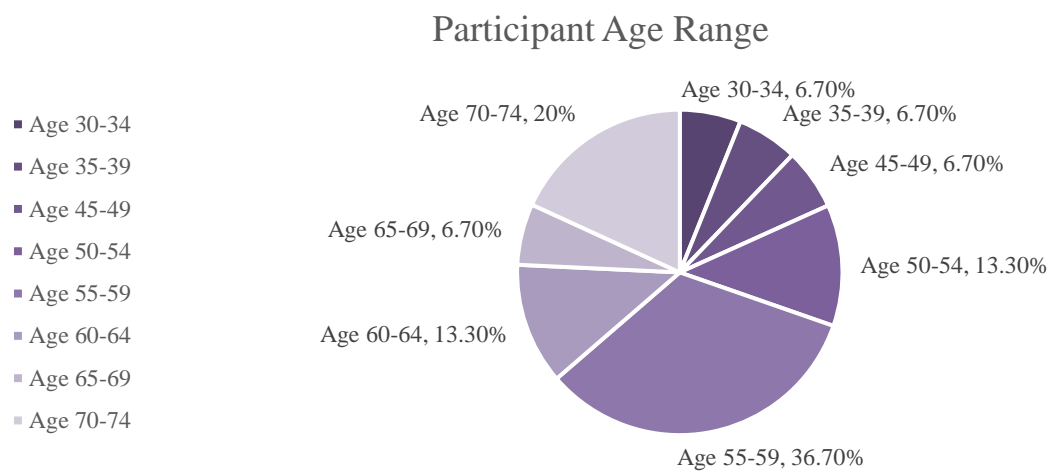
The participants represent the role of either pastor, elder, minister, or deacon for their current church. The male and female participants reside in Delaware, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania and range in age from 34 to 74 years old. The number of years of preaching experience delivering sermons to congregations ranges from 5 to more than 50 years. They

represent church sizes of small (less than 50 members), medium (51 to 300 members), and large (301 to 2000 members) and reflect the church denominations of Baptist, Southern Baptist, Episcopal, and Non-Denominational.

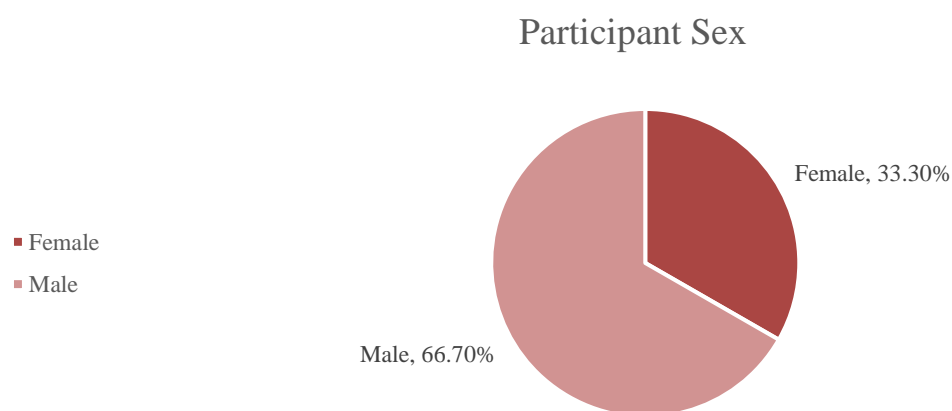
### **Demographic Results of the Participants**

Four participants comprise the largest age range group of 55 to 59 years old, or 36.7% of the participants. The second largest age range group is 70–74 years old, or 20% of the participants. Of those surveyed, 66.7% of participants are male representing 10 out of the 15 participants. The majority of the participants reside in New Jersey, representing 10 out of the 15 participants, or 66.7%, followed by Pennsylvania with three participants, or 20% of the participants.

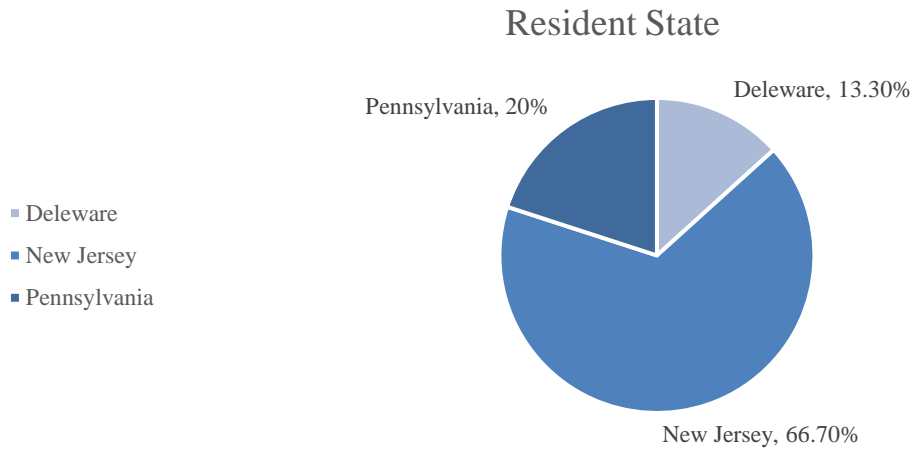
The Non-Denominational church category represents the majority of the participants, which include eight participants, or 53.3% of the participants. The second largest church denomination is Baptist with four participants, or 26.7% of the participants. Additionally, 53.3%, or eight participants are currently at a medium (51 to 300 members) size church, which is the largest number of participants in the current church size category. The second largest category represents a large (301 to 2000 members) size church, which is four participants, or 26.7% of the participants. Figures 4.1–4.5 depict data findings as percentages of the participants by age, sex, resident state, number of years of preaching, church denomination, and church size.



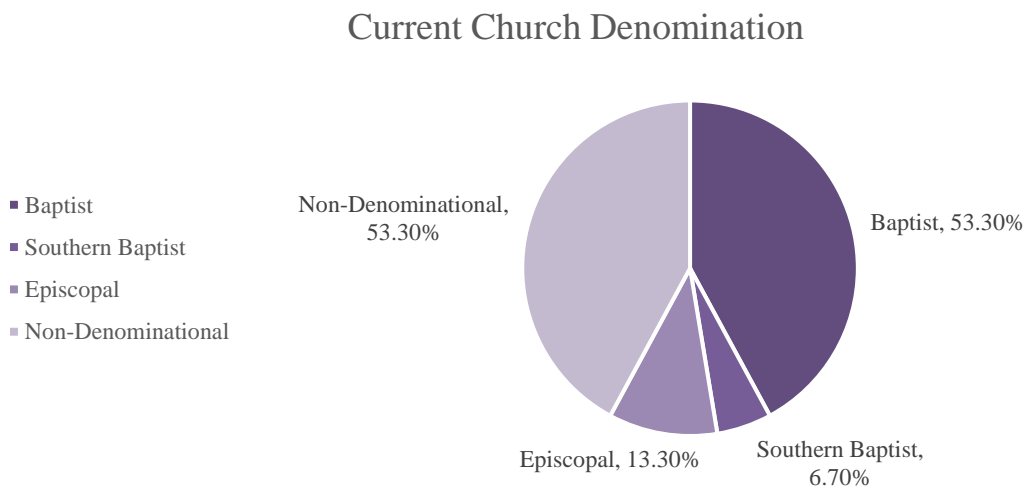
**Figure 4.1. Participant Age Range**



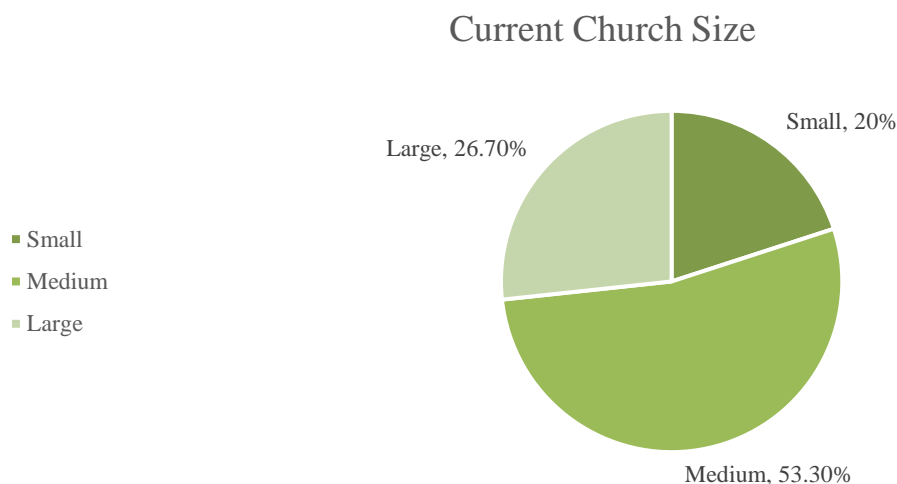
**Figure 4.2. Participant Sex**



**Figure 4.3. Participant Resident State**



**Figure 4.4. Participant Current Church Denomination**



**Figure 4.5. Participant Current Church Size**

### **Local Preacher Interview Protocol**

Each participant was interviewed via Zoom, and the research utilized a standard protocol, “Local Preachers Interview Protocol,” to ensure continuity with each interview. The following outline occurred with each participant.

1. Introductions
2. State the Purpose of the Interview
3. Review Key Terms, Definitions, and Worship Principles
4. Initial Interview Questions
5. Closing

The purpose of the interview was to gather information from each participant to support collecting data to answer the research study’s central question: What do pastors and preachers communicate about the theology and principles of worship to their congregations in their sermons? The sub-questions for the research were as follows:

1. What seminary courses/training for sermon preparation do pastors and preachers receive?
2. How do the seminary courses/training for sermon preparation reflect the theology and principles of worship?

3. What do the pastors and preachers understand about the theology and principles of worship?
4. How do pastors and preachers ensure the theology and principles of worship are shared with the congregation through sermon delivery?

During each interview, the participants responded to the following questions that garnered data in relation to the central research question and the sub-questions. Table 4.1 provides a cross-reference of the initial interview questions specifically addressing the research questions. Additional questions asked during the initial interview and recorded via Zoom were the following:

1. Tell me about yourself and your role at your current church.
2. How long have you been preaching sermons to church congregations?
3. Where did you receive formal training to prepare, write, and deliver sermons to church congregations?

**Table 4.1. Actual Initial Interview Cross-Reference Table**

<b>Research Question</b>	<b>Initial Interview Question</b>
Sub-Question #1 What seminary courses/training for sermon preparation do pastors and preachers receive?	Describe the formal training you received to prepare, write, and deliver sermons to church congregations (e.g., topics, class titles).
Sub-Question #2 How do the seminary courses/training for sermon preparation reflect the theology and principles of worship?	What specific seminary classes or church organization training did you receive on the theology and principles of worship?
Sub-Question #3 What do the pastors and preachers understand about the theology and principles of worship?	Describe/explain your understanding of the theology and principles of worship.
Sub-Question #4 How do pastors and preachers ensure the theology and principles of worship are shared with the congregation through sermon delivery?	How do you ensure listeners of your sermons explicitly connect the essential elements or themes to the theology and principles of worship?
Central Question What do pastors and preachers communicate about the theology and principles of worship to their congregations in their sermons?	When developing your sermon, what essential elements or themes do you intentionally include in your sermons?  What principles of worship are regularly shared when you deliver your sermons to church congregations?  What elements of your sermon support church congregations in developing a lifestyle of worship?

### Preparation for Analyzing the Initial Interview Data

As part of the initial interview data-gathering process, each participant was assigned a three-letter identification and transcript color to remain anonymous for the research study. The three-letter identification labeled the “Local Preacher Interview Protocol,” the “Local Preacher Initial Reflection Tool,” and the “Local Preacher Sermon Analysis Tool” for each participant. A transcript color is assigned to each participant to support the inductive coding process of identifying themes and narrative content to support the data needed for addressing the research questions. Table 4.2 lists the actual participants’ assigned three-letter identification and transcript color. The interviews resulted in a total of 356 responses. The coding process yielded 138 categories and 22 themes among the seven interview questions (see Appendix P). Table 4.3 provides an overview of the number of categories and themes per interview question.

**Table 4.2. Participant Anonymous Identification**

Participant #	Three-Letter ID	Transcript Color
1	OOR	Black
2	LOA	Orange
3	EAL	Blue
4	AUI	Green
5	AAE	Purple
6	EOL	Pink
7	EAK	Light Orange
8	EYA	Light Purple
9	RAN	Red
10	NAE	Teal
11	OAO	Dark Gray
12	AHT	Gold
13	RHO	Dark Teal
14	AAO	Burgundy in Italics
15	AAN	Light Blue in Italics

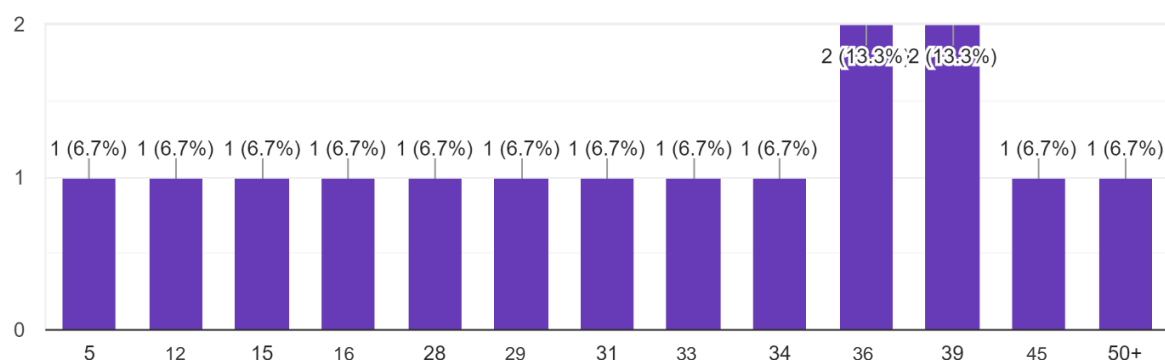
**Table 4.3. Number of Responses, Categories & Themes**

<b>Interview Question</b>	<b>Number of Responses</b>	<b>Number of Coded Categories</b>	<b>Number of themes</b>
Describe the formal training you received to prepare, write, and deliver sermons to church congregations.	123	23	5
What specific seminary classes or church organization training did you receive on the theology and principles of worship?	44	12	2
Describe/explain your understanding of worship theology and principles of worship.	70	31	4
What principles of worship are regularly shared when you deliver your sermons to church congregations?	23	14	3
What essential elements or themes do you intentionally include in your sermons?	53	23	3
How do you ensure listeners of your sermons explicitly connect the essential elements or themes to the theology of worship and principles of worship?	25	15	2
What elements of your sermon support church congregations in developing a lifestyle of worship?	18	10	3

### Formal Training Results

Nine pastors, two elders, three ministers, and one deacon, as participants, were able to provide their exact number of years of preaching experience. The number of years is based on when the participants recalled the actual year or age they delivered their first sermon. Twelve participants have experience with preaching that began prior to official licensing or ordination by their church organization. In most cases, their first experience with delivering a sermon led to their commitment to undergo formal training, often leading to licensing and/or ordination. The number of years of preaching experience among the participants averaged 29.8 years, with the

largest number of years being more than fifty years representing one participant. Thirty-six years of preaching experience and thirty-nine years of preaching experience, with each category having two participants (2 pastors, 1 elder, & 1 minister), represent the largest number of participants in a particular category pertaining to experience. Figure 4.6 provides a snapshot of the participants' years of preaching experience.



**Figure 4.6. Participant Years of Experience Preaching**

Each participant replied to the question, “Where did you receive formal training to prepare, write, and deliver sermons to church congregations?” The participants received formal training through seminaries, colleges, universities, schools/institutes, church associations, conferences, and local church organizations. Two participants received their formal training strictly through their local church organization. Thirteen participants received their formal training through a combination of pathways. For example, Participant RHO received formal training through attending a seminary, conferences, and a local church organization. Participant EAK received formal training through attending a seminary, completing church association requirements, and local church organization requirements. Eleven seminaries/colleges/universities provided formal training received by eleven of the participants. The representative educational institutions are as follows:

1. Alliance Seminary
2. Candler School of Theology at Emory University
3. Eastern Theological Seminary
4. Institute of Jewish Studies out of Philadelphia Biblical University
5. Iona Seminary of the Southwest
6. Lutheran Theological Seminary of Philadelphia
7. Morehouse College
8. Philadelphia Biblical University (now Cairn University)
9. St. Joseph's University
10. Virginia Theological Seminary
11. Vision International University

### **Description of Formal Training**

Each preacher was asked to describe the formal training they received to prepare, write, and deliver sermons to church congregations. There were 123 responses from the participants. The initial coding of the interview responses resulted in thirty-three codes of the actual content. The thirty-three codes were then categorized into five major themes. The five major themes developed were 1) *course/topical training*, 2) *sermon development*, 3) *sermon delivery*, 4) *student evaluations*, and 5) *non-preaching ministerial training*.

In the area of coursework or topical training, all participants could recall courses or classes they experienced at higher learning institutions, schools/institutes, church associations, and local church organizations. The topics included *apologetics*, *biblical exposition*, *biblical languages: Hebrew and Greek*, *church history*, *discipleship*, *doctrine/soteriology*, *eisegesis*, *exegesis*, *hermeneutics*, *homiletics*, *New Testament*, *Old Testaments*, *public speaking*,

*theology/systematic theology, and topography.*

The top three topics mentioned by the participants are *Old Testament*, *New Testament*, and a tie between the topics *Homiletics*, *Hermeneutics*, and *Theology/Systematic Theology* for the third most popular topic mentioned.

### **Participant Highlights Related to the Topics**

- Participant AAN on church history: “history of the Church [and] Christian history [and] our African-American Christian history.”
- Participant AUI on Old Testament/New Testament: “St. Joseph’s is a faith-based college ... the curriculum requires you to take some Bible courses, so I took an Old Testament course and a New Testament course while I was there, which were very informative.”
- Participant EAL: “Some of it dealt with exegeting Scripture, homiletics, even a little bit of teaching on Hebrew and Greek along the lines of interpreting the Scripture.”
- Participant AAE on theology: “I would say theology that the basis of everything fell under the theology of who we say God is, how we present God and the message that is brought forth to the congregation [regarding church training on theology]. As I actually got in Bible College, I really began to learn all the different parts to theology.”

The theme of *sermon development* related to four categories with participants experiencing training on *sermon preparation*, *sermon outline*, *developing the sermon points and structure*, and *sermon techniques: exegesis vs. eisegesis*. *Sermon points and structure* were mentioned the most by seven participants. Participant AAO shares, “organize my points and have some structure and form to it.” Participant RAN recalls, “They were doing ... how to execute, it was more than the nuts and bolts of a sermon that would be what I would say, the actual mechanics of a sermon, and how to make it. You have the key points and all of that.”

*Sermon delivery* includes five categories of *planned preaching*, *impromptu preaching*, *sermon critiques*, *the study of preachers*, and *styles of preaching*. Each category had three participants verbalizing their training experience with sermon delivery. Pertaining to *planned preaching*, Participant AAO states:

Yeah, at [Church name] in particular, we had something called preaching clinics ... That was held once a month, and we actually had to. We were given a theme, and sometimes we'd be given a Scripture. Sometimes we were allowed to choose our own Scripture, and we had to get up and deliver a sermon to our peers, and so that was probably the most intensive, as far as actually delivering a sermon. [Church name] was also ministerial training. We were in training with the pastor, I think it was three of us, and ... once a month we had to deliver a sermon.

Participant RAN recalls, "They would work hard at us finding keywords that people normally wouldn't hear in a sermon ... it was just teaching us how to look at Scripture differently and that's when we did the 2-minute, 3-minute sermonettes."

For the theme of *student evaluations*, seven participants recalled their experiences with assignments, exams, board examinations, and evaluations as part of their training. The evaluations included receiving grades, undergoing psychological exams, interviews, appearing before examination boards, and experiencing council members voting on one's preparedness for training and ministry. For example, Participant AAN shares, "no preaching clinics, but we did write papers on various topics in general ... primarily about Bible events and what they meant. There was one paper that I remember vividly, the title was, 'How Do You Know You Were Called?'" Participant AAE states, "It also includes psychological evaluations, and then you are grilled by a Board of ordained Ministers to be judged for your preparedness for ministry." Participant NAE describes, "The council in my church gets to vote. I need two-thirds of them to say 'yes, you can go into formation,' and then when you get to the end of all of that you get put through a series of interviews. I had six, 20-minute interviews on six different topics, and then those twelve people have come together and say, 'Yes, you can go, you can enter training.'"

Six participants shaped the fifth theme, *non-preaching ministerial training*. Participant AOA received liturgical and planning worship services training. Participant OOR received prophetic training. Participant NAE experienced chaplaincy training and recalls, “I had to do a chaplaincy internship at a local hospital ... 100 hours of classroom instruction and 300 clinical hours are what it takes to have one unit of chaplaincy, and it is mandatory for anyone going to be ordained in the Episcopal Church.” Participants OOR, EYA, and AHT completed training on the spiritual gifts.

### Analysis of Formal Training

Each participant described their formal training with ease. At times, for the participants with more than thirty years of preaching experience, they needed a moment to recall their experiences and their memories came easily as they shared their personal experiences. It is interesting to note that several of the participants recalled their personal desires to learn more as preachers and church leaders. In fact, they seemed inspired to want to grow in their knowledge and calling. For instance, Participant EAK shares, “My initial training was through the Institute of Jewish Studies out of Philadelphia Biblical University, Bachelor of Science in Bible with the concentration in discipleship, Master of Science and Christian Counseling from Philadelphia Biblical University.” Participant OAO states, “I have a philosophy degree from Morehouse College. I have a Master of Divinity degree from Emory University, or Candler School of Theology at Emory University, and I have a degree in Anglican Studies from Virginia Theological Seminary, and in context Morehouse is Baptist, Emory is Methodist, and Virginia is Episcopalian.”

The researcher notes that not one participant believed their training was unwarranted. The participants freely described the value of the training they received. Only one participant

described one negative experience, which related to the topic, *biblical languages: Hebrew & Greek*. The participant states, “Yes, I did have a class on Hebrew. I thought it was horrible. I didn’t like it. I got through it. If you give me a Greek letter today, I wouldn’t appreciate it,” and then laughed at the memory. Based on all of the information provided by the participants related to formal training to prepare, write, and deliver sermons to church congregations, their responses indicate that their formal training prepared each of them for their role as a preacher.

### **Training on Worship Theology and Principles Results**

Fifteen preachers were asked by the researcher, “What specific seminary classes or church organization training did you receive on worship theology and the principles of worship?” Reviewing the transcripts and the Zoom recordings of each participant resulted in forty-four responses with twelve initial codes. The twelve codes supported the creation of two major themes 1) *training* and 2) *no training*.

Four participants were formally trained in worship theology and principles through their seminary/college/university. Two participants received training only through their church organization. Three participants received training only through attending worship workshops and/or conferences. Though considered informal training by the researcher, two participants experienced mentor training in worship.

Six participants shared specific training in worship that directly tied to music versus worship theology and principles. For example, Participant EAL states:

The most training I got on worship was through an organization called the International Worship Institute, LaMar Boschman out of Texas, where he taught a lot on worship and not just with music, but on liturgy, church liturgy. Where a lot of the classes dealt with the liturgy meaning the music, that it lined up with doctrine and things like that... I had taken courses, I would say, on and off over a period of four or five years, because they would come out, design new courses, and then offer them.

Participant AAE shares, “I had a guitar, and I would go around demonstrate and lead worship and

help to bring change for congregations that wanted to go through change, and then that, I think, became kind of central to me as I continued to pass through my congregation and then being a part of the different movements where worship was developing.” Participant OAS recalls, “At [school name] we had to take introduction to Black church music. We also did Introduction into Church Music and Black Church Music at [school name] and we had to take another class at [school name] on the hymnals, which is the Hymnal No. 82... Along with things that the church has been doing historically, like a Gregorian Chant, the exultant during, before, [and] on the night of Easter, so on and so forth.”

The second theme, *no training*, yielded four categories: *no seminary training on worship*, *no church association training on worship*, *no local church organization training*, and *independent study or self-trained on worship*. The largest category with seven participant responses was *no seminary training on worship*. The second largest category was *independent study/self-trained with four participants*. Basically, the four participants at times thought it best to grow in their understanding of worship, and in two cases, this involved not having formal training. Participant LOA shares, “In the midst of pastoring I would go look up every word that the Bible does talk about worship. There’s eighteen words in the Old Testament.” Participant RHO expresses, “I’ve studied worship on my own just for my own edification to understand what the worship music ministry was about.”

### **Participant Highlights Related to Receiving No Training at Seminary**

- Participant OOR: “I have not undergone, like a college, or some type of seminary, specifically for worship.”
- Participant EYA: “So at the institute were there any specific classes on worship, theology, or principles of worship? No!”

- Participant LOA: “There was no curricula that said, read this book and take this test.”
- Participant EAK: “Hmm! I don’t know. I can’t say that there was one specific point. Yeah, not that I can think of.”
- Participant AAN: “As that is defined, I don’t know if anyone sat down and said, this is it. It was what we do and how we do it. You know we run around the church seven times, and that kind of worship, but not a formal class, not a sit down.”
- Participant EAL: “In the seminary it was interesting. There were no courses on worship. There were courses on theology, homiletics. There was actually no course particularly, specifically designed or titled as worship. That was in seminary at [School Name]”

Table 4.4 provides an overall summary of the type of training each participant received pertaining to worship.

**Table 4.4. Summary of Participant Worship Training**

Three-Letter ID	Seminary/College/University Training on Worship	School/Institute Training on Worship	Church Organization Training on Worship	Workshop/Conference Training on Worship	Mentor Training on Worship
OOR					X
LOA				X	
EAL	X	X			
AUI				X	
AAE					X
EOL					
EAK					
EYA			X		
RAN				X	
NAE					
OAQ	X				
AHT			X		
RHO	X		X	X	
AAO	X		X		
AAN					

### Analysis of Worship Training

Asking the participants to share their training on worship theology and principles seemed to be a challenge for the participants when compared to how easily they described their formal training to prepare, write, and deliver sermons. The researcher noticed that it was difficult for participants to simply admit they did not have formal training on worship theology and principles. A few participants who easily realized that this training did not occur seemed surprised to admit there was no training and seem enlightened that it should have occurred with their formal training to prepare, write, and deliver sermons. Some participants compared their experiences and realized the focus was not on worship but strictly sermon planning and development. For instance, Participant EOL states, “Not a lot, not a lot. It was more so emphasized in terms of the authenticity of the Word, and making sure that what you’re saying is in line with Scripture, on how to present it [the sermon] of course with clarity with the points so the people are getting what you’re saying of course, with the anointing.”

The researcher notes that in some cases, the participants felt the need to justify or explain why actual training on worship theology and principles was not applicable to their role at the time of their formal training on preparing, writing, and delivering sermons. Participant LOA explains, “So the more you know about God, the more inclined you are to worship him, not letting the fog of obstacles that come against us to block out our vision of who God is, all of that became very important to me as I developed as a worshiper....I used an outpouring of all of the experience associated with getting a greater knowledge of God. It became my instructions.”

Participant NAE expounded by stating:

No, and I'll tell you why because our worship is set up a little bit differently ... So everything in the service is to prepare the person who's in charge to receive communion. So, for example, you are supposed to study Scripture and receive instruction in the Bible. So that is your reading. You open with prayer. So prayer, you read the lectionary, someone who literally reads it aloud in church, including the gospel reading. You listen to someone preach, so they will work down that Scripture for you. Then, after that you confess your concerns to God, as a community you reaffirm your faith in the words of the Nicene Creed, you pray for the world, the church ... and then we exchange the peace and the purpose, for that is, if you are at war with your neighbor, I mean truly at odds with your neighbor you're not supposed to come up to take Communion. So that peace, that exchange of peace is a way that offers you the opportunity to be able to go to your neighbor, and shake their hand. Then you receive communion, there are prayers after that, and then we're done. So, in our worship, the preaching is not the center of our worship, the Eucharist is.

The researcher notes that participants believe that attending workshops or conferences on worship was enough to suffice as training versus the need to have received training through their educational institutions, church organizations, or church associations that provided their training on preparing, writing, and delivering sermons. For example, Participant LOA states, “I mean there were of course times when I've attended worship workshops.” Participant AUI shares, “I've been to workshops over the years. I visited different workshops and different conferences and conventions.”

What is clear is that the extensive training that participants received through seminaries/colleges/universities, schools/institutes, church associations, and local church organizations to prepare, write, and deliver sermons did not occur for the participants in relation to worship theology and principles. Although six participants admit to experiencing coursework on worship through an educational institution or local church organization, it is unclear whether or not the training was specific to worship theology and principles. None of the participants spontaneously provided a specific worship topic such as *The Role of a Pastor and Worship*, *Worship in the Bible*, or *Worship Theology and Pedagogy*. For the majority of the participants, this area of questioning leads the researcher to note that they were not intensely or properly prepared by their educational institutions, church associations, or local church organizations with regard to worship theology and principles when compared to their experiences pertaining to sermon development and preaching.

### **The Understanding of Worship Theology and Principles Results**

Each participant was asked to describe or explain their understanding of worship theology and principles of worship. The variety of responses yielded thirty-one codes that the researcher categorized into four themes. The themes applied to the coded responses are 1) *an understanding of worship theology*, 2) *an understanding of worship principles*, 3) *parameters for worship*, and 4) *an imprecise understanding of worship theology and principles or nearing off-topic*.

Nine participants are able to provide explanations that indicate they have an understanding of worship theology and/or worship principles. More specifically, four participants demonstrate an understanding of worship theology. For example, Participant OOR states, “It’s based on the deity of God. The presence of God, the function of God, the worth of God.” Participant OAO shares, “My understanding, my theological, historical, and philosophical understanding of why

God created humans, was to worship, is to worship God specifically, that is what our central vocation is called to.” Participant LOA comments, “I understand the importance of who God is, and what God demands, and how we connect ourselves with God in our worship, and even to know that worship is what we think about God. Praise is what we do because of what God has done for us, and drawing that dichotomy.” Participant AHT explains:

So understanding that God is our Creator, and He created us for worship. When the Bible says, those that seek to worship God must worship Him in spirit and in truth, we’re taught that we have to come before God, transparent, and that’s through our relationship with Him, communing with Him, and prayer, and sometimes just sitting and being still, to hear His voice entering into a true relationship with the Father, causes us to worship Him when we realize or understand the whole purpose and focus of our being.

Both of the participants’ responses bore some truth with regard to the idea of parameters for worship, meaning the principles should be aligned and the person should apply the principle of worship to Scripture. However, the responses are needed to answer the actual question.

The largest number of responses dealt with the theme *parameters for worship*, with twenty-seven responses or statements shared by the participants. Nine participants’ responses related to *parameters for worship* and an additional four participants’ responses relate to both *parameters for worship* and *an imprecise understanding of worship theology and principles or nearing off-topic*. To illustrate, Participant EAL comments, “When you talk about theology, the principles or the practice of it ... I guess I would say they have to be aligned. They have to be in agreement. Your practice has to be in agreement. Principles have to be in agreement with your theology.” Participant AUI states, “Alright, so, my understanding of worship theology and the principles of worship is taking a look at Scripture, and finding not only the meaning, as it was initially intended but how you can apply that meaning to your walk in life.”

### Participant Highlights Related to Parameters for Worship

- Participant AAE: “The nuts and bolts of worship come from the combination of the objective proclamation of the truth of God. Reading a Scripture, praying prayers of Scripture, going on with the subjective openness to the way God moves by His Spirit, and the people who come to worship.”
- Participant EOL: “It is based on the relationship that a person has with the Lord, and it is not always demonstrated in song all the time, because, you know, in the Scripture it tells us that you know we’re living sacrifices, our bodies, we can worship the Lord with our bodies as well.”
- Participant AAO: “To me, worship is pure and simple adoration of God. It is to me, giving Him everything. When I’m in worship, I’m like in a bubble. It’s me, and it’s Him, and that is my prayer always for the congregation ... though we are a group. But it is an individual thing where we are in a room with God, and to me ... I have a heart that when I close my eyes, and when you say what is worship, worship to me is complete adoration of a God who is absolutely my everything. And so, yeah, that’s it.”
- Participant RAN: “So when it talks about the person, Jesus said, the person that will worship Him must worship in spirit and in truth ... the only way for a true believer to actually worship is to do it in spirit and in truth.”

The second highest number of statements by the participants related to the theme of *an understanding of worship principles*. The participants gave generalized responses that enabled the researcher to determine the participants were making a connection to a worship principle, which supports the foundation for understanding worship theology. One participant, Participant OOR, in particular, provides several statements pertaining to worship principles. Participant OOR

articulates that principles of worship are the standards for worship. Participant OOR further voices, “Worship is sacrifice ... Jesus is the ultimate sacrifice ... one aspect of worship is having a healthy understanding of the atonement ... another principle of worship is humility ... another principle of worship is love ... repentance is a principle of worship.”

### **Participant Highlights Related to Worship Principles**

- Participant AUI: “As far as the principles of worship the idea that one is based in, of course Scripture, based in the idea that the primary purpose of worship is to constantly work to solidify and enhance your relationship and connection with God, and ... using that connection not only to find what His purpose is for you, but how it is that you could help other people find theirs.”
- Participant EYA: “Well, when I think about the principles of worship theology, I think about loving the Lord with all my heart, all my soul, all my strength. I think about how very personal He is. He is a very personal God. He’s not far away. When I call out to Him. I know that He hears me. When I sing my songs to Him I’m making melody in His ears, so I would say that theology and worship, that all comes under that for me.”
- Participant RHO: “It is the recognition that we were created to worship Him with everything that we are and everything that we have, even our monetary and material things. We were created to worship Him.”
- Participant AHT: “When we think about the Trinity, God the Father, He did that in creation, God the Son through salvation, then the Holy Spirit, when we realize, especially when we focus on Jesus, and how He who knew no sin became sin for us. He died on the Cross and suffered so that we could have this life that we’re living. It gives us cause to worship, to just meditate on the sacrifice that was needed.”

Five participants provided responses that clearly speak to the worship principle: *Worship is a lifestyle*. This is part of their way of defining worship and it demonstrates the participants understand the role of worship in the life of a believer or worshiper of God. Participant RAN briefly states, “Principles of worship relate to ... the believer’s thirst or wanting to hear God, and to feel His presence, and to allow that presence to overtake our daily lifestyle.” Participant EAK explains:

So we have a core value at our church that is centered around lifestyles of worship, and so we view worship as something that you do, not just on Sunday morning when you gather with the church and sing songs, we view worship as the whole collective of the Christian life. Everything that we do is worship, you know, how we conduct ourselves in our job, is a form of worship. Giving is a form of worship. So we have as a core value that we work to adopt lifestyles of worship.

Participant RHO was actually in the midst of reading a book and shares:

We’re currently reading in our Bible study, *7 Basics of Belonging* by Samuel Rainer, and in either the first or the second chapter he asks his worship leader what is a definition for worship and his worship leaders simply says, worship is saying yes to God, and that really struck me. It really stayed with me, because that expands our outlook of worship, [from] just being confined to singing, music, dancing on a Sunday morning, and it expands it to, more so, this is a lifestyle. This is a walk. This is a *modus operandi*. This is how we should live before God in every area, every aspect, every realm of our life.

The fourth theme of *an imprecise understanding of worship theology and principles or nearing off-topic* reveals that three participants are not able to fully provide responses that solely reflect the question. For instance, Participant NAE explains:

All of our services are laid out in a book called *The Book of Common Prayer*....So *The Book of Common Prayer* though, has literally every service we do daily, cause you can do noon prayer any day of the week, you can do morning for any day of the week, and we’re encouraged to do that to keep that focus on God and keep our prayer lives healthy....The communion service, baptism, confirmation, ordinations, burial, the whole kitten caboodle, is in one little book ... it’s not just the text for the service, but there are like the italicized parts ... Oh, this is how we do this, and this is why we do that ... So everything is in there that we need.

Participant OAO responds:

Then theological integrity is a principle right? You know there are certain things like I remember when I was hanging out with the holiness, one preacher said, “We sing heaven belongs to you if you pray right, if you live right heaven belongs to you,” and he said, there’s a theological issue with this. Heaven belongs to you because Jesus Christ died, He died for your sins, and you were born again as a new creature. So also, looking at songs and even [artist name] has some issues. He’s on an on time God, even how she tells the story sometimes theologically clashes with who God is, or who we understand God to be in our world. So, theological integrity is a huge principle of worship for me.

### Analysis of Understanding of Worship Theology and Principles

All of the participants clearly understood the term *worship*. What seemed unknown to the participants, in general, were the terms *worship theology* and *worship principles*. Some participants used the “Key Definitions” reference sheet provided by the researcher at the beginning of the interview as a reference before verbalizing a response. In some cases, the researcher also provided additional clarifying information to support the participants’ with providing a response to the question.

Furthermore, when asking the participants about their understanding of *worship theology* and *principles of worship*, the researcher did not expect the participants to know specific worship principles, such as worship requires repentance, the Holy Spirit augments our worship, or the wishes of God demand our worship of Him. During the interview, the researcher was able to determine which participants’ responses, although maybe general, related to specific worship principles. To demonstrate, Participant LOA states, “So there’s certain things about our understanding of worship. It becomes part of the innate relationship that we have with God. With that we advance that as we learn more about Him.” Participant LOA’s response connects to the worship principle that *God is all about a worshipful relationship*.

Overall, the researcher did not sense that participants were uneasy responding to the question. However, some participants provided responses at times in which they admitted they were unsure if what they shared was accurate. Then, there were a few participants who seemed to talk at length with the hopes that what they were sharing would meet the expectations of the question asked. In this case, that is what precipitated the creation of the theme of *an imprecise understanding of worship theology and principles or nearing off-topic*.

The researcher determined that some of the participants had an overall general or working knowledge of *worship theology* and the *principles of worship*. Although the participants did not have a great amount of training specifically in this area, they were able to share their thoughts on worship and the connection of worship to God, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit. They were also able to provide examples of foundational components or principles that support one's understanding of worship theology. More than anything, a few of the participants comprehended the connection of worship as a lifestyle, and through the responses pertaining to worship principles, the participants fleshed out this biblical and contemporary concept in a manner that was applicable to their role as a worshiper and a spiritual leader interacting weekly with their congregations.

### **Sermon Delivery & Worship Principles Results**

As a follow-up to the participants describing their understanding of the principles of worship, the preachers responded to the question, "What principles of worship are regularly shared when you deliver your sermons to church congregations?" There were twenty-three responses that generated fourteen coded categories. The categories were organized into three themes: 1) *principles related to God or Jesus Christ*, 2) *principles related to the believer*, and 3) *a generalized response*.

Three participants provided responses to support the theme of *principles related to God or Jesus*. Participant RHO states, “I definitely try to reiterate how worship is surrender, and you know it’s surrendered to God and learning more about Him, and building our relationship with Him through prayer, Bible study, through worship, through fellowship with the saints of God through service.” Participant AHT reiterates, “It’s always about God’s unconditional love and His forgiveness. The power of forgiveness, and what our responsibility is, and response to what He’s done for us....Most often times everything leads back to Jesus and His sacrifice, and what He did for us that’s always, no matter what it is that I’m teaching or preaching or ministering.”

Participant RAN explains:

Back to the heart, the reality of it is....Christ expects realness. One thing ... God didn’t appreciate for years has always been, even when it came to idol worship, worshipping Him without the heart. And when He constantly got back to Israel, it was because they were not being honest in their worship toward him and so I think that is an area that I preach constantly about just being real, being heart-driven, allowing the Spirit, and connecting with the Spirit, that’s something that I try to make sure that my sermons always reflect.

The largest theme, with ten responses, pertains to *principles related to the believer*.

Participants provided responses that ultimately benefited the person who follows the Word of God or seeks a relationship with God. For example, Participant EAL states, “I think just that you want people to worship in line with the Word of God....And that’s what I want. A genuine response from the heart based on the Word of God is what I want for people to have.” Participant EAK explains, “I’m preaching through a full theology of worship in how we commune with each other, how we interact with our finances, how we interact with the world around us and all of that is geared towards a again a lifestyle of worship....Those are some of the principles that are preached through and preached to for our congregation.” Participant OAO articulates, “Oh, I’m always sharing justice. I’m always sharing inclusion. I’m always sharing God’s love for us.”

Three participants provide *a generalized response*, which means the response relates to worship but not necessarily a specific worship principle. To demonstrate, Participant RAN explains:

Well, generally it comes in as I'm teaching....It's just part of what I generally might teach, as I'm instructing the people in the Word of God. And then because of the Word of God I'm gonna run across it and I'm gonna highlight it and I'm going to make mention of that worship. For instance, when the children of Israel are given the Levitical authorship to be the priestly line, and how they were to worship God, how they were to have this relationship with God and all of the different things that they had to take care of in the tabernacle which to them was work. But then we see it as a fulfillment of who Christ was, and so in that I see that God has laid out a plan of how we come to Him.

Participant EOL shares:

The encouragement to worship, and then often a reminder of why we worship, because in a congregational setting you won't get everybody that's intimate, you won't get everybody that's on the same level. The Scriptures talk about in terms of let everything they have breath praise the Lord. That's always a good starting place, because certainly you don't, when you're giving a sermon, want to ostracize or marginalize anybody....But I try to encourage them....Remind them about why we praise, and the goodness of God, that's always an area that I go into in terms of how good God is, the goodness of God, and from the goodness of God, why we should praise the Lord.

### Analysis of Sermon Delivery & Worship Principles

The researcher notes that the responses are overall *general descriptions* as an attempt to describe regularly including worship principles in the delivery of their sermons. The researcher also notes that due to the number of generalized responses, the possibility exists that the participants did not want to acknowledge outright that regularly sharing worship principles through the delivery of the sermons does not occur. However, two participants are transparent and admit they do not share worship principles in their sermons regularly. To illustrate, Participant NEA remarks, "That's a little bit tougher, because, like I said our focus is not the sermon. The focus of our worship is not what the priest says." Participant EAL shares, "You know, honestly, I don't know if I've always made that clear in my sermons."

The participants struggled overall with answering this question. This presents an anomaly for the researcher because the previous question in the interview asked participants to describe their understanding of worship principles. In the previous question, several of the participants were able to provide clear responses that connected to worship principles. The follow-up question, “What principles of worship are regularly shared when you deliver sermons to church congregations?” basically asked the participants to then share how they include the worship principles identified in the delivery of their sermons. For instance, Participant OOR previously shared *sacrifice, love, humility, and atonement* as relating to worship principles. Based on the examples provided, the participant would have identified which worship principles they specifically included in their sermons. Participants RHO, AHT, and EAK seemed to understand the continuity of the question.

### **Intentional Elements or Themes in Sermons Results**

“What essential elements or themes do you intentionally include in your sermons?” was a question to which each participant provided a verbal response during the Zoom interviews. This question was a general question that allowed the preachers to freely answer. As a result, fifty-three responses were coded as twenty-six categories. The researcher refined the categories to three distinct themes due to the variety of responses: 1) *Christian walk*, 2) *God or Christ-centered*, and 3) *technology or media*. These became the main themes based on the coding of the participants’ responses.

Nine participants provide elements or themes that completely focus on the Christian walk. Some of the responses relate to *community, the fruit of the Spirit, personal commitment, and life application*.

### Participant Highlights Related to the Christian Walk

- Participant EAL: “I think in my sermons no matter what I’m teaching on, I want there to be an element of the knowledge of the grace of God. I also want there to be an element of faith, because it almost goes hand in hand.”
- Participant NAE: “Our relationship with God... Faith has been another big one.”
- Participant AHT: “Intentionally, definitely, forgiveness and love.”
- Participant LOA: “That as we are taught, and particularly in the Bible, the Bible environment, you gotta get to the Cross. The Cross is that place where every believer is won. That’s in every message that the Cross is there because of Calvary.”
- Participant AAE: “Growth is a heavy emphasis and an understanding of how you flesh out your faith on a day in and day out basis. I refer to that as real-life discipleship. You know, understanding how this challenging world that we live in, and especially at this challenging time that we exist in, challenges us in many ways from day to day and you know we have to constantly evaluate how we’ve processed today, and how we’re living out our faith.”
- Participant RHO: “Of course praise, worship...exalting God, giving God the reverence that He is due, not just in a worship setting, but again, every day....Discipleship is a big one ... We have to do discipleship ... we should be impacting the world.”

One participant provided responses solely on the media/technology theme. Participant AUI describes the use of music, media, and movies as a source for deriving his sermon elements or themes. Participant AUI explains,

I always intentionally, all my sermons, end with a song. I don’t sing it, but I generally find, or try to find, a song that relates to whatever is the central theme of my message ... a lot of my sermons draw their inspiration from some type of media presentation. It’s generally movies. I have an uncanny connection with the Lord where He’ll drop some

very interesting things into my spirit from movies that I'm watching. So it makes watching movies an interesting experience sometimes ... I think one of the sermons I provided for you was titled "Endgame." The idea or the inspiration for that came from the Marvel movie, *Endgame*. The idea of basically, where are you going? You're going about your business of living your life. What is the ultimate goal? Where are you trying to go? How does that align with what God would have you to do?

Six participants provide responses that support two themes: *Christian walk* and *God or Christ-centered*. Their responses relate to *Jesus Christ, the gospel, reverence of God, God's attributes, and the work of the Holy Spirit*.

### **Participant Highlights Related to the Christian Walk & God or Christ-centered**

- Participant EYA: "Fearing the Lord, and that doesn't mean scare, that means respect."
- Participant EOL: "Why Christ came, why He came, What He came for, how much He loves you, and wants you to have what He came for, and provide for us."
- Participant EAK: "The gospel. First and foremost the gospel ... Bible study and reading ... prayer ... and community."
- Participant OAO: "We're talking Advent, we spend a lot of time on what does it mean to experience the birth of God amongst us. Right? What we call incarnation theology that's a big theme, incarnation theology, especially because I tend to lean on the side of scholars that articulate that the incarnation to a degree might have been even stronger than the resurrection, that if Jesus had not died for us since, because He was born and born human and born man and divine, that breaks the cycle of what we have seen in the Old Testament. I tend to do a lot of work with the birth of Christ and Christ as a human being with us. If Christ can do it as a fully human person, and fully divine, so can we, Advent is gonna definitely be that."

- Participant RAN: “Well, the head topic is always lifestyle change. Christ being centered and our need for the Holy Spirit. Those are the things that I really kind of always wrap around the sermons.
- Participant AAN: “One of the common themes is that God expects excellence ... when I look back on my share, I always see that principle of coming clean, confessing, motive!”

### Analysis Intentional Elements or Themes in Sermons

The preachers gave a variety of responses to indicate the elements or themes they intentionally included in their sermons. The researcher notes that the use of the term *element* may be the reason why a few participants did not necessarily provide a theme but instead described what they do either during a sermon or to prepare their sermon. For example, Participant AAO describes: “Well, I intentionally include life applications because to me, if I don’t, it’s just a history lesson. But God’s Word is relevant right now ... I always want to leave people thinking, what does this mean to me? What is this saying to me? Not just that was a great word. When you go home and you listen to it again, can you find yourself in that? I always want to leave people locating themselves in what it is that God is saying through the Word that I preach.”

They all seemed to answer the current question about elements and themes regularly in their sermons with ease. During the interview, this question directly followed the previous question that asked the participants to identify worship principles they often include in their sermons, which presented a challenge. Knowing that participants can easily identify elements and themes gives pause for the researcher to wonder if the greater issue at large is that the preachers need more opportunities to make the connections between their elements and themes to worship. The current question of elements and themes provided by several of the participants focuses on *Jesus Christ, the gospel, and faith*, which correlate with worship principles. With additional

opportunities to make clear connections to worship, they can eventually understand how the chosen elements and themes in their sermons directly correspond to the overall subject of worship.

### **Explicitly Connecting Elements or Themes to Worship Results**

After the preachers shared the elements and themes they regularly included in their sermons, the participants were asked the following question: “How do you ensure listeners of your sermons explicitly connect the essential elements or themes to the theology of worship and principles of worship?” The twenty-five responses garnered fifteen coded categories covering multiple contents that related to areas such as *sermon intent*, *encouraging worship*, and *personal testimony*. The fifteen categories generated two distinct themes 1) *a biblical-related strategy* and 2) *an audience-related strategy*.

One participant demonstrated an exemplary response. The response speaks to both a *biblical-* and an *audience-related strategy* for explicitly connecting the participant’s identified previous elements or themes with the current interview question. Participant RHO indicates:

Again, I think, if we consider worship in the broad sense and again the definition, a simple definition from Sam Rainer’s book of saying *yes* to God, as a way of worship. Then, if you’re talking about salvation, salvation is saying *yes* to God. If you’re talking about forgiveness, even when you don’t want to, it’s *yes* to God. Repentance, when we miss it, but we know that God is a God that will forgive us when we confess our sins. Spiritual growth. We know that takes effort and that effort is not that easy all the time. And so, but we do it, and we make the effort because we are worshiping God with our whole heart, with our lives, and we want to grow closer to Him. We want to get to know Him better. We want to reflect Him and His characteristics. I think that you can connect worship to all of those things.

Participant RHO’s response demonstrates how a preacher could take any of their weekly elements and themes and explicitly connect them to worship where listeners would not have to infer a connection to worship.

The largest number of responses, which were fourteen, connect to the audience related strategy theme. Eight preachers provide responses solely related to this theme.

### **Participant Highlights with an Audience-Related Strategy**

- Participant AAO: “I think the only way I could answer that is I pray. I pray and I ask God, Lord, make this make sense, and make this a foundational piece. Make this something that will develop, will help these people to grow. Don’t let it just be a message that they feel just good [where] there’s absolutely no foundation to it ... I have asked God, I want this to be something that is yours and not mine. That it is going to make your people strong. Make your people more educated in who you are and experience you in a way that perhaps they wouldn’t if that word wasn’t delivered.”
- Participant NAE: “My way of doing that ultimately I have talked about the Scripture. I’ve talked about the thread, a pull on that thread through the four elements, if I’m lucky and my way of doing that ultimately, like, I said, is to try to end with a question. So if I’m talking about how God loves us and what we see in the Scripture that somebody else did to show their love towards their fellow man, well, then, how are you going to share your [love], show your love to your fellow man? How are you going to do that now? What are you willing to do? How are you willing to exercise this in your life, is the bottom line.”
- Participant EOL: “Always leaving at the end an area for people to make their own assessments, ending with the question, “Could it be?” I think that’s always great ... end with those, “Could it be that?” “Could this mean?” and then people are able to make [their] own judgments hopefully within themselves in terms of what I was trying to convey with the worship principles and the worship points I was trying to get across.”

- Participant EAK: “So ultimately we connect lifestyles of worship to people discovering their God-given purpose and so everyone understands in our church that when we talk about lifestyles of worship that doesn’t have anything to do with Sunday morning, that has to do with who you are six and a half other days of the week ... We want to help them to identify they’re unique purposes and so we do a good number of things to do that to help them with spiritual gifts assessments, and even some personality assessment things that we do through our assimilation process for people being part of our church. And so all of that is connected if you’re going to be a worshipper, it has little to do with being at Sunday morning worship.”
- Participant AHT: “So one of the things that I love about the teaching, it first started when I was in Georgia, and [name] taught us that when we teach, we get a response, so we ask volunteers, people to give us feedback, give me a point ... And my bishop does it as well. We volunteer to give him something that we learned and gleaned from the Word of God and respond so that he knows that we got it.”
- Participant AAE: “So when I preach, it’s often the dialogue, and I’ll pick people in the audience, in the congregation as I’m preaching, and I’ll ask them questions, and I’ll ask for responses. I’m encouraging them to have dialogue with me as I preach, and you never know what that’s gonna produce to be honest with you. But it works out pretty well, and in doing that I’m causing them to think and to process. I’m helping them to learn to ask questions, and I often point out that the best way to grow is to learn to ask the best questions and that’s the way I’m trying to develop their mindset and the process of discipleship, and fleshing out their faith on a day in and day out, basis.”

- Participant RAN: “So in my presentation, I always want to let people see the love that Christ and God have for us. It will always be chasing us, no matter where the sin lies. Christ, God, He’s there chasing us in all situations, and so what I try to do, and my goal and AIM, is to at the same time tell the truth about our lifestyles and our changes and our necessity, our need for Christ, our need for the Holy Spirit, but also paint the picture of always coming back to what the Cross says, and what the Cross did. And so, I think through that through that lens it paints a clearer picture that the love of God is so remarkable, and in every situation with this, that it will not stop chasing us. We have no reason not to accept.”
- Participant AAN: “One of the things I did learn was in an introduction of your message that the purpose of that is to connect the congregation to the principles that you’re getting ready to expound on. That you are to develop a relationship between the two and then once you connect them to it, then you can go on and explain what the principles are saying, and that’s what some people might call the hook, where you’re getting them to see that what you’re getting ready to say applies to them.”

Two participants provided their thoughts solely as biblical strategies—about how they explicitly connect worship to their elements and themes. For example, Participant AUI states, “As I’m preparing a sermon, I’m intentional about making sure that whatever the illustrative thematic unit that I’m using, I explicitly show how it’s connected to the Scripture.” Participant OAO responds, “I would say that the worship principles follow the text which follows the theology, which follows the theme, kind of a circular reality here.”

Three participants provided more than one response, and their responses supported both the *biblical-related strategy* and *audience-related strategy*. For instance, Participant EYA

provides an *audience-related strategy* and shares, “So back to what I say it’s relationship with the Lord. That’s how I will tell them. This is how you know that you are worshipping the Lord, and when you worship the Lord all week long when you come in on Sunday, you can tell the ones that have this love relationship with the Lord all week, because when they come in on Sunday, they’re more on fire, their prayer is more explosive. It’s not dead and dry.” Participant EYA also states, “I don’t know what God is inquiring of people, but whatever it is, hopefully, in reading the Word and understanding the Word, the Spirit of the Lord would begin to open up their understanding,” and this is a *biblical-related strategy*. Another example is Participant OOR, who shares, “In my outlines. I try to gear the main points of it to still tunnel back to Jesus.” Then Participant OOR explains, “It’s different approaches that I’ve used. Some I’ve used demonstration [and] visual demonstrations in some sermons. I have used some of the media team to flash stuff on the board,” reflecting an *audience-related strategy*.

#### Analysis of Explicitly Connecting Elements or Themes to Worship

Although there are twenty-five responses, the researcher initially assesses that the majority of the participants did not answer the question accurately. The researcher was expecting responses to reflect the exemplar response provided by Participant RHO. There was continuity between the previous interview question and the current question of explicitly connecting elements and themes to worship theology and principles with Participant RHO’s response. If continuing in that pattern of thinking, the majority of the responses are off-topic when considering the researcher’s expectations. Yet, the opening or the area that may have led to the variety of responses is the word, *element*, within the question. To demonstrate, Participant LOA expresses, “I preach expository. I let the text say what it has to say. I’m an exegetic expositor. I exegete the text, which means I draw meaning and revelation from the texts instead of pouring my meaning into the text,

that's eisegesis. I exegete the text." A person would think the response to be off-topic. However, through interpretation, Participant LOA is expressing the skill of exegeting biblical text as an element used to explicitly connect to worship theology and principles. As a result, the researcher expanded the initial expectation to consider a broader view of the question, especially if the responses pertained to an element versus a specific theme.

In some cases, participants initially seemed hesitant to answer the question. With some guidance, participants provided their responses. The researcher had to mention several times that the response needed to explicitly share how the preacher connects their elements and themes to worship theology and principles. The researcher shared with each participant that *explicit* meant the listener would not have to infer on his or her own a connection to worship. One participant was transparent and admitted that explicitly sharing and making a connection was not often practiced. Participant EAL acknowledges, "I have to say I haven't made a complete connection, because I haven't put that as part of the message to begin with." This was appreciated because Participant EAL experienced personal insights during the interview and noted future approaches when planning sermons.

Overall, when examining the responses in the context of connecting the elements or themes explicitly to worship theology and principles, the researcher determines the participants do not often do this. The researcher also determined that in some cases, the participants thought their actions were being explicit when in actuality, the listener would have to make an inference on their own when listening to a preached sermon. To demonstrate, Participant OOR, at one point in the interview, replies, "My strategy is I don't want people to just leave after I've preached, and say they felt good. I want them to be able to say I learned more about Jesus ... In my outlines. I try to gear the main points of it to still tunnel back to Jesus." The listener would have to infer that

Participant OOR's actions and statements connect to the worship principle, *Jesus is our eternal object of worship*. One participant believes a direct approach was better. Participant EYA clearly shares, "So back to what I say, it's relationship with the Lord. That's how I will tell them. This is how you know that you are worshipping the Lord...." Participant EYA indicates the goal is to state it directly to the listeners. This may be the needed approach until explicitly connecting elements and themes to worship theology and principles becomes innate as a preacher.

### **Supporting Congregations Developing a Lifestyle of Worship Results**

The last interview question asked participants, what elements of your sermon support church congregations with developing a lifestyle of worship? The eighteen responses yielded ten coded categories that related to areas such as *modeling, discipleship, liturgy, visualization, transparency, and God's desires*. Based on the identified categories, the researcher identified three major themes: 1) *sermon-related responses*, 2) *pre/post sermon-related responses*, and 3) *generalized responses*.

Seven participants correspond with the *sermon-related responses* theme. Moreover, two participants, who provide *sermon-related responses*, were able to accurately identify which element of their sermon support their congregations in developing a lifestyle of worship. To demonstrate this point, Participant AAN alludes to the closing of the sermon. Participant AAN responds, "I guess it would be the end. The closer, that it is a connection ... between what you did say and how it applies to their life. God wants this, God needs this. God wants you to have this. There is some kind of connection between you and the principle that you were expounding on. Everything else could have been general, but the close is more personal—one on one." Participant AAO specifies the entire sermon from beginning to end. Participant AAO explains:

There's an intro, of course, then I have three key points, and then I close ... as a matter of fact, I do it like what we have Monday through Friday. Our church does something called SOAP. I don't know if you're familiar with it, that acronym ... SOAP is simply this, it is an acronym for Scripture, Observation, Application, and then Prayer ... I'm tying Scripture to life. It's like I'm knitting when I'm preaching and at the end you should have a nice sweater, or you should have a nice throw ... at the end of it ... There's worship all through that, because, as we're hitting the key points as we are hitting the takeaways, worship just comes up. It's organic. That's the word I want to use. It's organic because when the Word of God is preached effectively, efficiently, I believe worship is organic.

### **Participant Highlights of Sermon-Related Responses**

- Participant AUI: "I bring it back to the idea of connecting, one being intentional about connecting the Scripture to something that people can relate to or people may already have some kind of connection. Two, always applying whatever Scripture is saying back to how you can apply that to your life right now and today, and make it a regular part of your life and how you can use it to better solidify your connection with God."
- Participant EAL: "I think the aspect of faith, because faith without works is dead. And then the challenge, there's always some type of challenge, with each message. So between the two of those elements, I think a person is at least encouraged, exhorted or motivated to make a change."
- Participant AHT: "So I don't know if it's developing a lifestyle of worship, but I know I definitely give them instruction to pull out their Bibles, make sure you're taking notes, to go back, because we miss stuff. Statistics say at a 30-minute sermon we probably get about 10 minutes of it. So I always say, make sure you have your Bible... I don't know if this is specifically about worship, but at least definitely about being resourceful, being able to take notes and respond to us that they really got something from out of the Word."
- Participant RAN: "The heart that God seeks is a heart of purity and a heart of righteousness ... whenever I try to preach a sermon, if I can always let people know that

God's main thing is coming after our heart ... if I can present that as an element in worship, as it relates to me presenting a sermon, I think my job is done as a pastor, as a shepherd to teach them, to teach them the Word of God."

- Participant OOR: "I think transparency is a way to support it, develop and inspire people to understand how to take worship and relationship with God, and apply it in your everyday life."

Five preachers expressed answers that relate to the *pre/post sermon-related theme*. Their responses did not specifically relate to the actual delivery of the sermon; however, the researcher notes that the responses applied during the actual worship service, which could occur before or after the actual sermon. To demonstrate, Participate EYA voices, "Well, what I do is actually tell them this is what you need to do and, as I said earlier, the churches are not taught. They think praise and worship is the choir singing. It doesn't necessarily have anything to do with them being involved. So they have to be taught that they have to be explicitly involved in the worship of God, not only through music but in their offering that is a form of worship." Participant EOL remarks, "I would say with modeling, with singing, with doing congregational singing, sometimes it's solo singing, but sometimes it's congregational singing, sometimes it may be a hymn that I'll sing." Participant NAE expresses, "Our whole service is for that. I go back to my question, and I know not everyone does that but that's my way of trying to bring them into a relationship with the sermon. When someone is forced to think about what you said, and exactly how it impacts their life, or how they're going to approach this relationship, or what they're going to do to show God's love in the world, or how they're going to do something I think that makes a difference to people."

Three participants provided generalized responses to the final question. Their responses cover more than just the time of listening during a sermon or participating during a worship service. To illustrate, Participant EAK mentions:

Yeah, that's our assimilation process, like the first connection point from our person being from point A to point B in our church is that we invite them to discover their purpose, and so we invite them to get connected to our newcomers class so that they can one find out about the church. But then find out about how they're uniquely wired and designed, because we see that design reveals your destiny. It's one of the things that we tell them, how you're designed reveals your destiny? And so if you're going to develop lifestyles of worship, you gotta know how you're designed. We're constantly casting the vision of people not sitting on the side lines in life and understanding who they are and what they were created to do.

Participant AAE communicates:

I think when you can answer the question, *What is worship?* then you'll understand more of how you respond in lifestyle to your faith. So if we're called to a life of worship that relates not only to the way that I adore God and praise God throughout my day, it also relates to the way that I respond to the people who I need around me. It also relates to the way that I hear His Spirit speak to me, the revelation that I receive and the way that I share prophecy, prophetic words that God lays on my heart. It's the way that I understand God working in me as I look to Him and yield to His Spirit on a day-to-day basis.

Participant RHO voices:

I try to really teach my members of my church about true discipleship, what that means at [church name]. The vision was first we become a disciple, and then we go and make disciples of others, and so that, becoming a disciple is that you do the work to worship God yourself, and then you go tell somebody else about the relationship that you have with God and trust that God is going to draw them. Again, discipleship, just that whole giving of yourself to God in every aspect, recognizing that it's not easy and it's a struggle, because everybody has to deal with this flesh. But you continue in the mindset of worship. You continue to do that. You continue to draw closer to Him, you continue to seek after Him. You continue to yield to Him, and thank God for His grace when we mess up, [when] we miss the mark. We can always come back to Him and get it right.

### Analysis of Supporting Congregations Developing a Lifestyle of Worship

The researcher notes the participants did not hesitate to answer the final question. In some cases, the participants continued their train of thought from the prior question in order to provide a response. A few of the participants began with the word *again* several times, indicating they were continuing a response from a previous interview question. In most cases, the continuation of the previous responses was appropriate. However, in some cases, it led to participants not answering the final question in a manner specific to the sermon as an act of supporting the development of a lifestyle of worship. For example, Participant RHO identifies *discipleship* as an essential element, or theme intentionally included in their sermons and mentions *discipleship* again as part of supporting church members with developing a lifestyle of worship. The response would have been most appropriate if the final question did not need to connect to the sermon supporting listeners with developing a lifestyle of worship.

The preachers provided varied responses, which indicated they may not have known how to answer the question because of the phrase *lifestyle of worship*. As many of the participants responded to the question, the researcher notes that the final question was another question during the interview to which none of them had been asked before or had given thought to in their role as a preacher. The researcher is inclined to believe that this is through no fault of their own versus the need for exposure to engaging in more conversations on the topic of *worship theology* and *principles*.

## Analysis of the Local Preacher Interview Reflection

### Biblical Content

The “Local Preacher Initial Interview Reflection Tool” analyzes each participant’s response to determine expressed training and preparation with a focus on biblical content and worship content. It is necessary to examine the combined results of the fifteen participants by reviewing first the biblical content focus. The biblical content focus of the interview involves five specific criteria for analysis:

- The participant received seminary courses/training on biblical theology.
- The participant clearly articulated at least three biblical principles without prompting from the interviewer.
- The participant expressed intentionally developing sermons to include biblical principles.
- The participant stated at least three examples of explicitly connecting sermon themes to biblical theology & principles.
- The participant utilizes resources that focus on biblical principles to develop and deliver a sermon.

The reflection tool allows the researcher to identify the participants’ responses in three categories: *Yes*, *No*, or *The Response Implies a Connection to a Biblical Principle, Though Not Explicitly Stated*. The combined results of the fifteen participants reveal that 100% of the preachers received seminary courses or training in biblical theology. The participants clearly articulated at least three biblical principles without prompting from the interviewer, representing 93.3% of the preachers. Additionally, 100% of the participants express intentionally developing sermons to include biblical principles. The participants stated at least three examples of explicitly connecting sermon themes to biblical theology and principles is 86.7% of the preachers. Lastly,

100% of the participants utilize resources that focus on biblical principles to develop and deliver a sermon. A display of the participants' combined results is in table 4.5.

**Table 4.5. Local Preacher Initial Interview Biblical Content**

<b>Expressed Training and Preparation</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Response Implies a Connection to a Biblical Principle Though not Explicitly Stated</b>
<b>Biblical Content Focus...</b>			
The participant received seminary courses/training on biblical theology.	100% (15)	0% (0)	0% (0)
The participant clearly articulated at least three biblical principles, without prompting from the interviewer.	93.3% (14)	0% (0)	6.7% (1)
The participant expressed intentionally developing sermons to include biblical principles.	100% (15)	0% (0)	0% (0)
The participant stated at least three examples of explicitly connecting sermon themes to biblical theology & principles.	86.7% (13)	0% (0)	13.3% (2)
The participant utilizes resources that focus on Biblical principles to develop and deliver a sermon.	100% (15)	0% (0)	0% (0)

*\*The number in the parentheses represents the actual number of participants.*

### Worship Content

The “Local Preacher Initial Interview Reflection Tool” analyzes each participant’s response to determine expressed training and preparation with a focus on worship content. Similar to the biblical content, it was necessary to examine the combined results of the fifteen participants by reviewing the worship content focus verbalized during the interviews. The worship content focus of the interview involves six specific criteria for analysis:

- The participant received seminary courses/training on worship theology.
- The participant clearly articulated at least three worship principles without prompting from the interviewer.
- The participant expressed intentionally developing sermons to include worship principles.

- The participant stated at least three examples of explicitly connecting sermon themes to the theology & principles of worship.
- The participant clearly articulated examples of elements in their sermons that support their congregation with developing a lifestyle of worship.
- The participant utilizes resources that focus on worship principles to develop and deliver a sermon.

The reflection tool allows the researcher to identify the participants' responses in three categories: *Yes*, *No*, or *The Response Implies a Connection to a Worship Principle, Though Not Explicitly Stated*. The combined results of the fifteen participants reveal that 60% of the participants received seminary courses or training on worship theology. The participants clearly articulated at least three worship principles, without prompting from the interview, representing 60% of the preachers. The participants expressed that they intentionally develop sermons to include worship principles, comprising 6.7% of the preachers. Additionally, 13.3% of the participants stated at least three examples of explicitly connecting sermon themes to the theology and principles of worship. The 60% of the participants clearly articulated examples of elements in their sermons that support their congregation in developing a lifestyle of worship. Lastly, 26.7% of the participants utilized resources that focus on worship principles to develop and deliver a sermon. A display of the participants' combined results is in table 4.6.

**Table 4.6. Local Preacher Initial Interview Worship Content**

<b>Expressed Training and Preparation</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Response Implies a Connection to a Worship Principle Though not Explicitly Stated</b>
<b>Worship Content Focus...</b>			
The participant received seminary courses/training on worship theology.	60% (9)	40% (6)	0% (0)
The participant clearly articulated at least three worship principles, without prompting from the interviewer.	60% (9)	20% (3)	20% (3)
The participant expressed intentionally developing sermons to include worship principles.	6.7% (1)	33.3% (5)	60% (9)
The participant stated at least three examples of explicitly connecting sermon themes to the theology & principles of worship.	13.3% (2)	6.7% (1)	80% (12)
The participant clearly articulated examples of elements in their sermons that support their congregation with developing a lifestyle of worship.	53.3% (8)	20% (3)	26.7% (4)
The participant utilizes resources that focus on worship principles to develop and deliver a sermon.	26.7% (4)	73.3% (11)	0% (0)

*\*The number in the parentheses represents the actual number of participants.*

### **Analysis of the Initial Interview Reflection Tool**

#### **Biblical Content**

Based on the reflection tool data, three out of the five criteria related to biblical content are found in 100% of the fifteen participants. The strongest areas pertaining to biblical content deal with the following:

- Seminary courses/training on biblical theology
  - Developing sermons with biblical principles
  - Utilizing resources that provide guidance on biblical principles when preparing sermons
- the biblical

The results of the top three categories are no surprise to the researcher especially since every participant indicates that they have received training. Most training in biblical theology tends to include sermon preparation and development. In addition, seminary courses and proper training also include participants establishing biblical tools and personal libraries to support sermon preparation and delivering sermons.

The lowest category pertaining to biblical content occurs with connecting sermon themes to biblical theology and principles. The researcher believes that challenges for the participants lay with the terminology *explicit* and overthinking their responses. Most preachers work to design and deliver sermons that are biblically based. As a result, biblically based sermons tend to naturally connect to biblical theology and principles.

### Worship Content

In reviewing the worship content focus, there are no criteria that indicates 100% for the participants. The highest percentage is 60% among nine participants, and the criteria deal with the following:

- Seminary courses/training on worship
- Being able to articulate at least three worship principles, unprompted by the interviewer

The results of the two highest criteria are overall connected. When taking courses or experiencing training in worship theology, there is a tendency to also gain an understanding of worship principles. Worship principles are the foundation for establishing a worship theology similar to the manner in which biblical principles establish biblical theology.

Initially, the researcher designed the reflection tool to reflect one column for *Yes* and one column for *No*. By the fifth participant interview, the researcher adapted the reflection tool to include the heading, *Response Implies a Connection to a Worship Principle Though Not*

*Explicitly Stated* to capture the participants' responses. During the interviews, it became clear that the preachers did not want to appear unknowledgeable in a given area, especially concerning the worship content and criteria. Their responses, for the most part, indicate a working knowledge of worship content. To acknowledge this observation, the researcher thought it best to adapt the interview reflection tool to capture a more accurate representation of the responses and better meet the needs of the study.

### **Local Preacher Sermon Analysis**

As part of the research, the fifteen participants submitted three sermons of their choice that were delivered to church congregations between the years 2021 and 2023. Sermon submissions included video links to Facebook, YouTube, ministry websites, and sermon scripts in Microsoft Word and PDF formats. Fourteen participants submitted three sermons, and one participant submitted two sermons for a total of forty-four sermons to be analyzed by the researcher. All sermon submissions occurred prior to each participant's scheduled interview.

### **Biblical Content**

The "Local Preacher Sermon Analysis Tool" analyzes each participant's sermon to determine specific criteria evident with a focus on biblical content and worship content. It was necessary to examine the combined results of the fifteen participants by reviewing first the biblical content focus. The *sermon biblical content focus* involves nine specific criteria for analysis:

- The sermon content has a precise theme/topic. E.g., creation, sin, judgment, redemption, and resurrection. (What?)

- The sermon content relates to Godly principles/universal biblical theological principles (Biblically-Based).
- The sermon content includes word pictures and storytelling to make the biblical text and the biblical world come alive in the mind of the listeners (Illustration).
- The sermon content makes historical connections to present-day connections (Application).
- The sermon content addresses personal piety, care of the soul, social justice, community life, and/or the institutional church (Application).
- The sermon content presents emotional experiences of the gospel. (So what?)
- The sermon content makes a demand upon the hearers and encourages listeners to respond/ elicit growth & change in response to hearing the Word of God. (Now what?)
- The sermon content encourages Biblical Study skills. (Now what?)
- The sermon content encourages development in a listener's Christian walk. (Now what?)

The sermon analysis tool allows the researcher to identify the biblical content criteria in three categories: *Evident (Explicit)*, *Partially Evident (Implied/Inferred)*, or *Not Evident*. To support continuity by evaluating the biblical content for each sermon, the researcher documented specific statements from each speaker during the delivery of the sermon. The statements were inserted directly within the analysis tool underneath the appropriate biblical content criteria. Table 4.7 provides an example of matching actual sermon statements with biblical content criteria.

**Table 4.7. Example of Biblical Content & Actual Sermon Statements**

Criteria for Sermon Biblical Content	Evident (Explicit)	Partially Evident (Implied or Inferred)	Not Evident
<b>The sermon content encourages development in a listener's Christian walk. (<i>Now what?</i>)</b>  [32:35] My question becomes quite simply what are we willing to sacrifice? [34:19] My only question today is what sacrifice, what suffering are you willing to do in order to receive the perfect love that God has for all of us so that a couple of days from now we will truly understand the meaning of yes?	X		

Based on the forty-four sermons submitted by the participants, 100% of the sermon content has a precise theme or topic. Of these sermons, 97.7% have content that relates to Godly principles and/or universal biblical theological principles. The sermon content includes word pictures and/or storytelling to make the biblical text and the biblical world come alive in the mind of the listeners is found in 77.3% of the submitted sermons. Additionally, 36.4% of the sermon content makes historical connections to present-day connections. Sermon content addressing piety, care of the soul, social justice, community, and/or the institutional church is found in 100% of the submitted sermons. The review shows 45.5% of the sermons include content that presented emotional experiences of the gospel. Also, 81.8% of the sermons include content that makes a demand upon the hearers and encourages listeners to respond and/or elicit growth and change in response to hearing the Word of God. The sermon content that encouraged biblical study skills is 68.2% of the submitted sermons. Lastly, 100% of the sermon content encourages development in a listener's Christian walk. A display of the participants' combined results is in table 4.8.

**Table 4.8. Local Preacher Sermon Biblical Content**

<b>Criteria for Sermon Biblical Content</b>	<b>Evident (Explicit)</b>	<b>Partially Evident (Implied or Inferred)</b>	<b>Not Evident</b>
The sermon content has a precise theme/topic. E.g., creation, sin, judgment, redemption, and resurrection. ( <i>What?</i> )	100% (44)	0% (0)	0% (0)
The sermon content relates to Godly principles/universal biblical theological principles. (Biblically-Based)	97.7% (43)	2.3% (1)	0% (0)
The sermon content includes word pictures, storytelling to make the biblical text and the biblical world come alive in the mind of the listeners. ( <i>Illustration</i> )	77.3% (34)	0% (0)	22.7% (10)
The sermon content makes historical connections to present-day connections. (Application)	36.4% (16)	0% (0)	63.6% (28)
The sermon content addresses personal piety, care of the soul, social justice, community life, and/or the institutional church. ( <i>Application</i> )	100% (44)	0% (0)	0% (0)
The sermon content presents emotional experiences of the gospel. ( <i>So what?</i> )	45.5% (20)	2.3% (1)	52.3% (23)
The sermon content makes a demand upon the hearers and encourages listeners to respond/elicit growth & change in response to hearing the Word of God. ( <i>Now what?</i> )	81.8% (36)	2.3% (1)	15.9% (7)
The sermon content encourages Biblical Study skills. ( <i>Now what?</i> )	29.5% (13)	2.3% (1)	68.2% (30)
The sermon content encourages development in a listener's Christian walk. ( <i>Now what?</i> )	100% (44)	0% (0)	0% (0)

\*The number in the parentheses represents the actual number of sermons.

### **Participant Highlights for Sermon Biblical Content**

- The sermon content makes historical connections to present-day connections (Application).
  - Evident Example: Participant EAL Sermon 1: Description of the historical way of taking pictures and images being developed the old-fashion way in a darkroom and comparing the process to God working in the darkroom of one's life leading to a person's breakthrough.

- Evident Example: Participant EAL Sermon 3: Description of the Roman philosopher Seneca and quoting the philosopher by saying, “Success happens when preparation meets opportunity,” to demonstrate the importance of the act of preparation and purpose in one’s life.
- Evident Example: Participant AAE Sermon 1: Description of a nun in the middle ages named Teresa of Avira, who was a part of the monastic movement and separated herself and others to follow Jesus. This provided an example of dedicating oneself to Christ and sharing the gospel.
- Evident Example: Participant OAO Sermon 1: Description of slavery and the impact of Juneteenth and the connection to healing and reconciliation.
- The sermon content addresses personal piety, care of the soul, social justice, community life, and/or the institutional church (Application).
  - Evident Example: Participant AUI Sermon 1: [Page 5] “The difference between those that are walking with Jesus and those that are not is that those who do not walk with Jesus find themselves IN storms while those of us walking with Jesus are going THROUGH storms.”
  - Evident Example: Participant LOA Sermon 1: [1:12:59] “Can I ask the question this morning, “What has you tied down? What chord has you bound that nobody can see?”
  - Evident Example: Participant OAO Sermon 3: [43:40] “You really have to ask the question, ‘Am I moving in God’s will? Is this promise that God has left for me? Or am I usurping the process so much to the point that I may get to where I want to go but at the consequence of everybody else?’”

- Evident Example: Participant EYA Sermon 1: [12:31] “Jew and Gentile, we are no longer slaves, slaves to the sin nature in us, because once you get the Holy Ghost you then have the power to tell the devil, ‘No!’ You have power to tell him, ‘No!’ Now whether or not you use that power that’s up to each individual.”
- Evident Example: Participant AAO Sermon 1: [27:42] “Choose to be broken like David and tell God the truth and let God. “Let His grace consume you and get rid of the stench.”
- Evident Example: Participant AHT Sermon 2: [17:37] “We have got to learn how to change the memory that was created in our past in hope that we get healed for our future.... Check your soul!”
- Evident Example: Participant AAN Sermon 2: [24:30] “Your clay has to be broken up and I warn you that the process of your clay getting broken up will hurt.... For you to become good soil, it begins with being broken up.”
- The sermon content presents emotional experiences of the gospel. (So what?)
  - Evident Example: Participant NAE Sermon 1: [31:08] “Christ did that for everyone whether you believe or not. Whether you have done good all of your life or have committed heinous acts, his blood was shed for all of us, a crown of thorns placed on his head.”
  - Evident Example: Participant LOA Sermon 2: [1:10:27] “Thanks be to God the gospel reaches everyone no matter what your color no matter what your political or leanings no matter what country you came from the gospel saves everybody so here we have it salvation only comes to those who recognize their desperate need to be saved.”

- Evident Example: Participant OAO Sermon 3: [18:40] “Recognizing our sphere of influence, there are people who need to know the gospel of Jesus Christ. We are the only epistle they will read.
- Evident Example: Participant RHO Sermon 1: [1:03:05] “My brothers and sisters just think about all of the people who have heard the Gospel of Jesus Christ and rejected it. But when you and I heard the Gospel of Jesus Christ, at some point in our lives, we made a conscious decision to ask Jesus to come into our lives and it is that decision that changed our lives.”
- The sermon content makes a demand upon the hearers and encourages listeners to respond/ elicit growth & change in response to hearing the Word of God. (Now what?)
  - Evident Example: Participant NAE Sermon 3: [31:01] “My question for you is, what doors are you willing to knock on to provide comfort, support, and caring to the vulnerable?”
  - Evident Example: Participant AUI Sermon 2 [Page 8] “Once you’ve gathered your resolve by focusing on what you’ve got left rather than what we’ve lost, and decided to step out and push through our problems, listen to that small voice and place your faith in the ultimate endgame - Jesus.”
  - Evident Example: Participant OAO Sermon 1: [38:18] “Will you continue in the apostles’ teaching and will you persevere in resisting evil and whenever you fall into sin, repent and return to the Lord?”
  - Evident Example: Participant AHT Sermon 2: [27:48] “On this morning, it is time for healing. It is time to forgive. You might have to go talk to a counselor, therapist, [or] psychologist.”

- Evident Example: Participant RHO 2: [1:05:16] “We can say we believe all we want, but if we do not put action to our faith, our faith is dead.”
- The sermon content encourages Biblical Study skills. (Now what?)
  - Evident Example: Participant EAK Sermon 1: [2:12:02] “If you’re going to build on the firm foundation of Scripture you got to take a look in the book for your instruction because you’re only as firm as what you know. You got to take a look in the book.
  - Evident Example: Participant EAL Sermon 2: [17:09] “This is why we study the Word of God. This is why we come to church to hear a message, to hear what God has to say to us.”
  - Evident Example: Participant RHO Sermon 1: [1:06:19] “It is a knowledge that only comes through continued efforts to pursue after God. It comes with consistent prayer and fellowship with God. It comes with consistently studying the word of God and then applying what we have learned.
- The sermon content encourages development in a listener’s Christian walk. (Now what?)
  - Evident Example: Participant RAN Sermon 1: [1:11:41] “In Bible study we talked about a kingdom influencer, what does that look like? Looks like the reflection of Jesus—His love, His character, His holiness, His meekness, His humbleness, His prayer life.”
  - Evident Example: Participant OAO Sermon 3: [56:22] “God is calling us to be a new creature, new names, new bodies, new spirits in Christ.”
  - Evident Example: Participant AAO Sermon 1: [9:45] “Are you one who wants joy? Do you want your roots pulled up? Are you tired of your garden being full

of weeds and nobody can see a flower; all your flowers are being choked out by the weeds that run deep and destroy?”

- Evident Example: Participant AAN Sermon 1: [53:24] “Do you look like the church? Do you act like the church? Are you patient like the church? Do you forgive like the church, or are you a building, closed, doors closed, windows shut?”
- Evident Example: Participant AHT Sermon 1: [25:05] “What trait do you need to have to be able to be successful or what are one of the keys to success?”
- Evident Example: Participant RHO Sermon 3: [31:33] “He speaks to us and convicts us when we’re doing wrong. He leads and guides us according to the Word of God and according to the will of God. He gifts us with everything that we need. Every spiritual gift that we need, it is provided to us by the Holy Spirit so that, my brothers and sisters, we can be successful disciples for Jesus Christ.”

### Worship Content

The “Local Preacher Sermon Analysis Tool” analyzes each participant’s sermon to determine specific criteria evident with a focus on worship content, in addition to the biblical content. In order to address the research questions, it was necessary to examine the combined results of the fifteen participants by analyzing the sermon worship content focus. The *sermon worship content focus* of the interview involves ten specific criteria for analysis:

- The sermon content relates to worship theology/principles (Biblically-Based).
- The sermon content includes a biblical definition of worship (Worship Theology).
- The sermon content shares a specific component/characteristic of biblical and historical worship with the listeners (Worship Theology).

- The sermon content expresses God’s expectations for a worshipful relationship with Him (Call to Worship).
- The sermon content encourages reverence for God (Worship Response)
- The sermon content encourages acts of worship (e.g., adoration, praise, thanksgiving) (Worship Response).
- The sermon content addresses worship service (Corporate worship: lamenting, prayer, communion, and confession) (Call to Worship).
- The sermon content encourages listeners to seek personal encounters with God (Call to Worship).
- The sermon content encourages the study of worship (Worship Theology).
- The sermon content encourages listeners to develop a lifestyle of worship/worship as all of life (e.g., evangelism, recreation, entertainment, justice, vocation, Bible study, and prayer) (Call to Worship).

The sermon analysis tool allows the researcher to identify the criteria of the worship content in three categories: *Evident (Explicit)*, *Partially Evident (Implied/Inferred)*, or *Not Evident*. When analyzing the worship content, the researcher was mindful of the following statement to maintain consistency across the forty-four sermons: Was the content (any of the criteria) mentioned explicitly, or implied by the speaker? Furthermore, to support continuity while evaluating the worship content for each sermon, the researcher documented specific statements that occurred by each speaker during the delivery of the sermon. The statements were inserted directly within the analysis tool underneath the appropriate worship content criteria. An example of matching specific sermon statements with specific worship content criteria is in table 4.9.

**Table 4.9. Example of Worship Content & Actual Sermon Statements**

Criteria for Sermon Worship Content (Was the content (any of the criteria) mentioned explicitly, or implied by the speaker?)	Evident (Explicit)	Partially Evident (Implied or Inferred)	Not Evident
<b>The sermon content encourages listeners to seek personal encounters with God. (<i>Call to Worship</i>)</b>  [46:04] ...Has to be a continual move of pursuing God. [46:49] God intends for us as a people to always cling to Him and always be in search of Him. [1:10:17] What God wants is for you to seek Him daily. [1:24:57] You will start wanting hear God. You'll start wanting to feel His presence all around you.	X		

Based on the forty-four sermons submitted by the participants, 4.5% of the sermons reviewed include content explicitly related to worship theology and/or principles. Sermons that include content that explicitly reveal a biblical definition of worship is found in 0% of the sermons analyzed. Also, 2.3% of the sermons evaluated contain content that explicitly shares a specific component and/or component of biblical and historical worship with the listeners. The review reveals 4.5% of the sermons contain content that explicitly expresses God's expectations for a worshipful relationship with Him. Sermon content that explicitly encourages reverence for God occurs in 9.1% of the sermons viewed. Furthermore, 15.9% of the sermons reviewed contain content that explicitly encourages acts of worship. Sermon content that addresses worship service occurs in 2.3% of the sermons. Additionally, 13.6% of the sermons explicitly encourage listeners to seek personal encounters with God. Sermon content that explicitly encourages the study of worship occurs in 0% of the submitted sermons. Lastly, 2.3% of the sermons contain content that explicitly encourages listeners to develop a lifestyle of worship or worship as all of life. A display of the participants' combined results is in table 4.10.

**Table 4.10. Local Preacher Sermon Worship Content**

<b>Criteria for Sermon Worship Content</b> <i>(Was the content, any of the criteria, mentioned explicitly or implied by the speaker?)</i>	<b>Evident (Explicit)</b>	<b>Partially Evident (Implied or Inferred)</b>	<b>Not Evident</b>
The sermon content relates to worship theology/principles. <i>(Biblically-Based)</i>	4.5% (2)	63.6% (28)	31.8% (14)
The sermon content includes a biblical definition of worship. <i>(Worship Theology)</i>	0% (0)	2.3% (1)	97.7% (43)
The sermon content shares a specific component/characteristic of biblical and historical worship with the listeners. <i>(Worship Theology)</i>	2.3% (1)	2.3% (1)	95.5% (42)
The sermon content expresses God's expectations for a worshipful relationship with Him. <i>(Call to Worship)</i>	4.5% (2)	11.4% (5)	84.1% (37)
The sermon content encourages reverence for God. <i>(Worship Response)</i>	9.1% (4)	11.4% (5)	79.5% (35)
The sermon content encourages acts of worship. E.g., adoration, praise, thanksgiving <i>(Worship Response)</i>	15.9% (7)	6.8% (3)	77.3% (34)
The sermon content addresses worship service. (Corporate worship: lamenting, prayer, communion, confession) <i>(Call to Worship)</i>	2.3% (1)	0% (0)	97.7% (43)
The sermon content encourages listeners to seek personal encounters with God. <i>(Call to Worship)</i>	13.6% (6)	11.4% (5)	75.0% (33)
The sermon content encourages the study of worship. <i>(Worship Theology)</i>	0% (0)	0% (0)	100% (44)
The sermon content encourages listeners to develop a lifestyle of worship/worship as all of life. (E.g., evangelism, recreation, entertainment, justice, vocation, Bible study, & prayer) <i>(Call to Worship)</i>	2.3% (1)	6.8% (3)	90.9% (40)

*\*The number in the parentheses represents the actual number of sermons.*

### **Participant Highlights for Sermon Worship Content**

- The sermon content expresses God's expectations for a worshipful relationship with Him (Call to Worship).
  - Evident Example: Participant RHO Sermon 1: [1:04:38] "God has ordained for us to live His divine power. He has given us all things that pertain to life and godliness. Not only Grace and peace but also all things that pertain to life and godliness are ours through our knowledge of Him. We know Him because He called us to know Him."

- Partially Evident: Participant AAN Sermon 1: [44:57] “When God looks at you, what He wants to see is a heart turned to Him.”
- The sermon content encourages reverence for God (Worship Response).
  - Evident Example: Participant LOA Sermon 3: [48:51] “Fact, praise Him with the sound of the trumpet, praise Him with the psaltery and harp, praise Him with the timbrel and dance, praise Him with the stringed instruments and the organ. Praise Him with the loud cymbals, praise Him on the high sounding cymbals, let everything that’s breathing praise God.”
  - Evident Example: Participant EYA Sermon 1: [18:18] “We serve one God. We worship one God. And as believers in Christ, I hope that you worship one God.”
  - Partially Evident Example: Participant EOL Sermon 2: [1:05:30 ] “You can question God. We don’t’ disrespect the deity of God because He’s sovereign and He’s Lord, right?”
- The sermon content encourages acts of worship (e.g., adoration, praise, thanksgiving) (Worship Response).
  - Evident Example: Participant EAL Sermon 2: [17:23] “This is why we worship God. We sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs all based on the Word of God.”
  - Evident Example: Participant EYA Sermon 3: [1:01:58] “A tithe is a form of worship. You’re not paying your tithe.”
  - Evident Example: Participant RHO Sermon 2: [1:08:55] “Praise is an expression of what we believe God is going to do. When we can praise God before God shows up that is exercising a faith that we know that God is able to do

exceedingly and abundantly above all that we can ask or think even before we see it.”

- The sermon content encourages listeners to seek personal encounters with God (Call to Worship).
  - Evident Example: Participant AAE Sermon 1: [38:37] “Maybe you need to start by praying and saying Lord, I believe but I know you called me more than just to believe, you called me to be your disciple, maybe that’s the prayer that you need.”
  - Evident Example: [18:03] “I’m expecting our hearts to be open and synchronized to the voice of God. God let me know you. Let me know this is you instead of me running me around saying, ‘What do you hear God saying about me? What do you hear God saying about me?’ How about you hear what God is saying to you for you!”
  - Partially Evident Example: Participant AUI Sermon 2: [Page 2] “To put it plainly, when we ask the Lord to speak to us, we have to respect Him and the request enough to listen. If he is REALLY your constant friend, your friend that sticks closer than a brother then you have to act like it.”
- The sermon content encourages listeners to develop a lifestyle of worship/worship as all of life (e.g., evangelism, recreation, entertainment, justice, vocation, Bible study, & prayer) (Call to Worship).
  - Evident Example: Participant EAK Sermon 2: [1:31:08] Change requires you to have a lifestyle of worship.

- Partially Evident Example: Participant EOL Sermon 3: [51:06] “Seeking God on purpose and not just for a purpose.... So it is a daily practice of getting alone with God” (regarding prayer).

### **Worship Principles**

The “Local Preacher Sermon Analysis Tool” analyzes each participant’s sermon to determine specific worship principles and the use of exact words related to worship used by the fifteen participants within the forty-four sermons. The sermon analysis tool includes forty-one worship principles. The worship principles are as follows:

- The wonder of God demands our worship of Him.
- The work of God demands our worship of Him.
- The wisdom of God demands our worship of Him.
- The wishes of God demand our worship of Him.
- Christian worship is biblical.
- Our multifaceted God loves multifaceted worship.
- Worship is our response to God's revelation, and God reveals Himself in His Word.
- Worship is formational.
- Christian worship is dialogic and relational.
- God is all about a worshipful relationship.
- Christian worship is expressive and formative.
- Christian worship is generous and an excellent outpouring of ourselves before God.
- Worship is Transformational.
- Authentic worship requires Holiness.
- Worship requires growth.
- Worship is a process.
- Worship involves a routine.
- Worship as a practice takes time.
- Real worshipers demonstrate personal integrity.
- Authentic worship requires a sacred space.
- Christian worship is covenantal.
- Worship brings God's revelation of His presence and who God is.
- Worship begins with obedience & it is central to worship.
- Worship involves and equals submission.
- God wants worship from repentant hearts.
- Brokenness is a prerequisite for genuine worship.
- True worshipers keep His Word, seek Him, hide the Word, proclaim His truth, rejoice in His statutes, meditate on His precepts, consider His ways, and delight in His Word.
- Worship requires a living sacrifice.
- Christian worship is Trinitarian.
- Jesus is our eternal object of worship.
- The Holy Spirit augments our worship.
- Christian worship is communal.
- Christian worship is hospitable, caring, and welcoming.
- Worship involves service.
- Worship is Missional and Reproducible.
- Authentic worship includes right actions toward others.
- Authentic worship embraces love for the people of God.
- Christian worship is in but not of the world.
- Genuine worship transcends time and culture.
- Worship is a part of God's cycle of life.
- Worship is a lifestyle.

The sermon analysis tool allows the researcher to identify the evidence of the worship principles as *Evident (Explicit)*, *Partially Evident (Implied/Inferred)*, or *Not Evident*. When analyzing the sermon content for evidence of any worship principles, the researcher was mindful of the following statement to maintain consistency across the forty-four sermons: Were the following principles explicitly stated or implied by the speaker, where the listeners would have

to make an inference that there is a connection to the worship principle? In addition, to support continuity by evaluating the evidence of worship principles within each sermon, the researcher documented specific statements that occurred by each speaker during the delivery of the sermon. The statements were inserted directly within the analysis tool underneath the appropriate worship principle. Table 4.11 provides examples of connecting actual sermon statements with specific worship principles.

**Table 4.11. Example of Worship Principles & Actual Sermon Statements**

<b>The sermon content included the following worship principles:</b>  <i>(Were the following principles explicitly stated or implied by the speaker, where the listeners would have to make an inference that there is a connection to the worship principle?)</i>	<b>Evident (Explicit)</b>	<b>Partially Evident (Implied or Inferred)</b>	<b>Not Evident</b>
<b>Worship is Missional and Reproducible.</b>  [8:32] ...and we all know that we're called to be disciples too. [18:48] They are to be disciples who make disciples. I want to tell you that's the reason that we're here today. [19:11] People who go out and continue to tell the good news and who follow the commands of Jesus, who live the life that they've been called to, that's what discipleship is all about.		X	
<b>Authentic worship includes right actions toward others.</b>  [35:05] Are you willing to take the time to be merciful and show kindness to those who don't deserve it? Because in the same way, you will be shown mercy.		X	

The forty-four sermons submitted by the participants yields the following results:

#### Principles Explicitly Evident

Two worship principles are explicitly evident within a sermon. The two principles are as follows:

- Worship involves service, explicitly evident in one sermon (2.3%).
  - Example: Participant EAK Sermon 2: [1:31:17] This idea here for worship is service rendered to God....I love the idea that if you are going to serve God then you are worshipping Him....For many of us, we don't understand that our service

changes our worship....See you worship differently when you serve God by serving others.

- Worship is a lifestyle, explicitly evident in one sermon (2.3%).
  - Example: Participant EAK Sermon 2: [1:31:08] “Change requires you to have a lifestyle of worship.”

### Principles Partially Evident

Thirty worship principles are partially evident among the forty-four sermons. The principles are as follows:

- God is all about a worshipful relationship, partially evident in 11 sermons (25%).
  - Example: Participant RAN Sermon 3: [1:21:20] “Our ultimate goal is to praise and worship God until we see Him....God always wants you to experience Him.”
  - Example: Participant EYA Sermon 3: [5:23] “So, if you’re called you going to be at that wedding feast. If you’re called you’re going to be there and you’re going to have relationship with the King.”
  - Example: Participant AAE Sermon 3: [8:10] “He’s giving a new set of standards, a new righteousness that He’s calling His disciples to and it’s to change their whole understanding of what it means to live in relationship with God....I’m talking to you about a new righteousness a secret righteousness where you’ll have an experience of God a relationship.”
- Worship is Missional and Reproducible, partially evident in 11 sermons (25%)
  - Example: Participant NAE Sermon 2: [23:27] “We believe not because we have seen his wounds or placed our hands within his side but because we have seen

Christ in the face of another who has also not seen or touched Christ but lives their life in a way such that Christ has been made present in our lives.”

- Example: Participant LOA Sermon 1: [1:06:03] “We are trying to live a life that’s pleasing to Him so that others would see God in us and they would be drawn to Him.”
- Example: Participant EAL Sermon 2: [44:27] “We are containers for God’s expansion mentality to expand our capacity to reach others God’s, to reach the lost.”
- Example: Participant AAN Sermon 2: [26:56] “That seed that He is bringing is not for you. That seed that He is planting in you is not for you. That seed He is planting in you is for someone else....Someone else is going to eat [and] going to be sustained. Somebody else is going to be able to live on the fruit that is produced by the seed that God is planting in you.”
- Worship involves service, partially evident in 9 sermons (20.5%).
  - Example: Participant NAE Sermon 3: [30:10] “We are meant to serve the vulnerable in their greatest time of need.”
  - Example: Participant AUI Sermon 1: [Page 2] “Much like the disciples, when Jesus calls us, we can be assured that there is some work involved in becoming a follower of Christ.”
  - Example: Participant EAL Sermon 2: [35:22] “See when you’re in the house of God, and you’re serving in the house of God and you may get tired sometimes, you have to understand you have been anointed for this. You have been equipped for this.”

- Example: Participant EYA Sermon 1: [1:02:34] “I’m a servant. Why? Because I serve the Lord, and I am determined to serve the Lord all the days of my life.”
- Example: Participant RHO Sermon 1: [1:10:40] “Everything that we do, everything how we serve, everything needs to be done out of and motivated by God’s Agape love.”
- Authentic worship includes right actions toward others, partially evident in 8 sermons (18.2%).
  - Example: Participant EAL Sermon 3: [9:33] “So people can see us and see our attitude is a humble attitude, it’s a gracious attitude, it’s a giving attitude, it’s a forgiving attitude, it’s a loving attitude.”
  - Example: Participant AAE Sermon 1: [35:05] “Are you willing to take time to be merciful and show kindness to those who don’t deserve it? Because in the same way, you will be shown mercy.”
  - Example: Participant OAO Sermon 1: [38:44] “Will you strive for justice and peace among all people and respect the dignity of every human being?”
  - Example: Participant AAO Sermon 2: [11:13] “When you see the condition of your friend, when you see the condition of our world, our churches, are you willing to do something radical? That’s my question.”
  - Example: Participant RHO Sermon 2: [1:06:02] “We are living in a time where the church needs to get out of the four walls of the building and take the battle to the streets.... It’s not in these walls of the church but the real fight is out there in the world. The fight for justice is out there.... The fight against racism and

immorality and sexism and classism and poverty is out there and the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ needs to begin to show up for the fight.”

- Christian worship is communal, partially evident in 7 sermons (15.9%).
  - Example: Participant NAE Sermon 2: [52:55] “It is in gathering together that Christ is made known.”
  - Example: Participant EOL Sermon 1: [57:22] “Corporate worship is necessary for our faith.”
  - Example: Participant AAN Sermon 1: [50:20] “The real church is there to aid you, to nurture you, to bring you to that point of perfection, [and] maturity.”
  - Example: Participant AHT Sermon 1: [35:45] “God says we have to interact with people.”
  - Example: Participant RHO Sermon 1: [1:01:51] “It is because of this precious faith in Jesus Christ that we can gather today as the family of God sharing in the *koinonia* or the fellowship—as we grow together, as we work together, as we worship together, and as we fulfill the calling of God laying on our lives.”
- Jesus is our eternal object of worship, partially evident in 6 sermons (13.6%).
  - Example: Participant AUI Sermon 1: [Page 2] “Oftentimes, when we answer the call to become disciples and follow Jesus, we, like the original twelve disciples, do so because we feel in our heart that it is what we should do.”
  - Example: Participant EOL Sermon 2: [ 45:35] “You know it is wonderful to know that when you’ve been to the feet of Jesus that’s the place where you belong.”

- Example Participant AAE Sermon 1: [20:03] “Jesus told His disciples to call people to a commitment to not just acknowledge the truth about Him but to a lifestyle where they would live as disciples.
- Example: Participant RHO Sermon 1: [59:58] “This faith is the same as that of Peter himself and all believers that have accepted Jesus Christ as their lord and savior; for we know that there is only one Lord one faith and one baptism.... It is because of our faith that precious faith in Jesus Christ we have access to the abundance of his Heavenly Kingdom both now and for eternity.”
- Worship is transformational, partially evident in 4 sermons (9.1%).
  - Example: Participant LOA Sermon 1: [1:05:15] How many of you have really made it your desire for God to be pleased with your life?...We recognize and thank God for bringing us out of what we were to where we are right now.”
  - Example: Participant EOL Sermon 3: [53:41] “God is about changing us and making us more in the expressed image.”
  - Example: Participant AAN Sermon 2: [44:47] The S-O-N is also the source for all this transformation to take place.”
- God wants worship from repentant hearts, partially evident in 4 sermons (9.1%).
  - Example: Participant LOA Sermon 2: [1:05:57] “We are to seek forgiveness from Him for those things that we’ve done in our life and the lies that we told.”
  - Example: Participant AAE Sermon 2: [24:27] “The new righteousness or the kingdom experience that He’s calling His disciples to have demands a purity of heart....We need to come to the awareness that we need the continual cleansing of Jesus.”

- Worship requires a living sacrifice, partially evident in 4 sermons (9.1%).
  - Example: Participant NAE Sermon 1: [32:35] “My question becomes quite simply, what are we willing to sacrifice?”
  - Example: Participant AAE Sermon 3: [41:43] “You have to die to yourself in order to live and experience this. You have to have a change in your life where you’re no longer the way you used to be and now you’re going to embrace life as I’m calling you to.”
- The wonder of God demands our worship of Him, partially evident in 3 sermons (6.8%).
  - Example: Participant OOR Sermon 1: [14:16] “How many of you ever prayed, ‘Lord I want your glory? Lord, show me your glory.’”
  - Example: Participant OOR Sermon 2: [1:37:58] “We have to mature to the place where we are totally captivated with just the presence and glory of God ... an opportunity to be an audience to His glory.”
- Worship is Formational, partially evident in 3 sermons (6.8%).
  - Example: Participant EOL Sermon 3: [54:32] “Prayer cleanses, prayer purifies, and prayer purges us.”
  - Example: Participant OOR Sermon 1: [33:11] “God is always working on us. Hallelujah! He is working on us in our good days.... He’s working on us when we’re obedient. He’s even working on us when we’re disobedient. The wheel keeps spinning.... We are His workmanship.”
- Authentic worship requires Holiness, partially evident in 3 sermons (6.8%).
  - Example: Participant LOA Sermon 1: [1:17:35] “God does not bless unholy living, unholy thinking, unholy behavior. God will not bless it.”

- Example: Participant RAN Sermon 3: [54:50] “The reason why we can serve God, we can worship God is through his son because His son made it possible for us not to look dirty....He wanted nothing to do with us, but the Cross has afforded us the opportunity in the fellowship with God.”
- Authentic worship requires a sacred space, partially evident in 3 sermons (6.8%).
  - Example: Participant EOL Sermon 3: [45:35] “There is an intimate place that God’s call us in prayer ... an inner room.”
  - Example: Participant AAE Sermon 3: [22:50] “ ... prayer personal private encounter with God. The followers of Jesus are to find a private space to be in prayer, an inner room for prayer, a secret place for prayer.”
- Worship involves and equals submission, partially evident in 3 sermons (6.8%).
  - Example: Participant LOA Sermon 1: [1:05:47] “Some of us are as good as we are because we have purpose for God to rule and reign in our lives.”
  - Example: Participant RAN Sermon 3: [1:08:10] “I have to do it in the knowledge that Jesus, that the Savior, our God in heaven has all power and authority over my life.”
- Worship brings God’s revelation of His presence and who God is, partially evident in 3 sermons (6.8%).
  - Example: Participant EOL Sermon 1: [1:06:32] “God wants to give us more upper-room experiences.”
  - Example: Participant OOR Sermon 2: [1:38:31] “It’s an honor to be in your presence. It’s an honor, hallelujah, to be in your surroundings.”

- Example: Participant RHO Sermon 1: [1:18:38] “God will begin to reveal some things to us that we’ve never seen before. God will begin to reveal himself to us in ways we’ve never seen Him. God will begin to draw closer to us because again Peter reminds us that God’s promises are true and they’re sure and God promised in His word that if we draw nigh to Him, He’s going to draw close to us.”
- Christian worship is hospitable, caring, and welcoming, partially evident in 3 sermons (6.8%).
  - Example: Participant AUI Sermon 1: [Page 6] “Galatians 6:2 does not say, carry my burdens and yours too; it does say carry each other’s burdens, and in THIS way you will fulfill the law of Christ.”
  - Example: Participant AAE Sermon 2: [40:32] “We know that when somebody sins against us we want to respond to them with anger [and] righteous indignation for what they’ve just done. Jesus is saying forgive them, be merciful, kind, turn the other cheek, give them your shirt, go the extra mile, love them as they don’t deserve.”
- The wishes of God demand our worship of Him, partially evident in 2 sermons (4.5%).
  - Example: Participant RAN Sermon 3: [1:01:55] “He says give me your allegiance.”
  - Example: Participant EOL Sermon 1: [1:10:03] “The invitation to gather does not come from somebody sending you a text, or somebody giving you a call, or somebody encouraging. The invitation is from God. The invitation to gather is an invitation from God who desires us to gather.”

- Worship is our response to God’s revelation, and God reveals Himself in His Word, partially evident in 2 sermons (4.5%).
  - Example: Participant EAK Sermon 1: [1:17:17] “We should feel hungry when we do not have a regular rhythm in practice of engaging with the word of God. Our souls should feel starved of something and the reason for that is because Scripture is the authority on our lives. Scripture is the thing that guides our lives.”
  - Example: Participant AAE Sermon 3: [6:46] “The more I get into God’s word the more I realize that God’s Word wants to get into me and take me places that I haven’t been before.”
- Christian worship is dialogic and relational, partially evident in 2 sermons (4.5%).
  - Example: Participant RAN Sermon 3: [1:24:57] “You will start wanting to hear God. You’ll start wanting to feel His presence all around you.”
  - Example: Participant EOL Sermon 3: [44:50] “A private prayer life is important to our relationship with God because prayer is simply nothing but dialog and communication to God....The more I dialog with God, the more I communicate with God, the more He gives me direction...the more He gives me the purpose and the more I can be able, hallelujah, to be strong in the Lord.”
- Christian worship is expressive and formative, partially evident in 2 sermons (4.5%).
  - Example: Participant EOL Sermon 2: [1:01:10] “No more dead worship. No more dead prayers.”
  - Example: Participant OOR Sermon 2: [1:05:42] “You have to be willing to express and become vulnerable unto God.”

- Worship involves a routine, partially evident in 2 sermons (4.5%) .
  - Example: Participant EOL Sermon 1: [55:00] “Gathering [regularly] is important for your maturity.”
  - Example: Participant EOL Sermon 3: [51:14] “The prayer closet causes us to have prayer habit.”
- Worship is a part of God’s cycle of life, partially evident in 2 sermons (4.5%).
  - Example: Participant LOA Sermon 1: [58:56] “There is nobody in here today that wherever you may be right now in the continuum of life, you never thought you’d be at this place, but God has a plan.”
  - Example: Participant RAN Sermon 3: [48:50] “So He planted worship as a direction to always have to be able to come back to Him, not just in the time of need but to remember that [in] all stages of life.”
- The work of God demands our worship of Him, partially evident in 1 sermon (2.3%).
  - Example: Participant EOL Sermon 2: [1:10:47] “It’s all about the glory, say that ‘It’s all about God receiving all, ALL, of the glory’” (referring to Jesus raising Lazarus).
- Worship requires growth, partially evident in 1 sermon (2.3%).
  - Example: Participant EAK Sermon 2: [1:05:20] “Now one way Christians can grow in Christ is to cultivate some spiritual disciplines. Prayer, fasting, service, study, and meditation of the Word are just a few practices Christians have used for centuries to cultivate spiritual growth.”

- Worship is a process, partially evident in 1 sermon (2.3%).
  - Example: Participant AUI Sermon 1: [Page 4] “The only way that we can demonstrate to people the goodness of God is for us to wind up in a situation where He gets to show off how good He is.”
- Worship begins with obedience & it is central to worship, partially evident in 1 sermon (2.3%).
  - Example: Participant OOR Sermon 1: [12:16] “Obedience connects us to everything that God has for us.”
- Brokenness is a prerequisite for genuine worship, partially evident in 1 sermon (2.3%).
  - Example: Participant OOR Sermon 1: [15:49] “We gotta be prepared to receive the grace of God and the truth of God, the good of God, and the judgment of God. Tell your neighbor I need it all.”
- The Holy Spirit augments our worship, partially evident in 1 sermon (2.3%).
  - Example: Participant RHO Sermon 3: [30:17] “If we are open to listen to what the Spirit is saying to the church, He will not speak tradition but he will speak truth. He will not speak opinion but He will speak truth. He will not speak feelings but he will speak truth...and the Comforter has come to reveal the truth of Christ and the truth of His church.”
- Authentic worship embraces love for the people of God, partially evident in 1 sermon (2.3%).
  - Example: Participant NAE Sermon 3: [30:10] “We are meant to serve the vulnerable in their greatest time of need. By doing so we open up our own vulnerabilities allowing the love of God to flow through us to someone else.”

- Worship is a lifestyle, partially evident in 1 sermon (2.3%).
  - Example: Participant EOL Sermon 1: [1:07:44] “Live the Word of God.”

### Principles Not Evident

Eleven worship principles are not explicitly evident or partially evident among the forty-four sermons. The principles which are 0% evident or partially evident are as follows:

- The wisdom of God demands our worship of Him.
- Christian worship is biblical.
- Our multifaceted God loved multifaceted worship.
- Christian worship is generous and an excellent outpouring of ourselves before God.
- Worship as a practice takes time.
- Real worshipers demonstrate personal integrity.
- Christian worship is covenantal.
- True worshipers keep His Word, seek Him, hide the Word, proclaim His truth, rejoice in His statutes, meditate on His precepts, consider His ways, and delight in His Word.
- Christian worship is Trinitarian.
- Christian worship is in but not of the world.
- Genuine worship transcends time and culture.

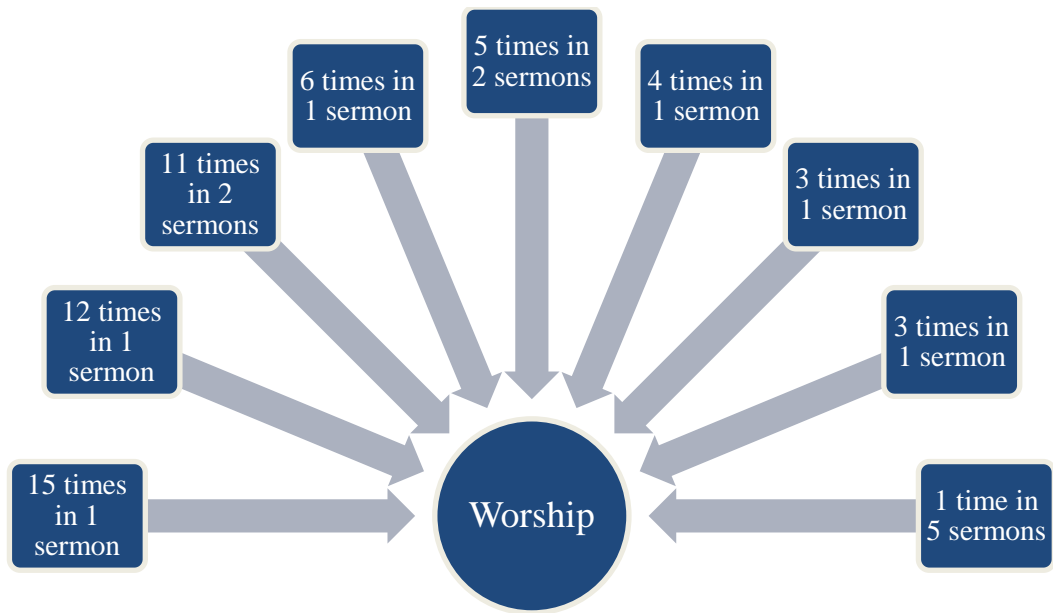
### **Use of Exact Terms Related to Worship**

The “Local Preacher Sermon Analysis Tool” analyzes each participant’s sermon to determine the use of exact words related to worship used by the fifteen participants within the forty-four sermons. The researcher reviewed the sermons for use of the following terms, or phrases:

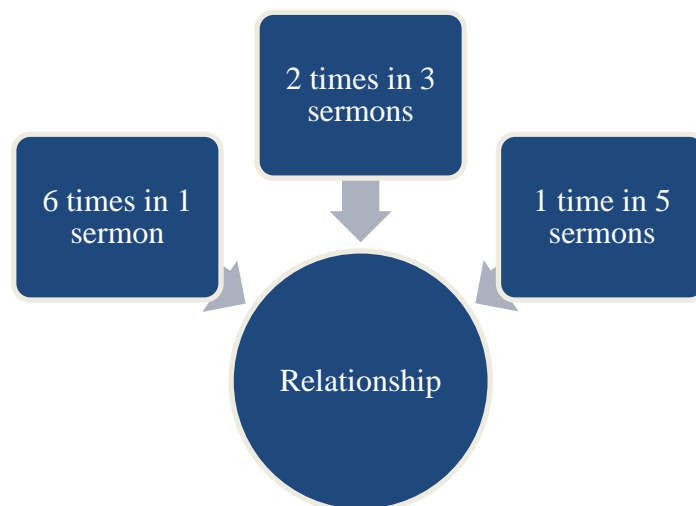
- Worship
- Corporate Worship
- Personal Worship
- Relationship (regarding God)
- Worship involves relationship/Worship is a Relationship (regarding God)
- Lifestyle
- Worship is a Lifestyle

The sermon analysis tool allows the researcher to identify the exact number of times a term or phrase is spoken by a participant within a particular sermon. Figure 10 reflects the use of the word *worship*.

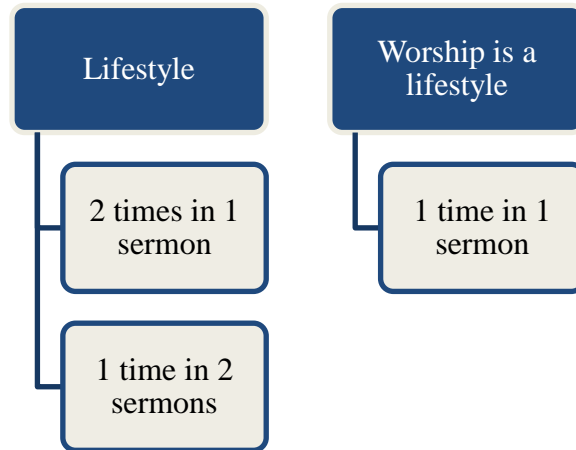
The phrase *corporate worship* is used 1 time in 1 sermon, and the phrase *personal worship* is not used in any of the sermons. Figure 4.8 depicts the use of the term *relationship* regarding God. The phrase, *worship involves relationship* or *worship is a relationship*, regarding God is not used in any of the sermons. Figure 4.9 displays the use of the term *lifestyle* and the use of the phrase, *worship is a lifestyle* within the sermons.



**Figure 4.7. Use of the Term Worship**



**Figure 4.8. Use of the Term Relationship**



**Figure 4.9. Use of Terms Related to Lifestyle**

### **Sermon Analysis Reflection Tool Analysis**

#### **Biblical Content Criteria**

Based on the sermon analysis data three sermon biblical content areas are found in 100% of the forty-four sermons. The strongest areas pertaining to biblical content include the following:

- The sermon content has a precise theme/topic.
  - Example: Participant LOA Sermon 1: Destiny, God’s Correction, Deliverance
  - Example: Participant EAK: God’s Purpose, Wisdom
  - Example: Participant AAO Sermon 1: Bitterness, Forgiveness
- The sermon content addressing personal piety, care of the soul, social justice, community life, and/or the institutional church:
  - Example: Participant AHT Sermon 1: [29:52] “You gotta have a passion or desire, something that you wanna do that is going to not only benefit you but make in turn when you’re obedient bless or be a benefit to somebody else.”

- Example: Participant RHO Sermon 1: [56:03] “It is our responsibility my brothers and sisters to disseminate that information to younger Christians. As the people of God, we should constantly encourage each other in the faith, bringing to the remembrance of the saints’ keys that we need to live a victorious life in Jesus Christ.”
- Example: Participant EYA Sermon 3: [1:06:32] “It takes the Word of God to cleanse us. It takes the Word of God to heal us and when saints who are called don’t get that they remain in a state, as far as I am concerned, just a little too long.”
- The sermon content encouraging development in the listener’s Christian walk:
  - Example: Participant OOR Sermon 3: [11:51] “You want to make a believer out of somebody, walk it out.”
  - Example: Participant RHO Sermon 1: [1:07:33] “It is that kind of power that God has made accessible to us. It is this power that has secured everything that we need to live a dynamic spiritual life and display Godly character and godliness in a fallen sinful world.”
  - Example: Participant NAE Sermon 2: [22:44] “Thomas responds saying my Lord and my God, this too should be our response as we so often find ourselves in Thomas’s shoes struggling to believe and remain faithful when the world around us often seems bent on its own destruction rather than resurrection and new life.”

The highest percentage for *Not Evident* is 68.2%. The majority of the sermon content does not encourage Bible study skills among the listeners. Participant LOA’s sermon statement reflects: [1:25:08] “When you get home, you got some reading to do. Read Isaiah chapter 59.”

Based on the results, examples like Participant LOA's sermon statement encouraging a personal Bible study moment need to be evident among more sermons.

For the researcher, the lack of Bible study encouraged in the sermons is surprising when independent Christian growth is rooted in Bible study. The researcher believes this could be due to the idea they may not feel the need to mention or encourage Bible study when delivering their sermons because of the possibility that their churches have weekly Bible study meetings or worship services. The same could also be true if the churches have several ministries that convene during the week and the format includes Bible study.

Overall the sermon biblical content is consistent when compared with the data results of the "Local Preachers Interview Reflection Tool." All of the *sermon biblical content focus* areas in the interview reflection tool reflect an affirmed *Yes* in more than 50% of each area. The sermon analysis reveals that six out of nine biblical content criteria exceed 50%. In addition to the three areas mentioned above, the criteria are the following:

- The sermon content relates to Godly principles/universal biblical theological principles (97.7%).
  - Example: Participant AHT Sermon 1: God's Vision, God's Calling
  - Example: Participant EYA Sermon 3: Predestination, The Work of Jesus Christ
  - Example: Participant AAN Sermon 2: Principle of Sowing
- The sermon content includes word pictures and storytelling to make the biblical text and the biblical world come alive in the mind of the listeners (77.3%).
  - Example: Participant RHO Sermon 1: Description of Peter nearing the end of his life; Description of Peter addressing false teachings

- Example: Participant AAN Sermon 2: Description of the 4 types of soil related to the parable; Description of the “farmer”—sower—scattering “seed” in the field
- Example: Participant NAE Sermon 2: Description of the disciples, their fear, after Christ was crucified; Description of the disciples seeing Christ after the resurrection; Description of Thomas’ belief
- The sermon content makes a demand upon the hearers and encourages listeners to respond/ elicit growth & change in response to hearing the Word of God (81.8%).
  - Example: Participant LOA Sermon 1: [1:21:38] “What I’m trying to get you to see is no matter what your past has been, if you turn your life to God, God can use you.”
  - Example: Participant EAK: [2:10:38] “The scripture should be our primary tool of hearing the voice of God not secondary. The Bible should be our primary tool of hearing the voice of God.”
  - Example: Participant RAN Sermon 3: [1:23:13] “I want to challenge you to spend moments ... moments with God will help to change the mind and help to cultivate the heart on how God intends us to be.”

#### Worship Content Criteria

The analysis of the forty-four sermons reveals that the highest *worship content* area reflects 15.9%. The worship criterion found to be *Evident* among seven sermons is the following:

- The sermon content encourages acts of worship.
  - Example: Participant RHO Sermon 1: [1:06:36] “It comes when we continuously invoke God’s presence through worship and praise.”

- Example: Participant RAN Sermon 3: [58:10] “Prayer, praise, teaching, and giving.”
- Example: Participant EOL Sermon 2: [55:21] “My worship is supposed to smell sweet. My praise is supposed to smell sweet. My service is supposed to smell sweet.”

The highest percentage for *Not Evident* represents two worship content areas among the sermons. At 97.7%, this means forty-three sermons are *Not Evident* in the following criteria:

- The sermon content includes a biblical definition of worship.
- The sermon content addresses worship service.

The overall results of the worship content criteria did not reflect the fact that at least nine participants indicated receiving seminary courses and/or training on worship theology and principles during their interviews. This leads the researcher to believe that the seminary courses and training may not have encouraged the preachers to include worship theology and principles in the development of their sermons.

Also, the researcher compared the results to the *worship content focus* area of the “Local Preachers Interview Reflection Tool.” The interview reflection tool data pertaining to worship included participants’ responses categorized as an affirmed *Yes*. Responses categorized as *Yes* more than 50% were in the following areas:

- The participant clearly articulates at least three worship principles without prompting from the interviewer (60%).
- The participant clearly articulates examples of elements in their sermons that support their congregation with developing a lifestyle of worship (53.3%).

In addition, the participants implied a connection to worship principles more than 50% within the following areas of the interview reflection tool:

- The participant expresses intentionally developing sermons to include worship principles (60%).
- The participant states at least three examples of explicitly connecting sermon themes to the theology & principles of worship (80%).

Based on the comparison between the sermons preached and what was shared during the interviews, there is a stark discrepancy. The researcher believes that each participant was truthful during their individual interviews. However, this is not reflected in the sermon analysis. The researcher believes that this is possibly due to preachers needing to be conscious of intentionally including worship theology and principles in their sermon planning process. The researcher is not advocating that this process should occur every time. Yet, the data reveals there is a need for the preachers to make a more concerted effort to be intentional about the inclusion of worship theology and principles in the delivery of their sermons.

### **Summary**

This chapter provides an overall representation of the data that was gathered and analyzed in three approaches:

- Individual interviews with fifteen participants
- Implementation of an initial interview reflection tool
- Implementation of a sermon analysis tool

The individual interviews enabled the researcher to ask essential questions that directly corresponded with the research study. The outcome provided narrative information in which the researcher coded, categorized, and identified themes based on the participants' responses.

The “Local Preachers Initial Interview Reflection Tool” enabled the researcher to quantify the narrative responses of the fifteen interviews and provide an overview of the interview responses explored through the lens of biblical content and worship content. This afforded the researcher the opportunity to determine the strengths and areas in need of growth when examining specific biblical-content criteria and worship-content criteria.

The “Local Preachers Sermon Analysis Tool” assisted the researcher with analyzing forty-four sermons to examine biblical content, worship content, and worship principles. As a result, the researcher was able to determine the dominant areas of biblical-content criteria, worship-content criteria, and worship principles shared through the efforts of delivering sermons to church congregations. The researcher was also able to compare the results of the sermon data with the interview reflection data to determine consistency with what was verbalized in the interviews versus what was actually preached based on specific biblical content and worship content.

The next chapter provides summaries of the findings and interpretations of the research findings. The following chapter also delineates further answers to the central question and sub-questions of the research study.

## **Chapter 5: Conclusion**

### **Introduction**

This chapter begins with a summary of the study, purpose, and procedures for this research study. The chapter provides an overview of the research findings and addresses the central question and sub-questions of the research study. Unexpected findings of the study are in this chapter, as well as a result of the data findings. This chapter further addresses the connections of the research findings to the literature review, validity, reliability, limitations, the implications of the research findings, and concludes with recommendations for future research.

### **Summary of the Study**

Today, the term *worship* is becoming more familiar with Christian believers who take the initiative to explore what God desires concerning reverencing Him and establishing a strong Christian walk with Him. The development of a Christian believer's familiarity with worship tends to take shape during corporate worship, mainly under the guidance of worship leaders or praise team members through acts of worship such as singing, clapping, or vocal utterances of praise. Yet, those experiences do not allow believers to strengthen their knowledge of studying God and His expectations for reverencing Him, or in other words, worship theology. Because of the significant congregational care afforded to individuals trained to preach the Word, it becomes necessary to consider pastors and preachers exposing their congregations to the theology of worship and its principles.

Upon extensively researching the literature about pastors and preachers intentionally exposing their congregations to the theology and principles of worship, a gap was revealed in the literature. Literature about the precise role of pastors and preachers actively leading the spiritual

growth of their congregations in the area of worship theology and principles does not exist. There is also a gap in the literature regarding the need for theological seminaries to impress upon ministers, pastors, or preachers, in general, to explore worship theology and principles to support their leadership roles in their local congregations. To experience this type of coursework, seminary students must choose worship courses unrelated to music or liturgy as electives for their degree completion plans. Based on the significance of worship in the life of a believer, this study is necessary to shed light on pastors and preachers embedding worship theology and principles in the delivery of their sermons to their congregations.

### **Summary of the Purpose**

This research study aims to identify what pastors and preachers communicate through their sermons that includes the theology and principles of worship to share with their congregations. The methods implemented help determine if there is a lack of theology and principles of worship in the training that pastors and preachers receive and in the development of their sermons. Furthermore, the study examines how often a pastor's or preacher's congregation might experience connecting the topic of a sermon preached with developing a lifestyle of worship.

### **Summary of the Procedures**

Overall, the qualitative study utilizes interviews with pastors and preachers as well as documents and videos submitted by the participants to gather data and address the central research question and sub-questions. Participants were recruited based on the researcher's church network and snowball sampling.

The researcher explored and ascertained data directly related to the research questions by implementing an exploratory research approach. The essential data-gathering method involved a primary source and a secondary source. The primary source was in-depth, semi-structured interviews held privately and virtually with participants. The researcher utilized a standard format for each interview known as the “Local Preachers Initial Interview Protocol,” which contained open-ended questions and was developed by the researcher. Zoom software recorded each interview to provide transcriptions of each interview. The researcher used inductive manual coding to identify specific categories and themes in the data-gathering process. In addition, following each interview, the “Local Preachers Initial Interview Reflection Tool” along with a matching Google Form of the reflection tool, both developed by the researcher, were completed to quantify the narrative information of each interview with a focus on biblical content and worship content criteria.

The secondary source included reviewing, gathering information, and analyzing sermons submitted by participants. Each sermon was analyzed using the “Local Preachers Sermon Analysis Tool” and a corresponding Google Form of the analysis tool, both created by the researcher. The analysis enabled the researcher to quantify the sermon content with a focus on biblical and worship content criteria and identify specific statements within each sermon to support answering the research study’s central question and sub-questions.

### **Summary of Findings Based on the Research Questions**

Sub-question one states, “What seminary courses/training for sermon preparation do pastors and preachers receive?” The research identifies the seminary courses or training for sermon preparation that pastors and preachers may receive. The data reveals that pastors’ and preachers’ coursework and training occur in multiple areas among educational institutions,

church associations, and local church organizations. Table 5.1 displays the specific topics experienced by the participants.

**Table 5.1. Seminary Courses & Training Topics**

Apologetics	Biblical Exposition	Biblical Languages: Hebrew & Greek	Chaplaincy	Church Administration
Church History	Doctrine/Soteriology	Exegesis & Eisegesis	Hermeneutics	Homiletics
Old & New Testaments	Public Speaking	Sermon Preparation, Outline, Points, Structure, Delivery	Spiritual Gifts	Spiritual Warfare
Study of Preachers & Preaching Styles	The Holy Spirit	Theology/Systematic Theology	Topography of Israel	

Sub-question two asks, “How do the seminary courses/training for sermon preparation reflect the theology and principles of worship?” When participants discussed their worship training experiences during the interviews, they did not share specific seminary courses and training topics with the researcher. The data reveals that although all participants received seminary courses or training, most preachers did not recall specific topics or courses related to worship theology and principles. This is primarily due to their courses’ focus and training on sermon planning, development, and delivery. In addition, most of the examples about worship training were of music. For participants who did experience seminary courses or training, which was less than half of the participants, table 5.2 displays the areas or subjects related to worship they mentioned during the interviews.

**Table 5.2. Areas & Subjects Related to Worship**

Approaching God in Worship	Biblical Theological Side of Worship	Black Church Music	Gregorian Chant	Hymns
Liturgy/Church Liturgy	Music Lining up with Doctrine	Personal Worship	Practical Things in Worship	The Heart of Worship
What Worship Is & What Worship Is Not	Worshiping God			

Overall, the data reveals that when compared to their seminary courses or training concerning the role of preaching and delivering sermons, further adequate preparation is necessary in the realm of pastors and preachers being able to fully understand the importance of worship theology and principles and the direct correlation to planning and delivering sermons.

Sub-question three examines, “What do pastors and preachers understand about the theology and principles of worship?” The data reveals that most preachers understand that worship theology and principles are directly connected to God, encompassing His desire for worship, His character, deity, and expectations for a relationship with His people. The participants also understand the importance of Jesus Christ and the work of the Holy Spirit when discussing the topic of worship. The participants are able to articulate essential areas that shape one’s understanding of worship in general. They know that worship relates to areas such as lifestyle, surrendering, the condition of one’s heart, spirit and truth, sacrifice, atonement, gratitude, thankfulness, humility, love, repentance, and giving. Their responses reveal a general knowledge of the term *worship* versus an in-depth understanding of the terms *worship theology* and the *principles of worship*. The data shows that preachers need to better understand that worship theology and principles are the foundation for successful engagement in worship with God.

Sub-question four inquires, “How do pastors and preachers ensure the theology and principles of worship are shared with the congregation through sermon delivery?” The data reveals that worship theology and principles are not shared often or explicitly through the delivery of sermons. During the interviews, the preachers provided several examples to demonstrate how they include worship theology and principles in the delivery of their sermons. However, most of their responses are broad generalizations rather than specific examples.

Furthermore, when speaking on specifically sharing principles of worship along with the sermon analysis, the data reveals that the sermon content represented by this study is essentially void of principles of worship. This means listeners often have to infer when a preacher highlights or connects their sermon content or points to specific worship principles. Based on the interviews, this seems due mainly to the participants not receiving coursework or training to highlight this necessity when planning and delivering their sermons. Overall, the data reveals that preachers need to contribute more effort to share worship theology and principles with their congregations.

The central question of the research is, “What do pastors and preachers communicate about the theology and principles of worship to their congregations in their sermons?” Based on the interviews and the sermon analysis, the data reveals, for the most part, the communication of what God expects regarding worship and the foundational principles that support worship need to be explicitly communicated to their congregations. Broad statements in the sermons address essential topics such as *faith, deliverance, the gospel, repentance, love, God’s purpose, and discipleship*. However, the connection of such vital topics to God’s expectations for worship is not explicitly shared, necessitating listeners to create their own connections or make inferences that what is shared directly relates to the listener’s Christian walk for developing a lifestyle of worship.

### **Summary of Unexpected Findings**

The analysis of the initial interviews and the evaluation of the sermon content reveal an unexpected finding. The “Local Preacher Initial Interview Tool” and “Local Preacher Sermon Analysis Tool” provide worship content data. The interview tool captures data related to the one-on-one interviews with the participants responding to worship content questions. For instance, a

participant indicating explicitly connecting sermon themes to the theology and principles of worship appears within the chart. The sermon analysis tool evaluates the presence of worship content spoken by the preacher during the actual delivery of a sermon. For example, the sermon content encourages reverence (i.e., worship) of God. When comparing the data of the two tools, the data reveals a discrepancy between the *Yes* and *Response Implies a Connection to a Worship Principle Though Not Explicitly Stated* columns of the initial interview tool and the *Evident* and *Partially Evident (Implied or Inferred)* columns of the sermon analysis tool.

The data in the initial interview tool indicates 80% or twelve participants implied or indicated clearly examples of elements in their sermons supporting their congregation with developing a lifestyle of worship. When analyzing the sermons for content that encourages listeners to develop a lifestyle of worship or worship is all of life, the data reveals 9.1% or four sermons demonstrate this criterion as *partially evident* or *evident*, with *evident* being represented by just one sermon. The low percentage of sermons does not reflect the high percentage of participants who verbalized specific elements of their sermons support congregations in developing a lifestyle of worship.

The initial interview tool depicts 93.3% or fourteen participants implied or indicated clearly at least three examples of explicitly connecting sermon themes to the theology and principles of worship. The sermon analysis reveals that 68.1% or 30 sermons contain content related to worship theology/principles, with the largest data being 63.6% of sermons or 28 sermons being *partially evident* that the criteria are implied or inferred by the speaker. With fourteen participants connecting their sermon themes to theology and principles of worship, the sermon analysis should have indicated a higher number of sermons.

Overall, the worship content criteria during the interviews reveal most of the criteria as *Yes* or *Implied* ranging from 53.3% to 80%. In contrast, the worship content criteria among the sermons show that most criteria are *Not Evident*, with percentages ranging from 75% to 100%.

### Findings Connected to the Literature Review

#### Theology and Theological Education

In the source, *Theology, Church and Ministry: A Handbook for Theological Education*, the contributing authors share that a strong background in theology enables a minister or pastor to deliver a biblically sound sermon.<sup>1</sup> “Preaching must rest on a theological and apologetic foundation....Theology does not primarily exist to teach us what to believe but rather to equip and enable us to articulate why we believe what we believe.”<sup>2</sup> When reviewing the forty-four sermons, every sermon was biblically sound. The data reveals that sermon content that relates to godly principles and/or universal biblical theological principles is 97.7% *evident*, or 43 sermons, and 2.3% *partially evident*, or 1 sermon. Also, Daniel Akin, author of the chapter “Theology for Church, Worship, and Ministry,” mentions theological schools producing ministers who are pastor-theologians.<sup>3</sup> These pastor-theologians address specific axioms, including the gospel, discipleship, and the great commission. During the interviews and within the sermons, substantial evidence supports the participants as knowledgeable of several axioms presented by Akin. Several preachers in this study often mention the gospel, discipleship, and references to the Great Commission to support their answers during the initial interviews and in the biblical

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<sup>1</sup> Robert R. Smith, “Theology, Preaching, and Pastoral Ministry” in *Theology, Church, and Ministry: A Handbook for Theological Education*, ed. David S. Dockery, (Nashville, TN: B & H Academic, 2017), 340.

<sup>2</sup> Smith, “Theology, Preaching, and Pastoral Ministry,” 340.

<sup>3</sup> Daniel L. Akin, “Theology for Church, Worship, and Ministry” in *Theology, Church, and Ministry*, ed. David S. Dockery, (Nashville, TN: B & H Academic, 2017), 390-91.

content focus of their sermons. The coding process captured the participants' interview responses along with the sermon analysis tool. For example, the sermon content that presents emotional experiences of the gospel is represented by 45.5%, or 20 sermons *evident*, and 2.3%, or 1 sermon, is *partially evident* with this criterion.

Justo L. Gonzalez references Friedrich Schleiermacher's areas of study for theological education in *The History of Theological Education*. The areas relate to philosophical theology, historical theology, and practical theology.<sup>4</sup> Based on the participants' descriptions of their classes and training experiences, their theological education represented these areas, especially when sharing their thoughts and experiences during the one-on-one interviews. During the delivery of their sermons, the preachers made references to their Christian faith, the life of the church, believers' complete dependence on God, and their role and church members' role in the Christian community.

Gonzalez also highlights the possibility of students experiencing deficiencies in their theological education and training. Pertaining to a deficiency, he mentions the importance of students being teachers, priests, and pastors. Gonzalez mentions, "Since clergymen have to be teachers, priests, and pastors, their training has to be directed toward those functions. As prospective teachers, students must study and learn how to proclaim the Word of God. As future priests, they must know how to direct worship and how such worship relates to the process of sanctification. And as pastors in formation, they must know how to lead the faithful and how to serve others."<sup>5</sup> Although the data illustrates the participants have strong results and knowledge regarding proclaiming the Word of God, the study's findings reveal a deficiency. Several

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<sup>4</sup> Justo L. Gonzalez, *The History of Theological Education* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2015), 106-7.

<sup>5</sup> Gonzalez, *The History of Theological Education*, 114.

participants admitted the shortcomings of their theological education, including the subject of worship and worship theology and principles. The results do not provide information on the participants being faithful and serving others as leaders. That was not a focus area within this research study.

*A Curriculum Design Manual for Theological Education* shares thirty-six institutional goals for learners, including bible teaching, theology, missions, ministry, and the role of music in worship. The author, Leroy Ford, also shares outcomes for students to demonstrate their understanding of a particular educational goal. The goals include the principles of basic sermon preparation, the fundamentals of sermon construction, and the varieties of biblical preaching.<sup>6</sup> The coded statements from the one-on-one interviews generated specific categories that matched the majority of institutional goals except for one goal—Bible teaching, which is connected to Bible study. Among the participants, this area needs improvement when examined within the forty-four sermons. The sermon content that encourages biblical study skills is *evident* in 29.5%, or thirteen sermons, and *partially evident* in 2.3%, or within one sermon for this criterion.

The literature review examines the Association of Theological Schools and degree completion plans of four top accredited institutions: Moody Theological Seminary, Fuller Theological Seminary, Princeton Theology Seminary, and Westminster Theological Seminary. The schools' degree completion plans include course topics such as Church History, Old Testament, New Testament, and Systematic Christian Theology. The data reveals the majority of the participants, eleven out of fifteen preachers, attended an accredited institution. During the interviews, the data revealed that the participants' certification and degree programs included the same course topics, similar to the top theological institutions. More specifically, the data shows

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<sup>6</sup> Leroy Ford, *A Curriculum Design Manual for Theological Education: A Learning Outcomes Focus* (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1991), 104.

that *Old Testament*, *New Testament*, and a tie with the subjects *Homiletics*, *Hermeneutics*, and *Theology/Systematic Theology* are the top three topics participants mention during the initial interviews as courses or training received to prepare, write, and deliver sermons.

### Worship

Authors Zack Hicks, John D. Witvliet, Greg Scheer, and Ralph P. Martin make a case for defining *worship* and acknowledge that defining the term *worship* is challenging for the church body. Furthermore, in *The Dynamics of Corporate Worship*, the author, Vernon Whaley, shares that church leadership and congregations need to be aware of more than just the definition of worship. He introduces the term *ministering worship* and states, “It defines the service (ministry) that I do unto the Lord (worship, love, exalt, and adore him) and that which God allows me to provide for his people (leading, teaching, and practicing principles of worship with the congregation).”<sup>7</sup> He advocates that understanding both the meaning of worship and biblical worship principles supports the spiritual growth of believers in their personal and corporate worship. Understanding worship and biblical principles of worship ultimately shapes leaders and congregations in developing a theology of worship. The findings reveal an issue with defining worship and a need for leaders to better understand worship theology and principles. When participants describe their understanding of worship theology and principles, the data indicates that fifteen participants provided seventy responses during the interviews. The researcher coded thirty-one categories and four separate themes related to participants attempting to define or describe the terms *worship theology* and *worship principles*. To further support the issues raised by the authors, among the forty-four sermons analyzed, the sermon content demonstrates that a

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<sup>7</sup> Vernon M. Whaley, *The Dynamics of Corporate Worship* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2001), 160.

biblical definition of worship is *evident* in 0%, within 0 sermons, and *partially evident* in 2.3%, or within one sermon for this criterion.

### Worship Principles

To comprehend and acknowledge essential worship principles that shape and provide a foundation for worship theology, a person needs to understand worship theology. *The Worship Sourcebook*, written by staff members of the Calvin Institute of Christian Worship, provides nine worship principles that contribute to planning corporate worship.<sup>8</sup> *Called to Worship* by Vernon Whaley shares thirty-five biblical worship principles at the end of each chapter, in a separate “Principles of Worship” section, that supports worship and the spiritual formation of believers. Whaley states, “I will offer an abstract to guide you in a lifestyle of worship, as well as practicable approaches that you can use in your time with God. These are meant to prepare you for eternal worship.”<sup>9</sup>

Additionally, the source, *The Great Commission to Worship* by David Wheeler and Vernon Whaley, connects five principles to the development of a lifestyle of worship, with one principle being that *worship is missional*.<sup>10</sup> They mention, “In one true sense, our blueprint for Great Commission worship may serve as a set of outcomes that help us stay focused on our calling—worship evangelism. This model thus serves as a guideline for what all Great Commission worship should accomplish in the hearts of believers. That is because Great

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<sup>8</sup> Faith Alive Christian Resources, *The Worship Sourcebook*, ed. John D. Witvliet (Grand Rapids, MI: Faith Alive Christian Resources, The Calvin Institute of Christian Worship, Baker Books, 2013), 16-17.

<sup>9</sup> Vernon M. Whaley, *Called to Worship: The Biblical Foundations of Our Response To God’s Call* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2009), xvii.

<sup>10</sup> David Wheeler and Vernon M. Whaley, *The Great Commission to Worship: Biblical Principles for Worship-Based Evangelism* (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2011), 51.

Commission worship is formational, transformational, relational, missional, and reproducible.”<sup>11</sup>

The data reveal significant room for growth among the participants to understand and explicitly embed worship principles in the planning and delivery of their sermons. Based on the analysis of the forty-four sermons, the findings reveal there are two worship principles out of a possible forty-two worship principles *evident* in two sermons, which are *worship involves service*, explicitly evident in one sermon (2.3%) and *worship is a lifestyle*, explicitly evident in one sermon (2.3%). The top three criteria denoted as *partially evident* among the sermons are the worship principles, *God is all about a worshipful relationship*, which is partially evident in 11 sermons (25%); *worship is missional and reproducible*, which is partially evident in 11 sermons (25%); and *worship involves service*, which is partially evident in 9 sermons (20.5%).

### Sermon Preparation

In *The Witness of Preaching*, Thomas G. Long explains three areas for sermon preparation. They are biblical exegesis, the basic form of a sermon, and the delivery of the sermon. He explains that a sermon needs to have a focus and a function.<sup>12</sup> Long mentions that a sermon makes a demand upon the hearers. The article “A Paradigm for Preachers” by Timothy Warren encourages the same approach: listeners need to be inspired to change as a response to hearing a sermon. Warren shares, “The third section goes from the theological to the homiletical product. This is the sermon delivered to the listeners. The final section in the entire preaching process involves not only the preacher but also the listeners, whose lives demonstrate change for having heard and responded to the sermon. The process is not completed until God’s people

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<sup>11</sup> Wheeler and Whaley, *The Great Commission to Worship*, 49.

<sup>12</sup> Thomas G. Long, *The Witness of Preaching*, 2nd ed. (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2005), 108.

think and act differently for having heard the Word expounded.”<sup>13</sup> When analyzing the sermons for biblical content, the findings demonstrate this is a strength among the preachers. The sermon content makes a demand upon the hearers and encourages listeners to respond and/or elicit growth and change in response to hearing the Word of God is 81.8%, or thirty-six sermons are *evident*, and 2.3%, or one sermon is partially evident for this criterion.

In *Shaping the Claim*, three principles relate to the delivery of a sermon. Marvin A. McMickle discusses Cleophus LaRue’s model, where a sermon is devoted to areas such as personal piety, care of the soul, social justice, community life, and the institutional church.<sup>14</sup> Among the preached sermons, Cleophus LaRue’s is strongly evident, with 100% of the sermons reflecting the criterion: *the sermon content addresses personal piety, care of the soul, social justice, community life, and the institutional church*. He further encourages preachers to offer a range of emotional experiences related to the gospel. There is evidence among the findings indicating that this area needs improvement. The criterion, *the sermon content presents emotional experiences of the gospel*, is found in 45.5%, or twenty sermons as *evident*, and 2.3%, or one sermon has this as *partially evident*.

Preaching style is important, and McMickle recommends preachers use word pictures and storytelling in his book, *Living Water for Thirsty Souls: Unleashing the Power of Exegetical Preaching*. He advises:

As a preacher and teacher, I do not simply try to tell something to people. I try to present the Gospel story in as graphic and visual a manner as possible....One of the most effective ways to accomplish this is to employ an epigrammatic preaching style. This means that the preacher makes use of word pictures, engages in storytelling, and makes the biblical text

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<sup>13</sup> Timothy S. Warren, “A Paradigm for Preaching,” *The Bibliotheca Sacra* 148, no. 592 (1991): 473.

<sup>14</sup> Marvin A. McMickle, *Shaping the Claim: Moving from Text to Sermon* (Minneapolis: MN Fortress Press, 2008), 72-3.

and the biblical world come alive in the mind of the listeners through character development and commentary on the actions being discussed in the text.<sup>15</sup>

This is another area of strength among the preachers based on the submitted sermons. The sermon content that includes *word pictures and storytelling to make the biblical text and the biblical world come alive in the mind of the listeners* as a criterion is evident in 77.3%, or within 34 sermons.

### **Validity of the Findings**

The researcher utilized more than one approach to validate the research study's findings. *Member checking* occurred with the participants after the initial interviews. The researcher emailed each participant a summary report called *Interview & Sermon Analysis Findings* (see Appendix O). The report provided each participant with a summary of the initial interview findings, a summary of the sermon analysis findings, a list of sermon content worship principles, and additional notes. Research participants had three options to reflect and respond to the research findings by scheduling a Zoom meeting, phone call, or emailing the researcher their comments, thoughts, or questions. As a result, participants provided their comments or thoughts via email and a phone call with the researcher. None of the participants indicated the findings of the interviews or sermons as inaccurate. Also, the "Local Preacher Follow-up Interview Protocol" was not utilized because the participants did not request a Zoom follow-up interview. Five participants provided feedback pertaining to their summary report. The feedback is as follows:

- Participant OOR writes, "I saw the results and they were great. I think more of us should get our messages evaluated. Iron sharpens iron."

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<sup>15</sup> Marvin A. McMickle, *Living Water for Thirsty Souls: Unleashing the Power of Exegetical Preaching* (King of Prussia, PA: Judson Press, 2001), 188.

- Participant EAL communicates, “I don’t have anything in particular but would like to talk about it a little.”
- Participant EOL writes, “So wow! What an impressive review! Although we depend solely on the Holy Spirit as we plan and deliver sermons, seeing a reflection really helps us to remain focused and targeted on our assignment as ministers of the gospel.”
- Participant RHO composes, “What a pleasure and blessing to have this privilege to participate in this important work for the Kingdom of God....Thank you for the opportunity. It was such an enjoyable experience and thank you for your kind words and affirmation.”
- Participant AAO scribes, “Received, thank you. I have no additional questions or comments at this time ... praying God’s richest blessings over all that you are doing ... May His grace and favor rest on you!”

The researcher clearly distinguishes the data and reflections between the interviews and the sermon analysis as a second approach to validating the findings. The researcher’s interpretations and reflections pertaining to the interviews are clearly labeled as *Interviewer’s Additional Observations/Notes (Body language/Level of Comfort Answering the Questions/Participant Spontaneous Feedback)* at the bottom data table on the “Local Preacher Interview Protocol” document for each interview. The researcher’s reflections or impressions of the sermon analysis are labeled as *Additional Notes* at the bottom of the last data table on the “Local Preachers Sermon Analysis Tool” document for each sermon.

The third approach to validating the findings was the researcher documenting all data, including evidence to support the data as well as evidence that contradicts the unexpected

findings in this research study. This appears in chapter 4: Research Findings and chapter 5: Conclusion of this research study.

A peer debriefer who meets the qualifications for selection by the researcher is the final and fourth approach to validate the research findings. The peer debriefer assisted the researcher by reviewing portions of the researcher's created protocols, tools, Google forms, summary reports, and initial coding efforts. The peer debriefer asked questions that related to the research methods and findings and provided feedback to ensure the researcher maintained transparency with the data findings. The peer debriefer asked the researcher the following questions:

- Did you know any of these people in advance (referring to the research participants)?
- Is there any possibility that any of these participants told you what you wanted to hear, or maybe exaggerated their responses in order to sound more pastor-like?
- Is this the first one that you're doing right now (referring to coding)?
- Are you planning to go to the next interview and see what things pop up there (referring to coding)?
- How many times are you planning to read each of these (referring to the interview transcripts)?
- Are you planning to report the dissent (referring to themes)?
- Who chose the sermons?
- Did they do it before or after the interview (submission of the sermons)?
- If they said it in a different way, full life worship, or something, would that be counted here (referring to the use of specific terms in the sermons)?
- Have you received responses from this (referring to the summary reports)?

The researcher's responses to the peer debriefer's questions are in the document *Peer Debriefer Questions, Comments, & Responses Transcript* (see Appendix P). The peer debriefer provided the researcher with concluding feedback and shared, "I think this is really well done. It is well thought out. So as far as the peer debriefing goes, I think you thought through your bases, and you really are trying to mitigate any personal bias."

### **Reliability of the Findings**

The researcher used Zoom software to transcribe each initial interview and safeguard the data's reliability. However, the researcher utilized the Zoom video recordings to ensure the accuracy of the transcripts for each interview and the peer debriefer session with the researcher. Secondly, the researcher ensured all procedures for coding each interview were consistent. Also, the researcher maintained digital and handwritten coding notes reflecting participant individual coded data, color-coded participant statements, and participant-specific data clearly defined for the researcher. This occurred to maintain consistency when gathering and evaluating the data to determine findings. Lastly, all the steps of the research procedures appear in chapter 3: Methodology, chapter 4: Research Findings, and are summarized in chapter 5: Conclusion.

### **Limitations Based on the Findings**

A limitation of this research study could be the actual research questions. For data gathering, the focus was on the seminary courses and training the pastors and preachers received, along with the content of their submitted sermons for analysis. Including an additional interview question as part of the study could have helped garner additional details pertaining to the participants' experiences with courses and training specifically designed for worship. Participants were asked, "What specific seminary classes or church organization training did you receive on worship theology and the principles of worship?" A follow-up question such as, "What specific subjects related to worship theology and principles have you studied by attending workshops or conferences, or through your own independent learning?" The purpose of the study was to discover what pastors and preachers communicate through their sermons that includes the theology and principles of worship to share with their congregations. Currently, there is a gap in

the literature regarding theological education, worship, and sermon preparation to influence pastors and preachers to embed worship theology and principles in their pastoral training and sermon preparation. This is why the focus of the participants in the study centered on the local preachers' educational institution attendance, church association training, and/or local church organization training.

The number of participants, local residences, initial interviews, and sermon submissions could be seen as narrow or limited for the purpose of this research study. Specifically for this study, there were fifteen participants, fifteen initial interviews, and zero follow-up interviews at the participants' discretion and availability. The participants provided forty-four sermons ranging from twenty-seven minutes to one hour and ten minutes in length or 19.8 hours to 51.3 hours of reading and viewing time for the researcher. The researcher's goal for the number of participants was initially twenty-five, which would have produced twenty-five interviews and seventy-five sermons for analysis as part of the study. The researcher's goal was to have participants that represented four states: Delaware, New Jersey, Maryland, and Pennsylvania due to the option of interviews occurring in-person or virtually through Zoom. In an attempt to meet the goals, the researcher contacted thirty-three possible participants via email and phone, which would have increased the number of participants, interviews, sermon submissions, and local residences. The limitation of the number of participants was due to the research study requirements and the data-gathering process. Also, the limitation of the local residences of the pastors and preachers was largely due to accessibility to conduct in-person interviews at the preference of the participants. To expound, the eighteen participants that were not a part of this study did not respond to the researcher's invitations, did not reside in one of the four states, did not have at least three years of preaching experience, and did not have at least three sermons in either script or video form

ranging from the years 2021 to 2023.

Another limitation of the research study could be the researcher's presence during the initial interviews impacting the participants' responses. The participants in this research study currently represent leadership roles in their church congregations. They are pastors, elders, ministers, and deacons in their respective local congregations. Based on their current roles, participants may have felt the need to project affirmative responses to the interview questions versus being willing to candidly admit a lack of knowledge or experience in a particular area. For instance, one of the interview questions asked the participants to describe their understanding of the theology and principles of worship. Due to their leadership roles, participants may not have felt comfortable admitting to the researcher their lack of knowledge in this area. They may have also had concerns about whether the recorded interview, research documentation, and the published dissertation would completely support their responses as being fully anonymous and confidential. Yet, the research study required that participants have experience with delivering sermons to church congregations. Without this requirement, the purpose of the study would have been impacted. As a result, the population for the study needed to include individuals with leadership roles in their churches and ministries.

Additionally, the participants' demographics relating to church denomination and sex could be a limitation of this research study. The participants were predominantly male, and the largest church denomination was Non-Denominational. This outcome could be interpreted as needing a more balanced representation of the targeted population for the research study. The initial goal was for participants to represent Baptist, Pentecostal, and Non-Denominational church denominations and be either male or female. The thirty-three participants invited to participate in the research study encapsulated male and female participants who represented

Baptist, Pentecostal, and Non-Denomination church denominations. Also, the researcher encouraged snowball sampling among the confirmed participants. This resulted in the representation of the Episcopal denomination in the study. The researcher made efforts to obtain a balanced representation of the targeted population; however, the researcher did not have control over the demographic representation of the participants who confirmed their willingness to participate in the research study. The researcher did have control over whether or not the participants met the initial requirements to be a Christian believer, have formal training in writing and delivering sermons, have at least three years of experience delivering sermons, and have a local residence in Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey, or Pennsylvania.

Finally, the researcher's understanding of the worship theology and principles as appropriate to this research study, researcher biases, and the trustworthiness of the data could be seen as limitations to the study. There is the possibility for criticism of the subjectivity inherent in interpretive work in that no research is free of the researcher's biases, assumptions, and personality. There is the belief that researchers cannot separate themselves from the activities in which researchers are intimately involved.<sup>16</sup> In designing and implementing the methods of this research study, the researcher made every effort to be intentional about decreasing potential barriers to the validity and reliability of this qualitative study.<sup>17</sup> The researcher ensured that the goals of the research study were suitable and reasonable and that the population sample met the research study requirements. An appropriate literature search and review occurred, although the influences for pastors and preachers embedding theology and principles of worship in their

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<sup>16</sup> W. Sword, "Accounting for Presence of Self: Reflections on Doing Qualitative Research," *Qualitative Health Research* 9, no. 2 (January 1999): 277.

<sup>17</sup> Danica Hays and Annaliese A. Singh, *Qualitative Inquiry in Clinical and Educational Settings* (New York, NY: Guilford Press, 2014) 198.

pastoral training and sermon preparation presented a gap in the literature on this topic. The researcher designed a central question, sub-questions, and interview questions that were answerable. Furthermore, the researcher described the data findings accurately and included a representation of dissents and unexpected findings. The researcher intentionally utilized multiple data sources such as artifacts, transcripts, interview notes, documentation tools, and researcher observations. The research findings include data that revealed patterns and themes. Lastly, the use of the researcher's initial interview reflection tool and the sermon analysis tool as well as the creation of Google Forms to quantify the narrative data serve to decrease opportunities for researcher biases and lend credibility to the data findings of this research study.

### **Implications of the Research Findings**

The implications of the research findings suggest a need for educational institutions, church associations, and local church organizations to evaluate their degree completion plans, curricula, and the scope and sequences of their programs through the lens of worship theology and principles. This evaluation would occur with the inclusion of biblical theology and principles, which tends to already exist in the coursework and training. To conduct the evaluation to embed worship theology and principles into future degree completion plans and curricula, along with the scope and sequences of current programs, would further support the understanding of what is common to seminary educators. Seminary educators expect that:

Students will, through their courses, integrate various cognitive, relational, spiritual, and professional understandings and skills. These clergy educators know that for students, developing the capacity to integrate skills and concepts in this way involves increasing depth and breadth of understanding, expanding their ability to see connections among things typically hidden from view and to recognize the relevance of the subject to their lives and work, and learning to attend simultaneously to the multiple and often competing

tasks integral to the work of clergy—tasks that originate in texts, traditions, ideologies, practices, congregations, and larger publics.<sup>18</sup>

Knowing this expectation exists gives more cause to encourage Christian educators and leaders who are training pastors and preachers to work toward producing future Christian leaders who are well-rounded in their biblical theology and beliefs as well as their worship theology and beliefs. Currently, most of the worship experiences for pastors and preachers enrolled in Christian leadership programs that include sermon preparation and delivery are experiencing the subject of worship as generally reflected by its application with music and church liturgy. Yet, there is an immediate need for educational programs, church associations, and local church organizations to assess and improve their course offerings and training to include specific content that exposes pastors and preachers to worship theology and principles. Their course and training experiences would include the importance of aligning biblical theology and principles with worship theology and principles. This approach would further support pastors and preachers in planning and delivering sermons that address worship theology and principles, thereby fostering a greater understanding of worship among church congregants when listening to their sermons.

The implications of the research findings further suggest that pastors and preachers need to intentionally pursue a greater understanding of worship theology and principles. Pastors and preachers tend to have a general understanding of worship. However, digging deeper into the biblical concept of worship theology and principles tends to present a challenge. For now, this is through no fault of their own because pastors and preachers rely heavily on the coursework and training of educational institutions, church associations, and local church organizations to

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<sup>18</sup> Charles R. Foster, et al., *Educating Clergy: Teaching Practices and Pastoral Imagination* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2006), 25.

provide adequate training and experiences to support their role and responsibilities with planning and delivering sermons that are theologically and biblically based.

As an alternative to the lack of in-depth preparation and learning pertaining to worship theology and principles, it behooves pastors and preachers to independently pursue increasing their knowledge of worship theology and principles and ensuring their sermons reflect biblical theology and principles as well as worship theology and principles. The growth and understanding of their congregation's ability to develop a lifestyle of worship is in part dependent upon the work of the pastors and preachers to expand their knowledge and apply the information learned in the execution of their sermons. This is important because "Where the Word of God is taught correctly, the opportunity exists for the informed worshipers to respond to God with their heart and mind, with affection and thought. In John 4:23, Jesus tells the woman at the well what kind of worshippers the Father is looking for when He says, 'True worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth.' The Word of God doesn't merely stir affections, but informs minds as well,"<sup>19</sup> writes Michael Bleeker.

Lastly, in addition to pastors and preachers being proactive about increasing their knowledge of worship theology and principles, the implications of the research further suggest that they need to explicitly include and share worship principles when planning and delivering their sermons to congregations. "When people attend church, they may respond to the preacher like a novice at the opera. They have never been told what a sermon is supposed to do. Commonly, many listeners react to the emotional highs. They enjoy the human interest stories, jot down a catchy sentence or two, and judge the sermon a success if the preacher quits on time.

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<sup>19</sup> Michael Bleeker, "The Worship Leader and Scripture," in *Doxology & Theology: How the Gospel Forms the Worship Leader*, ed. Matt Boswell (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2013), 46.

Important matters, such as the subject of the sermon, may escape them completely.”<sup>20</sup> This is why pastors and preachers need to be conscious of determining how their sermon themes and content connect to specific worship principles and explicitly share the identified principles when they deliver their sermons.

On average, preachers will have delivered a thirty-minute sermon and in that entire time a worship principle has not been explicitly shared. For example, when discussing the concept of drawing near to God as a sermon theme and biblical principle, James 4:8-10 states, “Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded. Lament and mourn and weep! Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to gloom. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up” (New King James Version). As a worshiper, a listener may ask why one should draw near to God, cleanse their hands, purify their hearts, and humble themselves. Bearing this in mind, with sermon planning and preparation, a preacher would recognize that as a means of reverencing or worshiping God, the following worship principles apply to the theme and Scripture:

- God is all about a worshipful relationship.
- Worship begins with obedience & it is central to worship.
- God wants worship from repentant hearts.
- Worship involves and equals submission.

When delivering the sermon, if a preacher states, “As children of God, He wants us to draw near to Him! He wants us to draw near because as worshipers of the true and living God, He is all about a worshipful relationship,” the listener is not inferring a connection to worship or a principle of worship because the speaker has explicitly made the statements. If a preacher exclaims, “We have to have clean hands and hearts free from sin. Humble yourselves and draw

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<sup>20</sup> Haddon W. Robinson, *Biblical Preaching: The Development and Delivery of Expository Messages*, 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2014), 14-15.

near to God! Worship begins with obedience, and it is central to our worship. If you're a worshiper of the Lord, you must know that God wants worship or reverence from repentant hearts, and worship involves and equals submission," then again, the listeners seeking to grow in their understanding of worship hear worship principles that enable them to understand why they should draw near to God and the connection to their life as worshipers. Delivered sermons that imply a connection to worship principles or rely on listeners to infer a connection to worship principles do not afford congregations with growing in their knowledge of worship and its daily application to their lives. When pastors and preachers present their sermon themes, introductions, three points (where applicable), and their conclusions, worshipers need to know not just how the sermon connects to their life but the specific worship principles that explicitly impact their lives with developing a Christian walk reflective daily of a lifestyle of worship.

### **Recommendations for Future Research**

The limitations and the implications of the research serve to support recommendations for future research on the topic of worship, worship theology, and worship principles. The recommendations are the following for consideration and implementation:

- 1) This research study is limited in the number of participants as preachers. A research study could occur on a larger scale with participants reflecting similar ages, sex, resident locations, and preaching experience to further add credibility to the current research study. The larger sampling could further support the current research findings, especially if a larger sampling yields similar findings that correlate to this particular research study.
- 2) The current research study focuses on preachers planning and delivering sermons that include worship theology and principles. Yet, a "flipped version" of the research

- study could be implemented with church congregations. A research study could occur with church members' to determine their understanding of worship based on the weekly sermons they hear as a listener in their church congregations. The implementation of this study could further support pastors and preachers making the conscious effort to embed worship theology and principles in the planning and delivery of their sermons on a more consistent basis.
- 3) The current study provides insight into the multiple types of courses and trainings that pastors and preachers receive to develop and deliver their weekly sermons to congregations. A comparative study could occur between pastors who experience the standard seminary courses and pastors who receive specific courses on worship theology and principles. This type of study could comparatively evaluate the influences and outcomes on the content of their sermon development and delivery to church congregations.
  - 4) This research study demonstrates the stark contrast between biblical and worship content. A longitudinal study could occur with pastors and preachers who experience seminary coursework and church association training on worship theology and principles. Researchers of the longitudinal study could follow the pastors and preachers from coursework and training to post-coursework and post-training. The study could determine the impact and implication of sermon planning and preparation based on pastors and preachers who intentionally experience coursework and training on worship theology and principles.
  - 5) The focus of this current study involves a qualitative approach to determine what pastors and preachers communicate to their congregations about worship theology

- and principles. A quantitative or mixed methods approach could occur to determine the impact of sermons inclusive of worship theology and principles on pastors, preachers, and church congregations.
- 6) A few times during the interview process of this research study, participants seemed surprised at the lack of worship training they received from their educational institutions, church associations, and local church congregations. An observational study could occur to systematically assess the behaviors of pastors' and preachers' specific actions experiencing seminary coursework or church training. The study could observe a direct correlation between sermon planning and delivery that includes or does not include worship theology and principles. This approach could help convince educational institutions, church associations, and local church congregations to intentionally embed the subjects of worship theology and principles into their curricula, scope and sequences, or degree completion plans.

### **Research Conclusion**

“Worship involves all that is inside a person, all that is outside a person and all that takes place within the corporate assembly of God’s people ... Worship is all that we are, reacting rightly to all that He is.”<sup>21</sup> The researcher recognizes there is a need for congregations to experience sermons that support listeners with being able to clearly identify the importance of worship in their life as a believer. As mentioned earlier in chapter 1, churchgoers place significant importance on the weekly sermons they hear to encourage their Christian growth and their overall relationship with God, hence the reason for embarking upon this research study. Every week millions of churchgoers gather weekly in-person or virtually to experience

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<sup>21</sup> John MacArthur, *Worship: The Ultimate Priority* (Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 2012), 185.

worshiping in community with other believers. As previously shared, they are interested in sermons that teach more about the Word of God and make a connection to their personal lives. At the center of this opportunity to meet the expectations of the weekly churchgoers are pastors and preachers who have prepared sermons to reflect the Word of God, transform the listeners' spiritual lives, proclaim the gospel, and ultimately encourage more congregants to fulfill God's desire for more people to reverence Him daily in their personal lives.

Pastors and preachers need to work to ensure their sermons embed worship theology and principles when planning and delivering their sermons. In its simplest form, Worship theology is basically the knowledge and study of God and His expectations for worship, or reverence, as all-encompassing of a believer's life. Pastors and preachers have relied on their educational institutions, church associations, and local church organizations to guide and train them in their role to prepare, write, and deliver sermons. As a result, pastors and preachers are well-versed in the architecture of sermon delivery to include essential biblical theology and principles. This occurs predominantly in the messages that churchgoers hear every week.

Yet, today, congregations need a greater understanding of worship and its impact on the development of their Christian walk. Consequently, their need for more understanding puts preaching at the center stage because when the preacher stands to deliver a message, the listeners know that, "Good preaching names [their] human dilemmas and brings good news, the encouragement that nothing can separate [them] from the love of God, whose grace is sufficient for life's challenges."<sup>22</sup> Bearing this in mind, pastors and preachers who embed worship theology and principles in the planning and delivery of their sermons become vital to the spiritual growth

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<sup>22</sup> Ruth C. Duck, *Worship for the Whole People of God: Vital Worship for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2013), 138,

of believers understanding their ultimate purpose as worshipers. “Preaching gives context and focus for the parts of the service that change weekly. Preaching approaches Scripture texts and human dilemmas by lifting out key concerns, images, and themes that echo through worship. Even a short sermon focuses worship on particular aspects of Scripture and life. Thus preaching (and the Scriptures on which it is based) provides the thematic center for worship as it changes from week to week and season to season.”<sup>23</sup> With this realization, congregations need a greater understanding and opportunity to develop their worship theology and hear sermons from their pastors and preachers that include specific worship principles that are biblical and applicable to their daily lives.

This research study seeks to encourage pastors and preachers to do something that was not asked of them when they attended the educational institution, church association, or local church organization of their choice. To reiterate, there are benefits to pastors and preachers accepting the challenge to embed worship theology and principles in the delivery of their sermons to their congregations. The training of future pastors and preachers needs to include the subject of worship with an accurate approach to developing a greater understanding of worship theology and principles. Without this training, congregations will ultimately remain stagnant in their spiritual growth as worshipers. We often hear the Scripture, John 4:23, “But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him,” quoted by many pastors and preachers to their congregations. However, there exists the need to equip our congregations in the full knowledge of what God desires so that when He is actively seeking worshipers, they are immediately found. They are found because pastors and preachers take up the mantle to purposely broaden their

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<sup>23</sup> Duck, *Worship for the Whole People of God*, 139.

leadership capacity in the areas of worship theology and principles. Moreover, worshipers are found because pastors and preachers are filling a spiritual gap by ensuring not only the growth of the Christian walk of their congregations but that their congregations' divine relationship with God deepens and flourishes in the understanding that worship is forever a lifestyle.

John MacArthur writes, "The purpose of the preacher is not merely to create an emotional experience. The preacher's primary duty is not to stir the emotions of his audience, but to 'preach the word ... in season and out of season ... with great patience and instruction' (2 Timothy 4:2). The calling of every preacher is to teach about God, and out of that foundation of knowledge comes worship."<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> MacArthur, *Worship*, 161.

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## Appendix A

### Moody Theological Seminary Program Plans

#### MDIV—MINISTRY LEADERSHIP—PROGRAM PLAN

**2021–2022**

##### *Chicago and Plymouth Campuses*

This program plan is a suggested sequence of courses for students who changed their program or were admitted during the 2021–2022 academic year. Adjustments may be made as needed based on course availability, prerequisite courses, transfer credits, and advanced standing credits. Students are responsible to satisfy all program requirements by their expected graduation date.

##### First Year—Fall

BI-5500	Hermeneutics	3
BI-5533	OT History, Literature, and Theology	3
NT-5503	New Testament Greek I	3
SF-5506	Biblical Spiritual Formation	2
IL-5500	Biblical Spiritual Formation Lab	1
		<b>12</b>

##### Spring

BI-5532	NT History, Literature, and Theology	3
GM-5500	Communication of Biblical Truth	3
HT-5500	Church History	3
IS-5500	Theo. & Practice of Intercultural Ministry	3
NT-5504	New Testament Greek II	3
		<b>15</b>

##### Second Year—Fall

IS-6600	Apologetics and World Religions	3
MN-5500	Essentials for Excellence in Min. Leadership	3
NT-6652	Greek Syntax and Exegetical Method	3
OT-5503	Biblical Hebrew I	3
ST-5534	Systematic Christian Theology I	3
		<b>15</b>

##### Spring

MN-5501	Dev. Ldrs. & Mng. Resources in Min. Ldrshp.	3
MN-6601	Power, Conflict, Res., & Trans. Ldrshp.	3
OT-5504	Biblical Hebrew II	3
PS-6607	Professional Ethics	3
ST-5535	Systematic Christian Theology II	3
		<b>15</b>

##### Third Year—Fall

FE-6670	Ministry Internship I	3
MN-6600	Global Perspectives in Ministry Leadership	3
MN-6603	Essentials of Finance in Ministry Leadership	2
OT-6603	Hebrew Syntax and Exegesis	3
PS-6603	Pastoral Counseling	3
		<b>14</b>

##### Spring

BT-6603	Biblical Theology of the OT Or BT-6604 Biblical Theology of the NT	3
FE-7770	Ministry Internship II	3
MN-7700	Harnessing Technology in Ministry	1
PS-6602	Narrative Preaching	3
XX-XXXX	Open elective	3
XX-XXXX	Open elective	3
		<b>16</b>

**Total Program Credits 87**

## MDIV—BIBLICAL SPIRITUAL FORMATION AND DISCIPLESHIP— PROGRAM PLAN

### 2021–2022

#### *Chicago and Plymouth Campuses*

This program plan is a suggested sequence of courses for students who changed their program or were admitted during the 2021–2022 academic year. Adjustments may be made as needed based on course availability, prerequisite courses, transfer credits, and advanced standing credits. Students are responsible to satisfy all program requirements by their expected graduation date.

#### First Year—Fall

BI-5500	Hermeneutics	3
BI-5533	OT History, Literature, and Theology	3
NT-5503	New Testament Greek I	3
SF-5506	Biblical Spiritual Formation	2
IL-5500	Biblical Spiritual Formation Lab	1
		<b>12</b>

#### Spring

BI-5532	NT History, Literature, and Theology	3
GM-5500	Communication of Biblical Truth	3
HT-5500	Church History	3
IS-5500	Theo. & Practice of Intercultural Ministry	3
NT-5504	New Testament Greek II	3
		<b>15</b>

#### Second Year—Fall

IS-6600	Apologetics and World Religions	3
MN-5500	Essentials for Excellence in Min. Leadership	3
NT-6652	Greek Syntax and Exegetical Method	3
OT-5503	Biblical Hebrew I	3
ST-5534	Systematic Christian Theology I	3
		<b>15</b>

#### Spring

OT-5504	Biblical Hebrew II	3
PS-6602	Narrative Preaching	3
PS-6607	Professional Ethics	3
SF-6602	Spirituality and the Family	3
ST-5535	Systematic Christian Theology II	3
		<b>15</b>

#### Third Year—Fall

FE-6670	Ministry Internship I	3
OT-6603	Hebrew Syntax and Exegesis	3
PS-6603	Pastoral Counseling	3
SF-6605	Theology and Practice of Prayer	3
XX-XXXX	Open elective	3
		<b>15</b>

#### Spring

BT-6603	Biblical Theology of the OT Or BT-6604 Biblical Theology of the NT	3
FE-7770	Ministry Internship II	3
SF-6604	Theology and Practice of Soul Care and Discipleship	3
SF-6606	Adv. Theology of Practical Sanctification	3
XX-XXXX	Open elective	3
		<b>15</b>

**Total Program Credits 87**

## MDIV—PASTORAL STUDIES—PROGRAM PLAN

## 2021–2022

### *Chicago and Plymouth Campuses*

This program plan is a suggested sequence of courses for students who changed their program or were admitted during the 2021–2022 academic year. Adjustments may be made as needed based on course availability, prerequisite courses, transfer credits, and advanced standing credits. Students are responsible to satisfy all program requirements by their expected graduation date.

#### First Year—Fall

BI-5500	Hermeneutics	3
BI-5533	OT History, Literature, and Theology	3
NT-5503	New Testament Greek I	3
SF-5506	Biblical Spiritual Formation	2
IL-5500	Biblical Spiritual Formation Lab	1
		<b>12</b>

#### Spring

BI-5532	NT History, Literature, and Theology	3
GM-5500	Communication of Biblical Truth	3
HT-5500	Church History	3
IS-5500	Theo. & Practice of Intercultural Ministry	3
NT-5504	New Testament Greek II	3
		<b>15</b>

#### Second Year—Fall

IS-6600	Apologetics and World Religions	3
MN-5500	Essentials for Excellence in Min. Leadership	3
NT-6652	Greek Syntax and Exegetical Method	3
OT-5503	Biblical Hebrew I	3
ST-5534	Systematic Christian Theology I	3
		<b>15</b>

#### Spring

BI-XXXX	Bible elective	3
OT-5504	Biblical Hebrew II	3
PS-6602	Narrative Preaching	3
PS-6607	Professional Ethics	3
ST-5535	Systematic Christian Theology II	3
		<b>15</b>

#### Third Year—Fall

FE-6670	Ministry Internship I	3
OT-6603	Hebrew Syntax and Exegesis	3
PS-6601	Pastoral Procedures and Practices	3
PS-6603	Pastoral Counseling	3
PS-6604	Preaching from the Old Testament Or PS-6605 Teaching with Skill and Influence	3
		<b>15</b>

#### Spring

BT-6603	Biblical Theology of the OT Or BT-6604 Biblical Theology of the NT	3
FE-7770	Ministry Internship II	3
NT-6604	Exegesis in the Greek NT Or OT-6604 Exegesis in the Hebrew OT	3
ST-7704	Interdisciplinary Theology Seminar	3
XX-XXXX	Open elective	3
		<b>15</b>

**Total Program Credits 87**

## MA IN MINISTRY LEADERSHIP—PROGRAM PLAN

## 2021–2022

### *Chicago and Plymouth Campuses*

This program plan is a suggested sequence of courses for students who changed their program or were admitted during the 2021–2022 academic year. Adjustments may be made as needed based on course availability, prerequisite courses, transfer credits, and advanced standing credits. Students are responsible to satisfy all program requirements by their expected graduation date.

#### First Year—Fall

BI-5500	Hermeneutics	3
BI-5533	OT History, Literature, and Theology	3
SF-5506	Biblical Spiritual Formation	2
IL-5500	Biblical Spiritual Formation Lab	1
		<b>9</b>

#### Spring

BI-5532	NT History, Literature, and Theology	3
GM-5500	Communication of Biblical Truth	3
HT-5500	Church History	3
IS-5500	Theo. & Practice of Intercultural Ministry	3
		<b>12</b>

#### Second Year—Fall

MN-5500	Essentials for Excellence in Min. Leadership	3
MN-6600	Global Perspectives in Ministry Leadership	3
MN-6603	Essentials of Finance in Ministry Leadership	2
ST-5534	Systematic Christian Theology I	3
		<b>11</b>

#### Spring

FE-6670	Ministry Internship I	3
MN-5501	Dev. Ldrs. & Mng. Resources in Min. Ldrshp.	3
MN-6601	Power, Conflict, Res., & Trans. Ldrshp.	3
MN-7700	Harnessing Technology in Ministry	1
ST-5535	Systematic Christian Theology II	3
		<b>13</b>

**Total Program Credits    45**

## Appendix B

### Fuller Theological Seminary Curricula

The following examples of curricula are from the *Fuller Theological Seminary Academic Catalog 2021-2022*.

#### Master of Divinity (MDiv)

**Degree Requirements.** The faculty at Fuller has developed a unified curriculum for the Master of Divinity degree. A total of 120 units is required to earn the Master of Divinity degree.

#### Shared Foundations (24 units)

- SF506 Vocational Formation in Seminary
- SF501 Foundations in the Psychological Sciences: On Being Human
- SF502 Introduction to Global Christian Traditions
- SF503 Living Missiologically
- OT500 Old Testament Introduction
- SF505 Foundations in Practical Theology

#### Bible Courses (24 units)

- LG500 Hebrew Tools for Biblical Interpretation or LG502 Beginning Hebrew and LG506 Intermediate Hebrew
- LG510 Greek Tools for Biblical Interpretation or LG512A and LG512B Beginning Greek
- NT500 New Testament Introduction
- OT527 Old Testament Exegesis or NE527 New Testament Exegesis
- Biblical Studies Elective (in an alternate Testament to the exegetical course)
- Any Biblical Studies Elective

#### Theology Courses (24 units)

- Systematics and/or History (12 units).
  - Option 1: Theology
    - ST505 Trinity, Revelation, and Salvation
    - ST506 Creation, Church, and Consummation
    - CH500 Early Church History or CH502 Medieval/Reformation History or CH504 Modern Church in a Global Context

(MDiv Students will need to use electives to complete either the two-course LG502 and LG506 Hebrew sequence and/or the two-course LG512A and LG512B; however, these additional units can count towards the Biblical Studies concentration)

- Option 2: History
  - CH500 Early Church History
  - CH502 Medieval/Reformation History or CH504 Modern Church in a Global Context
  - ST505 Trinity, Revelation and Salvation or ST506 Creation, Church, and Consummation
- Ethics: any course with an ET prefix
- Theology elective: Any course with a TH, ST, CH, ET, TC, PH, or MR prefix

### **Ministry Courses (20 units)**

- Leadership: any course with the LDR attribute
- Pastoral Ministry: any course with the PM attribute
- Integral Mission: EV500 Integral Evangelism, EV505 Witness and Justice, or EV514 Urban Evangelism
- Christian Formation and Discipleship: CF502 The Art and Practice of Teaching, CF561 Teaching and Learning with Adults, or any course with a YF prefix
- PR500 Homiletics
- Preaching Practicum: any course with the P1 attribute

### **Mission Courses (4 units)**

- Any course with an MB, MC, MD, ME, MH, MI, ML, MM, MO, MR, MT prefix

Capstone course/Apprenticeship (0 or 4 units)

### **Electives (24 units)**

- May be used to explore or complete one or more concentrations.

**Concentration: MDiv in Biblical Studies.** Students must complete at least 4 classes (16 units) from the following list in addition to the above-listed 28 units of Bible and Language degree requirements.<sup>2</sup>

- Any course with an LG, BI, NE, NS, NT, or OT prefix

Offerings may include such courses as:

- LG525 Beginning Aramaic
- LG533 Beginning Ugaritic
- LG546 Northwest Semitic Texts
- BI502 Women, the Bible, and the Church
- NE517 Book Study (English text)
- NE527 Book Study (Greek text)
- NS512 Jesus and the Kingdom of God
- NT556 Jesus, the Church, and Violence
- NT557 Slavery in the NT: Social Reality and Theological Image
- OT517 Book Study (English text)

- OT527 Book Study (Hebrew text)
- OT551 Old Testament Ethics
- OT560 Women in the Old Testament: Text and Context
- OT568 Food, Famine, and Feasting in the Old Testament
- OT573 Theologies of Exile in the Old Testament
- OT581 History and the OT
- OT583 Introduction to ANE History, Literature, and Culture

## Master of Arts (Theology)

***Degree Requirements.*** The faculty at Fuller has developed a flexible, unified curriculum for the Master of Arts (Theology) degree. A total of 80 units is required to earn the Master of Arts (Theology) degree. The degree requirements can be completed in two years of full-time study, although many elect to earn the degree over an extended period of time through part-time study.

**Integrative (12 units).** Students are required to take IS500 and choose two from the remaining three.

- IS500 Practices of Vocational Formation
- IS501 Practices of Worship
- IS502 Practices of Community
- IS503 Practices of Mission

### Interpreting (16 units)

- BI500 Interpretive Practices
- OT500 Old Testament Introduction
- NT500 New Testament Introduction
- Any Biblical Studies Elective

### Theologizing (20 units)

- History and Theology (16 units). Must take two history courses and two theology courses
  - God and Christ: any course with the TH1 attribute
    - HT500 The Church's Understanding of God and Christ in its Historical Development
    - HT501 The Church's Understanding of God and Christ in its Theological Reflection
  - The Church, Humanity, and the Christian Life: any course with the TH2 attribute
    - HT502 The Church's Understanding of the Church, Humanity, and the Christian Life in its Historical Development
    - HT503 The Church's Understanding of the Church, Humanity, and the Christian Life in its Theological Reflection
  - Modern and Global Contexts: any course with the TH3 attribute
    - CH504 The Modern Church in a Global Historical Context
    - CH506 American Christianity in a Global Historical Context
    - HT504 Modern Theology in a Global Context

- Theologizing elective: any course with the TH4 attribute
  - Almost any course with a CH, HT, ST, or TH prefix (ST511, CH549, CH551, and TH550 do not meet this requirement)
- Christian Ethics: any course with the TH6 attribute

### **Electives (32 units)**

- May be used to explore one or more areas of interest

### Capstone Essay

- After completing at least 60 units, students in the Master of Arts in Theology program must submit a one-page (250-300 words) essay reflecting on the academic capacities gained in their course of study.

## **Master of Arts in Theology and Ministry (MATM)**

***Degree Requirements.*** The faculty at Fuller has developed a flexible, unified curriculum for the Master of Arts in Theology and Ministry degree. A total of 80 units is required to earn the Master of Arts in Theology and Ministry degree. The degree requirements can be completed in two years of full-time study, although many elect to remain in their current context and earn the degree over an extended period of time through part-time study.

Integrative (12 units). Students are required to take IS500 and choose two from the remaining three.

- IS500 Practices of Vocational Formation
- IS501 Practices of Worship
- IS502 Practices of Community
- IS503 Practices of Mission

### **Interpreting (16 units)**

- BI500 Interpretive Practices
- OT500 Old Testament Introduction
- NT500 New Testament Introduction
- Any Biblical Studies Elective

**Theologizing (16 units)**

- History and Theology (12 units). Must take at least one history and one theology
  - God and Christ: any course with the TH1 attribute
    - HT500 The Church's Understanding of God and Christ in its Historical Development
    - HT501 The Church's Understanding of God and Christ in its Theological Reflection
  - The Church, Humanity, and the Christian Life: any course with the TH2 attribute
    - HT502 The Church's Understanding of the Church, Humanity, and the Christian Life in its Historical Development
    - HT503 The Church's Understanding of the Church, Humanity, and the Christian Life in its Theological Reflection
  - Modern and Global Contexts: any course with the TH3 attribute
    - CH504 The Modern Church in a Global Historical Context
    - CH506 American Christianity in a Global Historical Context
    - HT504 Modern Theology in a Global Context
- Christian Ethics: any course with the TH6 attribute

**Ministry (12 units)**

- Leadership: any course with the LDR attribute
- Worship, Preaching, and Communication: any course with the WPC attribute
- Evangelism: any course with the EVG attribute

**Contextualizing (4 units). Select one:**

- Engaging Global Realities: any course with the C1 attribute
- Engaging Culture: any course with the C2 attribute
- Engaging Human Diversity: any course with the C5 attribute

**Electives (20 units)**

- May be used to explore one or more areas of interest

**Apprenticeship (0 or 4 units)****Master of Arts in Ministry Leadership (MAML)**

***Degree Requirements.*** The faculty at Fuller has developed a flexible, unified curriculum for the Master of Arts in Ministry Leadership degree. A total of 48 units is required to earn the Master of Arts in Ministry Leadership degree. The degree requirements can be completed in one year of full-time study online, although most will do two classes a year incorporating at least one YL Training requirement each year for the first 4 years.

**Interpreting (16 units)**

- OT500 Old Testament Introduction
- NT500 New Testament Introduction
- Two Biblical Studies Electives

**Theologizing (12 units)**

- History and Theology (8 units). Must take one history course and one theology course
  - God and Christ: TH1 attribute
    - HT501 The Church's Understanding of God and Christ in its Theological Reflection
  - The Church, Humanity, and the Christian Life: TH2 attribute
    - HT502 The Church's Understanding of the Church, Humanity, and the Christian Life in its Historical Development
- Theology Elective: ET501, PH522, TC581

### **Ministry (20 units)**

- YF501 Introduction to Youth Ministry
- YF502 Leading Change/Youth Ministry OR LD500 Leadership
- FY523 Youth Minister as Person
- FE561 Leadership One
- FE562 Leadership Two

## **Doctor of Ministry (DMin)**

***Degree Requirements.*** The Doctor of Ministry degree requires the completion of 48 quarter units of credit beyond the Master of Divinity degree, or 60 quarter units of credit (including language) beyond a two-year (80 quarter units or 54 semester units) theological MA degree, or 64 quarter units of credit (including language classes) beyond a two-year (72 quarter units or 48 semester units) theological MAGL degree.

Fuller Doctor of Ministry students will have the option of completing the program on either the Personalized track or the Cohort track.

### **Personalized Track**

***Phase 1: DM711 Exploring the Contours of Ministry (4 units).*** All students in the Personalized Track begin with this 10-week online course. For the Personalized track, this course is the gateway to the Doctor of Ministry Program at Fuller and serves as a general orientation to the program and an introduction to the theological method and practices of the program.

***Phase 2: Mentoring (4 units).*** After completing DM711, students in the personalized track will enter into a two-year mentoring/coaching course led by Terry Walling and Leader BreakThru. This practical seminar focuses on moving beyond just attending classes – and onto integrating a student's DMin learning into a comprehensive personal growth experience. The goal is to maximize the intended learning and ministry transformation from their Doctor of Ministry program. It is achieved through the integration of personal learning and the assistance of a leadership development coach.

***Phase 3: Seminars/Electives.*** After completing DM711, students in the Personalized Track will complete 32-48 units of electives (depending on program) from any courses under any subject area listed below. Students may choose from multiple Personalized Track subject areas:

- Leadership
- Spiritual Formation/Discipleship/Mentoring
- Personal and Congregational Care
- Culture and Theology

- Ethics
- Evangelism, Church Growth, and Church Planting
- Multicultural and Urban Ministries
- Preaching, Worship, and the Arts
- Missional Theology and the Missional Church
- Church Planting
- Pastoral Counseling

Courses are taught by faculty drawn from both schools (School of Mission and Theology and School of Psychology), as well as adjunct professors who bring additional expertise. Personalized Track courses are taught as one-week intensives.

**Phase 4: Doctoral Project (8 units).** The doctoral project is divided into two parts:

1. **DM710 Developing Your Doctoral Project Proposal**, a 2-unit course focused on developing the Doctoral Project Proposal. This course is offered three times a year, in the Fall, Winter, and Spring quarters.
2. **DM706 Doctoral Project**. After the proposal is approved, students will register for the 6-unit Doctoral Project Writing course. Students are required to hire an editor for their projects.

## Cohort Track

**Phase 1: Seminars (40 units).** In cohort concentrations, the same group of students meet together online and for one- or two-week segments following a preset curriculum focused around the areas of interest listed below. The students may join one of the cohorts currently available:

- Christian Spirituality
- Presencia y poder: El Espíritu Santo como agente de transformación individual y comunitaria
- Urban Ministry
- Youth, Family, and Culture
- Spiritual Direction
- Holy Spirit Leadership
- Leading Change
- Urban Ministry
- African American Church Leadership
- Faith, Work, Economics, and Vocation
- Recovery Ministry
- Lifelong Leadership Formation
- Leading for Healthy Church Growth
- Congregational Leadership and Formation for Missional Witness

**Phase 2: Doctoral Project (8 units).** The doctoral project is divided into two parts:

1. Students work with the cohort mentor to develop their Doctoral Project proposal. The cohort mentor will approve the final proposal.
2. **DM706 Doctoral Project**. After the proposal is submitted and approved, students will register for the 8-unit doctoral project. Students are required to hire an editor for their final **project**.

## Doctoral Project

The Doctoral Project serves as the culmination of the degree, providing students with an opportunity to integrate coursework and reflection, applying this learning to a particular ministry context. The intended result is a unique and practical contribution both to the student's ministry and to the broader Christian community.

This project is a *major ministry project*: A biblically-based, theologically sound paper that explores and develops a strategy to address specific aspects of ministry in a particular context.

## Appendix C

### Princeton Theological Seminary Degree Designs



#### Sample Degree Design – MDiv Student with No Denominational Requirements

This design reflects an MDiv student with no denominational requirements. In this design, the student would take no January terms courses and only field education during one summer. This model allows for a minimum of 18 credit hours of general electives. Additional electives are possible if the student takes January courses or summer courses. Also, if the student takes January or summer term courses, the student could also take fewer than 12 credits during usually two semesters and remain full time (nine-credit minimum).

Foundational Courses	Fall	January Term	Spring
<b>No classes summer prior</b>			
<b>Year One</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Life Together Course (3)</li> <li>• Orientation to Old Testament and Exegesis (3)</li> <li>• World Christian History I (3)</li> <li>• Speech Communication in Ministry I (1)</li> <li>• Introduction to Field Education</li> <li>• Elective (3)</li> </ul> <b>Total = 13 credits</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Orientation to New Testament and Exegesis (3)</li> <li>• Doing Christian Theology (3)</li> <li>• Gateway Course in Practical Theology (EF or PC) (3)</li> <li>• Speech Communication in Ministry II (1)</li> <li>• Introduction to Field Education (.5 for year)</li> <li>• Elective (3)</li> </ul> <b>Total = 13.5 credits</b>
<b>No summer classes</b>			
<b>Year Two</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• World Christian History II (3)</li> <li>• Second Theology Course (3)</li> <li>• Field Education (1)</li> <li>• Preaching and Applied Exegesis or Elective (3)</li> <li>• Second-Year Discernment Process Requirement (.5)</li> <li>• Elective (3)</li> </ul> <b>Total = 13.5 credits</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Theological Imagination Course (3)</li> <li>• Intercultural Communication (1)</li> <li>• Field Education (1)</li> <li>• Preaching and Applied Exegesis or Elective (3)</li> <li>• Third Theology Course (3)</li> </ul> <b>Total = 11 credits</b>
<b>Summer Field Education (2) Total = 2 credits</b>			
<b>Year Three</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Digital Media Studies in Ministry (1)</li> <li>• Renewal of Creation, Self, and Communities Course (3)</li> <li>• Third Bible Course (3)</li> <li>• Third Gateway Course in Practical Theology (from remaining area of EF or PC) (3)</li> <li>• Elective (3)</li> </ul> <b>Total = 13 credits</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spiritual Practices of the Faith Course (3)</li> <li>• Christian Leadership: Church, Religion, and Society Course (3)</li> <li>• Third History Course (3)</li> <li>• Elective (3)</li> </ul> <b>Total = 12 credits</b>

#### Summary

1. Represents 78 credits – 78 credit-hour MDiv minimum
2. Minimum of 18 credit hours of general electives; additional electives if student takes January or summer courses or if student takes a course than counts for two requirements.
3. Life Together and Theological Imagination Courses cannot fulfill other requirements. Core Commitment courses (Renewal of Creation; Christian Leadership; Spiritual Practices) offered in Bible or theology may fulfill a third department course requirement. A student cannot fulfill a third history department course and one of the Core Commitments with the same course. These designations will be provided in the course descriptions.
4. If student takes January and summer courses, the student could have a less than 12 credit-hour load (usually two semesters). Must maintain nine credits to remain full time.



## Sample Degree Design – MA(TS) Student

This design reflects a MA(TS) student with no denominational requirements. This schedule reflects no January term or summer courses.

Foundational Courses	Fall	January Term	Spring
No classes summer prior			
Year One	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Life Together (3)</li> <li>• Orientation to Old Testament and Exegesis (3)</li> <li>• World Christian History I (3)</li> <li>• Speech Communication in Ministry I (1)</li> <li>• Second Core Commitment Course (3)</li> <li>• Introduction to Field Education</li> </ul> <b>Total = 13 credits</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Orientation to New Testament and Exegesis (3)</li> <li>• Doing Christian Theology (3)</li> <li>• Gateway Course in Practical Theology (EF, PC, or PR) (3)</li> <li>• Speech Communication in Ministry II (1)</li> <li>• Course in Area of Specialization (3)</li> <li>• Introduction to Field Education (.5 for year)</li> </ul> <b>Total = 13.5 credits</b>
No summer classes			
Year Two	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• World Christian History II (3)</li> <li>• Second Theology Course (3)</li> <li>• Field Education (1)</li> <li>• Course in Area of Specialization (3)</li> <li>• Course in Area of Specialization (3)</li> </ul> <b>Total = 13 credits</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Third Core Commitment Course (3)</li> <li>• Field Education (1)</li> <li>• Second Gateway Course in Practical Theology (from two remaining areas of EF, PC, or PR) (3)</li> <li>• Course in Area of Specialization (3)</li> <li>• Course in Area of Specialization (3)</li> </ul> <b>Total = 13 credits</b>

The second and third Core Commitment courses can be selected from the following areas: Theological Imagination courses; Renewal of Creation, Self, and Communities courses; Christian Leadership: Church, Religion, and Society courses; Spiritual Practices of the Faith courses.

### Summary

1. Represents 52.5 credits – 52.5 credit-hour minimum
2. Student takes 15 credit hours in the area of specialization.
3. The Capstone Requirement will be met through one of the "Course[s] in Area of Specialization" in the second year.
4. If student takes January and summer courses, the student could have a less than 12 credit-hour load during some semesters. Must maintain a nine-credit minimum to remain full time.

## Appendix D

### Westminster Theological Seminary Course Schedule Charts

The following recommended course schedule charts are from the *Westminster Theological Seminary Academic Catalog 2021-2022*.

### MDiv, General Ministries (Residential)

#### *Recommended Course Schedule, Three-Year Plan*

**Total semester hours required: 93 (excluding Languages) 111 (including Languages)**

	First Year			Second Year			Third Year		
Summer	OT 011	Hebrew 1	3 hrs						
	OT 012	Hebrew 2	3 hrs						
	<b>Total: 6 hrs</b>								
Fall	AP 101	Introduction to Apologetics	3 hrs	CH 211	Ancient Church	2 hrs	CH 311	The Reformation	3 hrs
	NT 001	Greek 1	3 hrs	NT 211	The Gospels	4 hrs	CH 321	Church in the Modern Age	4 hrs
	NT 111	New Testament Introduction	3 hrs	OT 211	OT History and Theology I	3 hrs	NT 311	Hebrews to Revelation	3 hrs
	OT 013	Hebrew 3	3 hrs	PC 111	Intro to Pastoral Counseling	2 hrs	OT 311	Prophetic Books	3 hrs
	PT 111	Intro to Pastoral Theology & Ministry	2 hrs	ST 211	Doctrine of Man	2 hrs	PT 021P	Case Study Seminar <sup>2</sup>	0 hrs
	ST 101	Introduction to Systematic Theology <sup>1</sup>		ST 231	Christian Ethics	2 hrs		Elective <sup>3</sup>	4 hrs
	or	or	3 hrs		Elective <sup>3</sup>	2 hrs			
	ST 113	Doctrine of God <sup>2</sup>							
	<b>Total: 17 hrs</b>			<b>Total: 17 hrs</b>			<b>Total: 17 hrs</b>		
Winter	NT 002	Greek 2	3 hrs		Elective <sup>3</sup>	2 hrs		Elective <sup>3</sup>	2 hrs
	<b>Total: 3 hrs</b>			<b>Total: 2 hrs</b>			<b>Total: 2 hrs</b>		
Spring	NT 003	Greek 3	3 hrs	AP 213	Christian Apologetics	3 hrs	OT 323	Poetry and Wisdom	2 hrs
	NT 123	Hermeneutics	4 hrs	CH 223	Medieval Church	2 hrs	PT 123	Gospel Communication <sup>4</sup>	2 hrs
	OT 113	Old Testament Introduction	3 hrs	NT 223	Acts and Pauline Epistles	4 hrs	ST 313	Doctrine of Salvation	3 hrs
	PT 343	Theology of Evangelism & Missions	2 hrs	OT 223	OT History and Theology II	3 hrs	ST 343	Doctrine of the Church	2 hrs
	ST 101	Intro to Systematic Theology <sup>1</sup>		PT 012P-2	Case Study Seminar <sup>2</sup>	0 hrs		Elective <sup>3</sup>	7 hrs
	or	or	3 hrs	ST 223	Doctrine of Christ	3 hrs			
	ST 113	Doctrine of God <sup>2</sup>			Elective <sup>3</sup>	2 hrs			
	<i>Mentored Ministry Field Experience<sup>2</sup></i>								
	<b>Total: 15 hrs</b>			<b>Total: 17 hrs</b>			<b>Total: 17 hrs</b>		

*Recommended Course Schedule, Four-Year Plan*

	First Year			Second Year			Third Year			Fourth Year		
Fall	AP 101	Introduction to Apologetics	3 hrs	NT 111	New Testament Introduction	3 hrs	CH 311	The Reformation	3 hrs	CH 321	Church in the Modern Age	4 hrs
	CH 211	Ancient Church	2 hrs	OT 011	Hebrew 1	3 hrs	NT 211	The Gospels	4 hrs	NT 311	Hebrews to Revelation	3 hrs
	NT 001	Greek 1	3 hrs	PC 111	Intro to Pastoral Counseling	2 hrs	OT 211	OT History and Theology I	3 hrs	OT 311	Prophetic Books	3 hrs
	PT 111	Intro to Pastoral Theology & Ministry	2 hrs	ST 231	Christian Ethics	2 hrs	ST 211	Doctrine of Man	2 hrs	PT 021P	Case Study Seminar <sup>2</sup>	0 hrs
	ST 101	Intro to Systematic Theology <sup>1</sup>			Elective <sup>3</sup>	2 hrs					Elective <sup>3</sup>	4 hrs
	or		3 hrs									
	ST 113	Doctrine of God <sup>1</sup>										
		<b>Total: 13 hrs</b>			<b>Total: 12 hrs</b>			<b>Total: 12 hrs</b>			<b>Total: 14 hrs</b>	
Winter	NT 002	Greek 2	3 hrs	OT 012	Hebrew 2	3 hrs		Elective <sup>3</sup>	2 hr		Elective <sup>3</sup>	2 hrs
		<b>Total: 3 hrs</b>			<b>Total: 3 hrs</b>			<b>Total: 2 hr</b>			<b>Total: 2 hrs</b>	
Spring	CH 223	Medieval Church	2 hrs	AP 213	Principles of Christian Apologetics	3 hrs	NT 223	Acts and Pauline Epistles	4 hrs	OT 323	Poetry and Wisdom	2 hrs
	NT 003	Greek 3	3 hrs	NT 123	Hermeneutics	4 hrs	OT 223	OT History and Theology II	3 hrs	PT 123	Gospel Communication <sup>4</sup>	2 hrs
	PT 343	Theology of Evangelism & Missions	2 hrs	OT 013	Hebrew 3	3 hrs	PT 021P-2	Case Study Seminar <sup>2</sup>	0 hrs	ST 313	Doctrine of Salvation	3 hrs
	ST 101	Intro to Systematic Theology <sup>1</sup>		OT 113	Old Testament Introduction	3 hrs	ST 223	Doctrine of Christ	3 hrs	ST 343	Doctrine of the Church	2 hrs
	or		3 hrs					Elective <sup>3</sup>	4 hrs		Elective <sup>3</sup>	2 hrs
	ST 113	Doctrine of God <sup>1</sup>										
		Elective <sup>3</sup>	2 hrs									
		Mentored Ministry Field Experience <sup>2</sup>										
		<b>Total: 12 hrs</b>			<b>Total: 14 hrs</b>			<b>Total: 14 hrs</b>			<b>Total: 11 hrs</b>	

Footnotes for MDiv, General Studies (Residential) emphasis:

<sup>1</sup> ST 101 and ST 113 are offered in both the fall and spring semesters. Space permitting, the student can choose which semester to take each course.

<sup>2</sup> Curricular Practical Training requirements: After completion of PT 111, students should begin their field experience. Two Case Study Seminars (PT 021P, PT 021P-2) are required, which can be taken any semester after completing PT 111.

<sup>3</sup>Of the 18 elective credits required for the MDiv General, 8 of the credits must be from the PT department. The remaining elective credit may be from any department. If students wish to take PT 121 in place of PT 123, they should choose to take that course instead of an elective in the fall semester.

<sup>4</sup>If students have taken PT 121, they should take two hours of elective credit in place of PT 123.

## MDiv, General Ministries (Online)

### Recommended Course Schedule, Four-Year Plan

Total semester hours required: 93 (excluding Languages) 111 (including Languages)

	First Year			Second Year			Third Year			Fourth Year		
Summer				NT 003	Greek 3	3 hrs	OT 013	Hebrew 3	3 hrs	OT 223	OT History and Theology II	3 hrs
				NT 111	New Testament Introduction	3 hrs	OT 113	Old Testament Introduction	3 hrs	NT 211	Gospels	4 hrs
				PT 121/123	Theo. of Preaching or Gospel Comm.	2 hrs	ST 211	Doctrine of Man	2 hrs	PT 0213	Mentored Ministry Seminar <sup>2</sup>	0.5 hrs
										Elective <sup>1</sup>		3 hrs
						Total: 8 hrs			Total: 8 hrs			Total: 10.5 hrs
Fall	AP 101	Intro to Apologetics	3 hrs	OT 011	Hebrew 1	3 hrs	CH 311	Reformation	3 hrs	NT 223	Acts and Pauline Epistles	4 hrs
	NT 001	Greek 1	3 hrs	AP 213	Principles of Christian Apologetics	3 hrs	ST 213	Christian Ethics	2 hrs	OT 311	Prophets	3 hrs
	ST 101	Intro to Systematic Theology	3 hrs	CH 223	Medieval Church	2 hrs		Elective <sup>1</sup>	3 hrs	ST 343	Doctrine of Church	2 hrs
		Elective <sup>1</sup>	2 hrs	PT 0211	Mentored Ministry Seminar <sup>2</sup>	0.5 hrs		PT Elective <sup>1</sup>	2 hrs	PT 0214	Mentored Ministry Seminar <sup>2</sup>	0.5 hrs
			Total: 11 hrs			Total: 8.5 hrs			Total: 10 hrs			Total: 9.5 hrs
Winter	PT 111	Intro to Pastoral Counseling	2 hrs	PT 343	Theology of Evangelism & Missions	2 hrs		PT Elective <sup>1</sup>	2 hrs		PT Elective <sup>1</sup>	2 hrs
			Total: 2 hrs			Total: 2 hrs			Total: 2 hrs			Total: 2 hrs
Spring	CH 211	Ancient Church	2 hrs	OT 012	Hebrew 2	3 hrs	CH 321	Church in the Modern Age	4 hrs	NT 311	Hebrews to Revelation	3 hrs
	NT 002	Greek 2	3 hrs	NT 123	Hermeneutics	4 hrs	OT 211	OT History and Theology I	3 hrs	OT 323	Poetry & Wisdom	2 hrs
	PC 111	Intro to Pastoral Counseling	2 hrs	PT 311	Foundations of Leadership	2 hrs	ST 223	Doctrine of Christ	2 hrs	ST 313	Doctrine of Salvation	3 hrs
			Total: 10 hrs			Total: 9.5 hrs			Total: 10 hrs			Total: 8 hrs

Footnotes for MDiv, General Studies (Online) emphasis:

<sup>1</sup> Of the 18 elective credits required for the MDiv General, 6 of the credits must be from the PT department. The remaining elective credit may be from any department.

<sup>2</sup> Students must be completing a module of Mentored Ministry in order to register for a seminar.

## Master of Arts (Religion)

### Biblical Studies Emphasis

#### Recommended Course Schedule, 2-Year Plan

Total semester hours required: 56 (Excluding Languages) 74 (Including Languages)

	First Year			Second Year		
Summer	OT 011	Hebrew 1	3 hrs			
	OT 012	Hebrew 2	3 hrs			
	Total: 6 hrs					
Fall	AP 101	Introduction to Apologetics	3 hrs	CH 321	Church in the Modern Age	4 hrs
	NT 001	Greek 1	3 hrs	NT 211	The Gospels	4 hrs
	NT 111	General Introduction to the New Testament	3 hrs	NT 311	Hebrews to Revelation	3 hrs
	OT 013	Hebrew 3	3 hrs	OT 211	OT History and Theology I	3 hrs
	ST 101	Intro to Systematic Theology	3 hrs	OT 311	Prophetical Books	3 hrs
	Department courses or electives <sup>1</sup>			Department courses or electives <sup>1</sup>		
	Total: 15+ hrs			Total: 17+ hrs		
Winter	NT 002	Greek 2	3 hrs	Elective		
	Total: 3 hrs			Total: 3 hrs		
Spring	NT 003	Greek 3	3 hrs	NT 223	Acts and Pauline Epistles	4 hrs
	NT 123	Hermeneutics	4 hrs	OT 223	OT History and Theology II	3 hrs
	OT 113	Old Testament Introduction	3 hrs	OT 323	Poetry and Wisdom	2 hrs
	Department courses or electives <sup>1</sup>			ST 313	Doctrine of Salvation	4 hrs
	Total: 12+ hrs			SUM EVAL	Summative Evaluation	1 hr
				Department courses or electives <sup>1</sup>		
				Total: 14+ hrs		

<sup>1</sup>Refer to the Department Course table below.

### Biblical Studies Emphasis

#### Recommended Course Schedule, 3-Year Plan

	First Year			Second Year			Third Year		
Fall	AP 101	Introduction to Apologetics	3 hrs	CH 321	Church in the Modern Age	4 hrs	NT 211	The Gospels	4 hrs
	NT 001	Greek 1	3 hrs	OT 011	Hebrew 1	3 hrs	NT 311	Hebrew to Revelation	3 hrs
	NT 111	General Introduction to the New Testament	2 hrs	Department courses or electives <sup>1</sup>			OT 211	OT History and Theology I	3 hrs
	ST 101	Intro to Systematic Theology	3 hrs				OT 311	Prophetical Books	3 hrs
	Total: 12 hrs**			Total: 12 hrs			Total: 13 hrs		
Winter	NT 002	Greek 2	3 hrs	OT 012	Hebrew 2	3 hrs			
	Total: 3 hrs			Total: 3 hrs					
Spring	NT 003	Greek 3	3 hrs	NT 123	Hermeneutics	4 hrs	NT 223	Acts and Pauline Epistles	4 hrs
	Department courses or electives <sup>1</sup>			OT 013	Hebrew 3	3 hrs	OT 223	OT History and Theology II	3 hrs
				OT 113	Old Testament Introduction	3 hrs	OT 323	Poetry and Wisdom	2 hrs
							ST 313	Doctrine of Salvation	3 hrs
							SUM EVAL	Summative Evaluation	1 hr
	Total: 9+ hrs			Total: 10 hrs			Total: 13 hrs		

<sup>1</sup>Refer to the Department Course table below.

## Master of Arts (Religion)

### Biblical Studies Emphasis

#### Recommended Course Schedule, 2.5-Year Plan (Spring Start)

Total semester hours required: 56 (excluding Languages) 74 (including Languages)

	First Year	Second Year	Third Year
Summer		NT 002 Greek 2 3 hrs NT 003 Greek 3 3 hrs <i>Total: 6 hrs</i>	
Fall		NT 101 New Testament Introduction I 3 hrs OT 011 Hebrew 1* 3 hrs ST 101 Intro to Systematic Theology 3 hrs <i>Department courses or electives<sup>1</sup></i> <i>Total: 9+ hrs</i>	CH 321 Church in the Modern Age 4 hrs NT 211 The Gospels 4 hrs NT 311 Hebrews to Revelation 3 hrs OT 211 OT History and Theology I 3 hrs OT 311 Prophetic Books 3 hrs <i>Total: 17 hrs</i>
Winter		OT 012 Hebrew 2 3 hrs <i>Total: 3 hrs</i>	
Spring	AP 101 Introduction to Apologetics 3 hrs NT 001 Greek 1* 3 hrs <i>Department courses or electives<sup>1</sup></i> <i>Total: 6+ hrs</i>	NT 123 Hermeneutics 4 hrs OT 013 Hebrew 3 3 hrs OT 113 Old Testament Introduction 3 hrs <i>Total: 10 hrs</i>	NT 223 Acts and Pauline Epistles 4 hrs OT 223 OT History and Theology II 3 hrs OT 323 Poetry and Wisdom 2 hrs ST 313 Doctrine of Salvation 3 hrs SUM EVAL Summative Evaluation 1 hr <i>Total: 12 hrs</i>

<sup>1</sup>Refer to the Department Course table below.

Department Courses (select one course in each group)					
	Church History <sup>2</sup>			Systematic Theology & Apologetics <sup>2</sup>	
CH 211	Ancient Church	2 hrs	AP 213	Principles of Christian Apologetics	3 hrs
CH 223	Medieval Church	2 hrs	ST 113	Doctrine of God	3 hrs
CH 311	The Reformation	3 hrs	ST 211	Doctrine of Man	2 hrs
			ST 223	Doctrine of Christ	3 hrs
			ST 231	Christian Ethics	2 hrs
			ST 343	Doctrine of the Church	2 hrs

<sup>1</sup>The total number of department and elective credits needed for the Biblical Studies emphasis is 10.

<sup>2</sup>Students are advised to note semesters in which courses are offered and the prerequisites for each course in order to properly plan their course of study.

## Master of Arts (Religion)

### Theological Studies Emphasis

#### Recommended Course Schedule, 2-Year Plan

**Total semester hours required: 56 (excluding Languages) 74 (including Languages)**

	First Year			Second Year		
Summer	OT 011	Hebrew 1	3 hrs			
	OT 012	Hebrew 2	3 hrs			
	<b>Total: 6 hrs</b>					
Fall	AP 101	Introduction to Apologetics	3 hrs	CH 311	The Reformation	3 hrs
	CH 211	Ancient Church	2 hrs	CH 321	Church in the Modern Age	4 hrs
	NT 001	Greek 1	3 hrs	OT 211	Old Testament History and Theology I	3 hrs
	NT 111	General Introduction to the New Testament	3 hrs	ST 211	Doctrine of Man	2 hrs
	OT 013	Hebrew 3	3 hrs	<i>Department courses or electives<sup>1</sup></i>		
	ST 101/113	Intro to ST or Doctrine of God**	3 hrs			
	<b>Total: 16 hrs</b>			<b>Total: 12+ hrs</b>		
Winter	NT 002	Greek 2	3 hrs	<i>Elective</i>		
	<b>Total: 3 hrs</b>			<b>Total: 3 hrs</b>		
Spring	CH 223	Medieval Church	2 hrs	AP 213	Principles of Christian Apologetics	3 hrs
	NT 003	Greek 3	3 hrs	ST 223	Doctrine of Christ	3 hrs
				ST 313	Doctrine of Salvation	3 hrs
	NT 123	Hermeneutics	4 hrs	ST 343	Doctrine of the Church	2 hrs
	ST 101/113	Intro to ST or Doctrine of God**	2 hrs	SUM EVAL	Summative Evaluation	1 hr
	<i>Department courses or electives<sup>1</sup></i>			<i>Department courses or electives<sup>1</sup></i>		
	<b>Total: 12+ hrs</b>			<b>Total: 12+ hrs</b>		

<sup>\*\*</sup>ST 101 and ST 113 are offered both in the fall and in the spring. Space permitting, the student can choose the semester in which to take each course.

<sup>1</sup>Refer to the Department Course table below.

## Theological Studies Emphasis

### Recommended Course Schedule, 3-Year Plan

	First Year			Second Year			Third Year		
Fall	AP 101	Introduction to Apologetics	3 hrs	CH 311	The Reformation	3 hrs	CH 321	Church in the Modern Age	4 hrs
	CH 211	Ancient Church	2 hrs	OT 011	Hebrew 1	3 hrs	OT 211	OT History and Theology I	3 hrs
	NT 001	Greek 1	3 hrs	<i>Electives<sup>1</sup></i>			ST 211	Doctrine of Man	2 hrs
	NT 101	General Introduction to the New Testament	3 hrs				<i>Department courses<sup>1</sup></i>		
	ST 101/113	Intro to ST or Doctrine of God**	3 hrs						
	<b>Total: 14 hrs</b>			<b>Total: 6+ hrs</b>			<b>Total: 9+ hrs</b>		
Winter	NT 002	Greek 2	3 hrs	OT 012	Hebrew 2	3 hrs			
	<b>Total: 3 hrs</b>			<b>Total: 3 hrs</b>					
Spring***	CH 223	Medieval Church	2 hrs	AP 213	Principles of Christian Apologetics	3 hrs	ST 223	Doctrine of Christ	3 hrs
	NT 003	Greek 3	3 hrs	NT 123	Hermeneutics	4 hrs	ST 313	Doctrine of Salvation	3 hrs
	ST 101/113	Intro to ST or Doctrine of God**	3 hrs	OT 013	Hebrew 3	3 hrs	ST 343	Doctrine of the Church	2 hrs
	<b>Total: 8 hrs</b>			<b>Total: 10 hrs</b>			SUM EVAL	Summative Evaluation	1 hr
							<i>Department courses<sup>1</sup></i>		
							<b>Total: 9+ hrs</b>		

<sup>\*\*</sup>ST 101 and ST 113 are offered both in the fall and in the spring. Space permitting, the student can choose the semester in which to take each course.

<sup>\*\*\*</sup>For the Winter/Spring semester of the student's first year, enrollment status is part time at 11 total credits (1 credit less than required for full-time status). Students who are on visa or who receive financial aid should contact the appropriate offices to discuss their status during this term.

<sup>1</sup>Refer to the Department Course table below.

## DMin Modules

With the exception of the Korean DMin, course codes for DMin modules can be interpreted following the example and table below:

### Example — DFP 1: Foundations for Preaching: Theology and Practice

<i>Program</i>	<i>Level</i>	<i>Concentration (Not used for Core Modules)</i>	<i>Course Number</i>
<b>DMin (D)</b>	Core (C)	<b>Preaching (P)</b>	<b>1</b>
	<b>Foundation</b>	Leadership (L)	2
	Elective (E)	Counseling (C)	3
		Evangelism (E)	4

### Core Modules

DC 1: Biblical Theology for the Practice of Ministry

DC 2: The Westminster Assembly and Pastoral Ministry

DC 3: Covenantal Apologetics for Ministry

### Preaching Concentration

DFP 1 Foundations for Preaching: Theology and Practice

DEP 1: Preaching Christ from the Psalms and Proverbs

PP 790: Foundations for Christian Public Witness

### Leadership Concentration

DFL1: Foundations for Leadership: Theology and Practice

DEL 1: Church Revitalization

### Evangelism and Missions Concentration

DFE 1: Foundations for Evangelism and Missions: Theology and Practice

### Counseling Concentration



## Appendix E

### Pastor/Preacher Recruitment Email

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[Date]

Dear [Recipient]:

As a faculty member and Ph.D. student in the School of Music at Liberty University, I am conducting research to understand better the training pastors and preachers receive to effectively plan sermons that include the theology and principles of worship to share with their congregations. The purpose of my research is to answer the research question, “How do pastors and preachers communicate the theology and principles of worship to their congregation?” I am writing to invite eligible participants to join my study.

Participants must be the following:

- A Christian believer
- A local preacher that resides in Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey, or Pennsylvania
- Formally trained and prepared for writing and delivering sermons to church congregations
- Experience with delivering sermons to a local church congregation during the main weekly service

Participants, if willing, will be asked to do the following as part of the study:

- Participate in an initial audio- and video-recorded 45-60 minutes individual, private interview. Participants may be asked 1-3 follow up questions needed for clarification after the interview.
- Provide the researcher with three recent sermons as Word documents, or as another option, three sermon outlines as Word documents with corresponding video links.
- Participate in an audio- and video-recorded 15-20 minutes follow-up individual, private interview to provide feedback and review the research findings for accuracy

The initial and follow-up interviews will occur at participants' local churches or via Zoom. Both interviews will be audio-recorded regardless of if they are held in-person or virtually through Zoom. Names and other identifying information will be requested as part of this study, but the information will remain confidential.

Participants will receive a \$25 gift card to [www.Christianbooks.com](http://www.Christianbooks.com) that they are encouraged to use for the purchase of Christian preaching and worship material.

To participate, please contact me at [REDACTED] or via email at [REDACTED] for more information or to schedule an interview. A consent document is attached to this email. The consent document contains additional information about my research. If you choose to participate, you will need to sign the consent document and return it to me via email at the time of the interview.

Sincerely,

Janicka Newbill, D.W.S.  
Adjunct Instructor, Department of Music and Worship

## Appendix F

### Recruitment Flyer

# Research Participants Needed

## Embedding the Theology and Principles of Worship in Sermon Preparation and Pastoral Training

- Are you a Christian believer?
- Are you a local preacher that resides in DE, MD, NJ, or PA?
- Were you formally trained and prepared to write and deliver sermons to church congregations?
- Do you have at least three years of experience delivering sermons to a local church congregation during the main weekly service?
- If you answered **yes** to each of the questions listed above, you may be eligible to participate in a research study.

---

The purpose of this research study is to better understand the training pastors and preachers receive to effectively plan sermons that include the theology and principles of worship to share with their congregations.



Participants will be asked to participate in two individual interviews: one audio- and video-recorded 45-60 minutes initial interview & one audio- and video-recorded 15-20 minutes follow-up interview. The two interviews will occur at participants' local churches or via Zoom.  
Participants will also be asked to provide three recent sermons as part of the study.

---

The findings of this study could encourage pastors and preachers to intentionally and explicitly embed worship principles when delivering their sermons to church congregations. Participants will receive a \$25 gift card to [www.Christianbooks.com](http://www.Christianbooks.com) that they are encouraged to use toward the purchase of Christian preaching and worship materials to help support the role of preparing and delivering sermons.



If you would like to participate, please contact the researcher at the phone number or email address provided below.

---

The researcher will provide participants with a consent document before the initial individual, private interview via email.



Janicka Newbill, a faculty member and student in the School of Music and Worship at Liberty University, is conducting this study.

Please contact Dr. Janicka Newbill at [REDACTED] for more information.

## Appendix G

### Pastoral/Preacher Consent Form

**Title of the Project:** Embedding the Theology and Principles of Worship in Sermon Preparation and Pastoral Training

**Principal Investigator:** Janicka Newbill, B.A, M.Ed., M.A., D.W.S., Liberty University School of Music

#### Invitation to be Part of a Research Study

My name is Janicka Newbill, and I am a Ph.D. candidate in Christian worship at Liberty University. You are invited to participate in a research study that explores the role pastors and preachers have in growing their congregation's knowledge of the theology and principles of worship. I am inviting pastors and preachers to be in the study who have experience with preparing and delivering sermons to Christian believers for their main weekly worship service.

In order to participate you must::

- Be a Christian believer
- Be a local preacher that resides in Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey, or Pennsylvania
- Have had formal training and preparation for writing and delivering sermons to church congregations (e.g., seminary courses, church organization training)
- Have at least three years of experience delivering sermons to a local church congregation during the main weekly service (e.g., for most local churches, this occurs on Sunday mornings)

Taking part in this research project is voluntary. Please read this entire form and ask questions before deciding whether to participate in this research.

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

The study aims to identify the training pastors and preachers receive to effectively plan sermons that include the theology and principles of worship to share with their congregations. The study will help determine the developments over the past ten to twenty years to require pastors and preachers to understand the theology and principles of worship. The study will also help determine the opportunities church congregations have to connect the topic preached to developing a lifestyle of worship.

#### What will happen if you take part in this study?

If you agree to be in this study, I will ask you to do the following things:

1. Participate in one audio- and video-recorded individual interview for 45-60 minutes based on your schedule availability. The researcher may follow up with one to three clarifying questions in an email or through a brief 15 minutes telephone conversation. The interview location will be at your discretion, either in person at your local church or via Zoom with the link provided by the primary investigator, Janicka Newbill.

2. Provide the researcher with three recent sermons in a Word document. The sermons reflect a recent preached message shared with a church congregation at a main weekly service within the last 2 years.
3. Provide feedback to the researcher on the accuracy of the research findings in a 15-20 minutes audio- and video-recorded follow-up interview. The researcher will email the findings at least ten (10) days before the follow-up interview. The follow-up interview location will be at your discretion, either in person at your local church or via Zoom with the link provided by the primary investigator, Janicka Newbill.

### **How could you or others benefit from this study?**

Participants should not expect to receive a direct benefit from participating in this study.

However, in general, this study can benefit local pastors and preachers in several ways. The findings of this study could encourage pastors and preachers to intentionally and explicitly embed worship principles in their sermons to church congregations. The findings of this study could also encourage accredited seminaries to consider requiring a course on worship as part of the coursework and degree completion plans for pastors and preachers. This would help create more well- rounded pastoral leaders and preachers who know the history and application of biblical content and the role of worship from a biblical perspective to the present day.

### **What risks might you experience from being in this study?**

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

### **How will personal information be protected?**

The records of this study will be kept private. Published reports will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a subject. Research records will be stored securely, and only the researcher will have access to the records.

- Participant names and church affiliations from the individual interviews will be kept confidential through the use of codes.
- Interviews will be conducted in a location where others will not easily overhear the conversation.
- Data will be stored on a password-locked computer equipped with a firewall, anti-virus software, and encryption. Data may be used in future presentations.
- Interviews will be recorded and transcribed. Recordings will be stored on a password-locked computer equipped with a firewall, anti-virus software, and encryption for at least three years, as required by the university, and then erased.

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

Participants will receive a \$25 gift card to [www.Christianbooks.com](http://www.Christianbooks.com) that they are encouraged to use for purchasing Christian preaching and worship materials to help support the role of preparing and delivering sermons.

### What are the costs to you to be part of the study?

The participants incur no cost to participate in the study.

### Is study participation voluntary?

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will be respected and not affect your current or future relations with Liberty University. If you decide to participate, you are free not to answer any questions or withdraw your participation at any time without affecting your current or future relations with Liberty University.

### What should you do if you decide to withdraw from the study?

If you choose to withdraw from the study, please contact the researcher at the email address/phone number included in the next paragraph. Should you choose to withdraw, data collected from you will be destroyed immediately and will not be included in this study.

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

The researcher conducting this study is Janicka Newbill. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact the researcher at [REDACTED]. You may also contact the researcher's faculty sponsor, Dr. Scott Connell, 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 [irb@liberty.edu](mailto:irb@liberty.edu).

*Disclaimer: The Institutional Review Board (IRB) is tasked with ensuring that human subjects research will be conducted in an ethical manner as defined and required by federal regulations. The topics covered and viewpoints expressed or alluded to by student and faculty researchers are those of the researchers and do not necessarily reflect the official policies or positions of Liberty University.*

### Your Consent

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

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

☐ The researcher has my permission to audio-record and video-record me as part of my participation in this study.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Subject Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature & Date

Liberty University  
IRB-FY21-22-1236  
Approved on 8-10-2022

## Appendix H

### Pastor/Preacher Recruitment Email Response to Flyer

---

[Date]

Dear [Recipient]:

Thank you for expressing an interest to be a research participant in the “Embedding the Theology and Principles of Worship in Sermon Preparation and Pastoral Training” study. As a faculty member and Ph.D. student in the School of Music at Liberty University, I am conducting research to understand better the training pastors and preachers receive to effectively plan sermons that include the theology and principles of worship to share with their congregations. The purpose of my research is to answer the research question, “How do pastors and preachers communicate the theology and principles of worship to their congregation?”

Participants must be the following:

- A Christian believer
- A local preacher that resides in Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey, or Pennsylvania
- Formally trained and prepared for writing and delivering sermons to church congregations
- Experience with delivering sermons to a local church congregation during the main weekly service

Participants, if willing, will be asked to do the following as part of the study:

- Participate in an initial audio- and video-recorded 45-60 minutes individual, private interview. Participants may be asked 1-3 follow up questions needed for clarification after the interview.
- Provide the researcher with three recent sermons as Word documents, or as another option, three sermon outlines as Word documents with corresponding video links.
- Participate in an audio- and video-recorded 15-20 minutes follow-up individual, private interview to provide feedback and review the research findings for accuracy

The initial and follow-up interviews will occur at participants’ local churches or via Zoom. Both interviews will be audio-recorded regardless of if they are held in-person or virtually through Zoom. Names and other identifying information will be requested as part of this study, but the information will remain confidential.

Participants will receive a \$25 gift card to [www.Christianbooks.com](http://www.Christianbooks.com) that they are encouraged to use for the purchase of Christian preaching and worship material.

To participate, please review the consent document attached to this email. The consent document contains additional information about my research. If you choose to participate, you will need to sign the consent document and return it to me via email at the time of the interview.

Sincerely,

Janicka Newbill, D.W.S.  
Adjunct Instructor, Department of Music and Worship

## Appendix I

### Local Preachers Interview Protocol

#### Title of the Project

Embedding the Theology and Principles of Worship in Sermon Preparation and Pastoral Training

#### **Interview Outline**

- I. Introductions
- II. State the Purpose of the Interview
- III. Review Key Terms, Definitions, & Worship Principles
- IV. Initial Interview Questions
- V. Closing

<b>Research Central Question</b>
----------------------------------

*(Note: This section is a reference for the researcher)*

#### The central question of the research:

How do pastors and preachers communicate the theology and principles of worship to their congregation?

#### The sub-questions for the research are the following:

1. What seminary courses/training for sermon preparation do pastors and preachers receive?
2. How do the seminary courses/training for sermon preparation reflect the theology and principles of worship?
3. What do the pastors and preachers understand about the theology and principles of worship?
4. How do pastors and preachers ensure the theology and principles of worship are shared with the congregation through sermon delivery?

<b>Participant Information</b>
--------------------------------

Date of Interview:

Time of Interview:

Virtual Location of Interview:

Interviewer:

Interviewee:

Audio recording File Name:

## **Introduction Script**

Good Morning/Afternoon/Evening!

Thank you again for your willingness to participate in this study. I know your time is valuable and your knowledge and expertise on the subject of worship, pastoral training, and sermon preparation are valuable to this research.

As a reminder, the purpose of this study is to identify the training pastors and preachers receive to effectively plan sermons that include the theology and principles of worship to share with their congregations. Your participation today will also help determine the opportunities church congregations have to connect the topics preached to developing a lifestyle of worship.

I am going to ask you a few questions. I will also drop the questions into the virtual chat. Please feel free to answer liberally as your responses and the recording of this interview will remain anonymous with no personal identification indicated in the published dissertation. This interview should last for about 45 minutes.

Before we begin, I'd like to share with you a document that contains some key terms to norm our discussion. Please take a few minutes to review the key terms, definitions, and examples of worship principles. *(Give the participant 3 to 5 minutes to review the document.)*

Do you have any questions or comments about the key terms and principles?

Please feel free to use this document as a reference when responding to the interview questions.

Ok, let's begin!

<b>Participant Initial Interview Questions</b>
------------------------------------------------

(Note: Be sure to drop each question in the virtual chat feature.)

1. Tell me about yourself and your role at your current church.
2. How long have you been preaching sermons to church congregations?
3. Where did you receive formal training to prepare, write, and deliver sermons to church congregations?
4. Describe the formal training you received to prepare, write, and deliver sermons to church congregations (e.g., topics, class titles).

5. What specific seminary classes or church organization training did you receive on worship theology and the principles of worship?
6. What resources do you presently utilize to support developing and delivering your sermons to church congregations?
  1. Are there any specific worship resources you use to support developing & delivering your sermons to church congregations?
7. Describe/Explain your understanding of worship theology and principles of worship.
  1. What principles of worship are regularly shared when you deliver your sermons to church congregations?
8. When developing your sermon, what essential elements or themes do you intentionally include in your sermons?
  1. Most sermon preparers are encouraged to include essential elements or themes such as salvation, repentance, righteousness, forgiveness, and spiritual growth.  
  
How do you ensure listeners of your sermons explicitly connect the essential elements or themes to the theology of worship and principles of worship?
  2. What elements of your sermon support church congregations in developing a lifestyle of worship?

### **Closing Script**

I have asked all of the questions for this interview.

Is there any information you would like to add to our discussion on worship, pastoral training, and worship principles, that I did not ask? (*Wait for a participant's response.*)

Do you have any questions for me? (*Wait for a participant's response.*)

You provided some great information!

Over the next few weeks, I will review the three sermons you provided. Based on this interview and the sermons, I will transcribe the interview and compile some key findings of this interview and the sermons. Then I will email you to schedule a follow-up interview that should take no more than 15-20 minutes. The follow-up interview will allow you to review the key findings for accuracy and provide additional feedback.

This concludes our initial interview! Again, thank you for taking the time to participate in this Interview.

(*Stop recording.*)

## Appendix J

### Local Preacher Initial Interview Reflection Tool

Instructions: After conducting the local preacher's initial interview, use field notes and audio recordings to reflect on the participant's responses relating to pastoral training and sermon preparation in the areas of Bible and worship. Place an "X" in the appropriate column to indicate "yes," "no," or "implied" for each criterion.

Expressed Training and Preparation	Yes	No	Response Implies a Connection to a Worship Principle Though not Explicitly Stated
The participant received formal training to prepare, write, & deliver sermons.			
<b>Biblical Content Focus...</b>			
The participant received seminary courses/training on biblical theology.			
The participant clearly articulated at least three biblical principles, without prompting from the interviewer.			
The participant expressed intentionally developing sermons to include biblical principles.			
The participant stated at least three examples of explicitly connecting sermon themes to biblical theology & principles.			
The participant utilizes resources that focus on Biblical principles to develop and deliver a sermon.			
<b>Worship Content Focus...</b>			
The participant received seminary courses/training on worship theology.			
The participant clearly articulated at least three worship principles, without prompting from the interviewer.			
The participant expressed intentionally developing sermons to include worship principles.			
The participant stated at least three examples of explicitly connecting sermon themes to the theology & principles of worship.			
The participant clearly articulated examples of elements in their sermons that support their congregation with developing a lifestyle of worship.			
The participant utilizes resources that focus on worship principles to develop and deliver a sermon.			

\*Clearly articulate: without prompting from the interviewer

**Interviewer's Additional Observations/Notes**

*(Body language/Level of Comfort Answering the Questions/Participant Spontaneous Feedback)*

## Appendix K

### Local Preachers Follow-Up Interview Protocol

#### Title of the Project

Embedding the Theology and Principles of Worship in Sermon Preparation and Pastoral Training

#### **Follow-Up Interview Outline**

- I. Opening
- II. Participant Reviews the Key Findings
- III. Participant Provides Feedback for Accuracy
- IV. Closing

#### Research Central Question

*(Note: This section is a reference for the researcher)*

#### The central question of the research:

How do pastors and preachers communicate the theology and principles of worship to their congregation?

#### The sub-questions for the research are the following:

1. What seminary courses/training for sermon preparation do pastors and preachers receive?
2. How do the seminary courses/training for sermon preparation reflect the theology and principles of worship?
3. What do the pastors and preachers understand about the theology and principles of worship?
4. How do pastors and preachers ensure the theology and principles of worship are shared with the congregation through sermon delivery?

#### Participant Information

Date of Follow-Up Interview:

Time of Follow-Up Interview:

Virtual Location of Follow-Up Interview:

Interviewer:

Interviewee:

Audio Recording File Name:

### **Introduction Script**

Good Morning/Afternoon/Evening!

I appreciate you participating in the following interview. How was your day? *(Wait for a response and affirm what the participant shares.)*

### **Review of Key Findings Script**

I had the opportunity to transcribe our interview and analyze the three sermons that I received. This information is captured on three documents: An interview protocol, an interview reflection tool, and a sermon analysis tool.

Before I share the actual documents I would like to note some “glows and grows” that will appear in the information.

*(Share some “glows and grows” – this will vary for each participant.)*

Please take the time to review the documents for accuracy.

*(Give the participant 8 to 10 minutes to review the documents.)*

*After 8 to 10 minutes pass...*

Do you need additional time to review the information? *(Wait for a response.)*

### **Participant Feedback Script**

After reviewing the information, do you have any questions or comments about the information on the documents? *(Note the participant’s questions and comments below.)*

### **Closing Script**

Thank you for providing time for this follow-up interview and giving your thoughts and feedback today. You are appreciated for your role and work as a preacher!

You have provided valuable input that I hope will inspire more preachers to embed worship theology and principles when they are preparing and delivering sermons. What you do as a preacher is an extraordinary calling. Thank you for being so willing to actively grow your church congregation and build the kingdom of God.

This concludes our follow-up interview!

*(Stop recording.)*

## Appendix L

### Local Preacher Sermon Analysis Tool

Instructions: Using the participant's sermons submitted for research, analyze the Biblical and worship content as well as the needs of the intended audience by placing a check mark (✓) in the appropriate column to indicate if each criterion is evident, partially evident, or not evident.

**Participant ID:**

**Participant Sermon #**

**Sermon Title:**

**Sermon Link:**

**Scripture:**

**Length:**

Criteria for Sermon Biblical Content	Evident (Explicit)	Partially Evident (Implied or Inferred)	Not Evident
The sermon content has a precise theme/topic. E.g., creation, sin, judgment, redemption, and resurrection. <i>(What?)</i>			
The sermon content relates to Godly principles/universal biblical theological principles. (Biblically-Based)			
The sermon content includes word pictures, storytelling to make the biblical text and the biblical world come alive in the mind of the listeners. <i>(Illustration)</i>			
The sermon content makes historical connections to present-day connections. (Application)			
The sermon content addresses personal piety, care of the soul, social justice, community life, and/or the institutional church. <i>(Application)</i>			
The sermon content presents emotional experiences of the gospel. <i>(So what?)</i>			
The sermon content makes a demand upon the hearers and encourages listeners to respond/elicit growth & change in response to hearing the Word of God. <i>(Now what?)</i>			
The sermon content encourages Biblical Study skills. <i>(Now what?)</i>			
The sermon content encourages development in a listener's Christian walk. <i>(Now what?)</i>			

Criteria for Sermon Worship Content <b>Was the content (any of the criteria) mentioned explicitly, or implied by the speaker?</b>	Evident (Explicit)	Partially Evident (Implied or Inferred)	Not Evident
The sermon content relates to worship theology/principles. ( <i>Biblically-Based</i> )			
The sermon content includes a biblical definition of worship. ( <i>Worship Theology</i> )			
The sermon content shares a specific component/characteristic of biblical and historical worship with the listeners. ( <i>Worship Theology</i> )			
The sermon content expresses God's expectations for a worshipful relationship with Him. ( <i>Call to Worship</i> )			
The sermon content encourages reverence for God. ( <i>Worship Response</i> )			
The sermon content encourages acts of worship. E.g., adoration, praise, thanksgiving. ( <i>Worship Response</i> )			
The sermon content addresses worship service. (Corporate worship: lamenting, prayer, communion, confession) ( <i>Call to Worship</i> )			
The sermon content encourages listeners to seek personal encounters with God. ( <i>Call to Worship</i> )			
The sermon content encourages the study of worship ( <i>Worship Theology</i> )			
The sermon content encourages listeners to develop a lifestyle of worship/worship as all of life. (E.g., evangelism, recreation, entertainment, justice, vocation, Bible study, & prayer) ( <i>Call to Worship</i> )			
<b>The sermon content included the following worship principles:</b> <b>Were the following principles explicitly stated or implied by the speaker, where the listeners would have to make an inference that there is a connection to the worship principle?</b>			
The wonder of God demands our worship of Him.			
The work of God demands our worship of Him.			
The wisdom of God demands our worship of Him.			
The wishes of God demand our worship of Him.			
Christian worship is biblical.			
Our multifaceted God loves multifaceted worship.			
Worship is our response to God's revelation, and God reveals Himself in His Word.			
Christian worship is dialogic and relational.			
God is all about a worshipful relationship.			
Christian worship is expressive and formative.			
Christian worship is generous and an excellent outpouring of ourselves before God.			
Authentic worship requires Holiness.			
Worship requires growth.			
Worship is a process.			
Worship involves a routine.			

Worship as a practice takes time.			
Real worshipers demonstrate personal integrity.			
Authentic worship requires a sacred space			
Christian worship is covenantal.			
Worship brings God's revelation of His presence.			
Worship begins with obedience & it is central to worship.			
Worship involves and equals submission.			
God wants worship from repentant hearts.			
Brokenness is a prerequisite for genuine worship.			
True worshipers keep His Word, seek Him, hide the Word, proclaim His truth, rejoice in His statutes, meditate on His precepts, consider His ways, and delight in His Word.			
Worship requires a living sacrifice.			
Christian worship is Trinitarian.			
Jesus is our eternal object of worship.			
The Holy Spirit augments our worship.			
Christian worship is communal.			
Worship involves service.			
Authentic worship includes right actions toward others.			
Authentic worship embraces love for the people of God.			
Christian worship is in but not of the world.			
Genuine worship transcends time and culture.			
Worship is a part of God's cycle of life.			
Worship is a lifestyle.			

**Exact use of the word/phrase during the Sermon**

(indicate the number of times the speaker states the following word/phrase.)

- **Worship**
- **Corporate worship**
- **Personal worship**
- **Relationship (pertaining to God)**
- **Worship involves relationship**
- **Lifestyle**
- **Worship is a lifestyle**

Appendix M

IRB Approval Letter

Date: 12-11-2022

IRB #: IRB-FY21-22-1236  
Title: Embedding the Theology and Principles of Worship in Pastoral Training and Sermon Preparation  
Creation Date: 6-26-2022  
End Date:  
Status: **Approved**  
Principal Investigator: Janicka Newbill  
Review Board: Research Ethics Office  
Sponsor:

Study History

Submission Type	Initial	Review Type	Limited	Decision	<b>Exempt - Limited IRB</b>
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Key Study Contacts

Member	Scott Connell	Role	Co-Principal Investigator	Contact	
Member	Janicka Newbill	Role	Principal Investigator	Contact	
Member	Janicka Newbill	Role	Primary Contact	Contact	

## Appendix N

### Example of Summary Report: Interview & Sermon Analysis Findings

Greetings [Participant's Name],

Below are the summary findings related to the initial interview that occurred on Monday, March 13, 2023, and the three sermons submitted for analysis.

Please review the information below to address the following questions:

- Does the summary of the findings accurately reflect what was discussed in the interview?
- Does the summary of the findings accurately reflect the content of the submitted sermons for analysis?

#### SUMMARY OF INITIAL INTERVIEW FINDINGS

- ❖ The participant received formal training to prepare, write, & deliver sermons.
- ❖ The participant received seminary courses/training on biblical theology.
- ❖ The participant clearly articulated at least three biblical principles, without prompting from the interviewer.
- ❖ The participant expressed intentionally developing sermons to include biblical principles.
- ❖ The participant stated at least three examples of explicitly connecting sermon themes to biblical theology & principles.
- ❖ The participant utilizes resources that focus on Biblical principles to develop and deliver a sermon.
- ❖ The participant received seminary courses and seminar training on worship theology, practical logistics associated with worship, and the connection of biblical theology to worship.
- ❖ The participant clearly articulated at least three worship principles, without prompting from the interviewer.
- ❖ The participant expressed intentionally developing sermons to include worship principles.
- ❖ The participant stated at least three examples of explicitly connecting sermon themes to the theology & principles of worship.
- ❖ The participant clearly articulated examples of elements in their sermons that support their congregation with developing a lifestyle of worship.
- ❖ The participant utilizes resources that focus on worship principles to develop and deliver a sermon.

## SUMMARY OF SERMON ANALYSIS FINDINGS

Sermon 1: [Sermon Title]

Sermon 2: [Sermon Title]

Sermon 3: [Sermon Title]

### **There was evidence/partial evidence of the following:**

Sermon(s) 1, 2, 3:

The sermon content has a precise theme/topic. E.g., creation, sin, judgment, redemption, and resurrection.

Sermon(s) 1, 2, 3:

The sermon content relates to Godly principles/universal biblical theological principles. (Biblically-Based)

Sermon(s) 1, 2, 3:

The sermon content includes word pictures, storytelling to make the biblical text and the biblical world come alive in the mind of the listeners. (*Illustration*)

Sermon(s) 1, 2:

The sermon content makes historical connections to present-day connections. (*Application*)

Sermon(s) 1, 2, 3:

The sermon content addresses personal piety, care of the soul, social justice, community life, and/or the institutional church. (*Application*)

Sermon(s) 1, 3:

The sermon content presents emotional experiences of the gospel. (*So what?*)

Sermon(s) 1, 2:

The sermon content makes a demand upon the hearers and encourages listeners to respond/elicit growth & change in response to hearing the Word of God. (*Now what?*)

Sermon(s) 1:

The sermon content encourages Biblical Study skills. (*Now what?*)

Sermon(s) 1, 2, 3:

The sermon content encourages development in a listener's Christian walk. (*Now what?*)

Sermon(s) 1, 2, 3:

The sermon content relates to worship theology/principles. (*Biblically-Based*)

Sermon(s) 1:

The sermon content expresses God's expectations for a worshipful relationship with Him. (*Call to Worship*)

Sermon(s) 1, 2:

The sermon content encourages acts of worship. (E.g., adoration, praise, thanksgiving.) (*Worship Response*)

Sermon(s) 1:

The sermon content encourages listeners to seek personal encounters with God. (*Call to Worship*)

---

The sermon content included the following worship principles as evident/partially evident:

- ❖ God is all about a worshipful relationship. [Sermons 1, 3]
- ❖ Worship brings God's revelation of His presence and who God is. [Sermon 1]
- ❖ God wants worship from repentant hearts. [Sermon 3]
- ❖ Jesus is our eternal object of worship. [Sermon 1]
- ❖ The Holy Spirit augments our worship. [Sermon 3]
- ❖ Christian worship is communal. [Sermons 1, 2]
- ❖ Worship involves service. [Sermon 1]
- ❖ Authentic worship includes right actions towards others. [Sermon 2]

Additional Notes:

The word "worship" was mentioned 2 times in Sermon 1.

The word "worshiper" was mentioned 2 times in Sermon 2.

The word "relationship" pertaining to God was mentioned 1 time in Sermon 1.

### RESEARCH PARTICIPANT REFLECTION/RESPONSE

After reviewing the above summary findings for the initial interview and the three sermons, would you like to provide additional comments/thoughts? Do you have any questions regarding the findings?

If you answered *YES* to either question, we could do the following:

- Option #1: Set up a 10-15 minutes Zoom meeting to discuss; or
- Option #2: Set up a 10-15 minutes phone call to discuss; or
- Option #3: You can share your comments/thoughts/questions in an email and I will respond promptly [REDACTED].

If you prefer option #1 or #2, please let me know which option you would like via email [REDACTED] text, or phone call [REDACTED] as soon as possible to schedule a date and time.

If you prefer option #3, please reply to my email and I will respond to your comments/thoughts/questions within 48 hours.

If there are *NO* additional comments, thoughts, or questions, please reply to my email and let me know by **Thursday, April 6, 2023.**



*Your participation in this research project is most appreciated! – Dr. Newbill*

## Appendix O

### Interview Questions & Coding Themes

#### **Formal Training**

**Question:** Describe the formal training they received to prepare, write, and deliver sermons to church congregations.

##### Themes

- 1) Course/topical training
- 2) Sermon development
- 3) Sermon delivery
- 4) Student evaluations
- 5) Non-preaching ministerial training

#### **Training on Worship Theology and Principles**

**Question:** What specific seminary classes or church organization training did you receive on worship theology and the principles of worship?

##### Themes

- 1) Training
- 2) No training

#### **The Understanding of Worship Theology and Principles**

**Question:** Describe or explain your understanding of worship theology and principles of worship.

##### Themes

- 1) An understanding of worship theology
- 2) An understanding of worship principles
- 3) Parameters for worship
- 4) An imprecise understanding of worship theology and principles or nearing off-topic

#### **Sermon Delivery & Worship Principles**

**Question:** What principles of worship are regularly shared when you deliver your sermons to church congregations?

##### Themes

- 1) Principles related to God or Jesus Christ
- 2) Principles related to the believer
- 3) A generalized response

#### **Intentional Elements or Themes in Sermons**

**Question:** What essential elements or themes do you intentionally include in your sermons?

##### Themes

- 1) Christian walk
- 2) God or Christ-centered
- 3) Technology or media

#### **Explicitly Connecting Elements or Themes to Worship**

**Question:** How do you ensure listeners of your sermons explicitly connect the essential elements or themes to the theology of worship and principles of worship?

Themes

- 1) A biblical-related strategy
- 2) An audience-related strategy

**Supporting Congregations Developing a Lifestyle of Worship**

**Question:** What elements of your sermon support church congregations with developing a lifestyle of worship?

Themes

- 1) Sermon-related responses
- 2) Pre/Post sermon-related responses
- 3) Generalized responses

## Appendix P

### Peer Debriefing Questions, Comments, & Responses Transcript

#### The Participants

**Peer Debriefing:** Because you conducted these interviews, did you know any of these people in advance?

**Researcher:** Yes, some I did, some I did know in advance, but when I say know, they're acquaintances.

**Peer Debriefing:** So I think you might want to just disclose that, you know, at least that you know them, and that you have a long term relationship. But you have known one of the participants for up to 20 years. Just so that that is stated but I don't think it is biased you. If anything, it might have biased, them

**Researcher:** Yes, so disclose the participants that I know. So let me look at that real fast while I have you. Okay, so I should define the level of knowing them.

**Peer Debriefing:** Yeah, that way, you're making some kind of distinction and I don't even know what you need to say that about all of them. You could just say in your demographics of these people were not known to the researchers, 6 people were acquaintances in one person the researcher has known for a number of years, and would consider referring.

**Peer Debriefing:** Is there any possibility that any of these participants told you what you wanted to hear? Or maybe exaggerated their responses in order to sound more pastor-like.

**Researcher:** No, and I'm going to show you...So every participants has their own folder, and in each folder after I did the protocol, as you saw, and I'm taking notes while they're talking. Once the protocol was done. I then did what is called a reflection tool, and in that reflection tool there's biblical content focused questions and then there's worship focus questions.

#### Coding the Initial Interview Transcripts

**Peer Debriefing:** Okay, so is this the first one that you're doing right now? You haven't done any others.

**Researcher:** The very first one.

**Peer Debriefing:** Okay. So you're already seeing some things that are popping up, which is good. But before you go ahead and move those into categories or scenes, are you planning to go to the next interview and see what things pop up there? Are you trying to find the same things at this point?

**Researcher:** No. What I want to do is as I read the next person I'm going to see which themes are also present in the next person as well as any new themes.

**Peer Debrief:** Yes. Perfect. Okay.

**Researcher:** And then, if I have to, if I find that oh, this theme is kind of similar, or the content is similar to what [participant's name] may have said, but [participant's name] just said it a different way. Then I'll go back and add the code so that it's consistent.

**Peer Debrief:** True. Okay, and how many times are you planning to read each of these?

**Researcher:** I'm thinking, I'm going to probably at least 2 to 3 and there's 15 of them. So I'm thinking, like I'll have [participant's name] open. I'll have the next person's open, and then they'll probably because I have a big screen and then go back and forth. If that makes sense. So I'm probably, and even I'll be honest with you, I've skimmed all of them already. The coding piece will probably touch them at least another 2 times each going forward.

### **Initial Interview Google Form Data**

**Peer Debrief:** It seems like a lot of them didn't know the answer and so they just talked and tried to come up with an answer like, that's what seems like it happened so.

**Researcher:** Yes. Yeah, and that's this. So that's this color here. That became it implies, yeah.

**Peer Debrief:** I think it will be important when you report your results, that you put that in as a limitation of because of a pastoral position. They don't want to appear as though they have not studied something or done something that might be like an element of shame or embarrassment to them.

**Researcher:** Yeah, and it's not their fault.

**Peer Debrief:** So right, and so many of them may have tried to answer a question and answered it inaccurately, because they didn't want to say no, so that might be something as a limitation.

**Peer Debrief:** My other question is about when you report your themes. Are you planning to report the dissent? The will ones that didn't align with your themes.

**Researcher:** Tell me what you mean.

**Peer Debrief:** So like, we were looking at [participant's name] earlier, and it talked about worship training with ties to music. What if you have like 14 of your participants, say that. But one of them says I had worship training, and it wasn't tied to music. Are you planning to report that? As well? Yeah.

**Researcher:** Yes, I am having looked at all the interviews and the data from what they shared. Honestly, I can tell you, just off the top of my head, none of them simply just received worship theology tried in

**Peer Debrief:** Sure so, and that's just an example. But when, when there is a clear theme that presents itself but there's a few people that don't match that same thing I think it would be like an honest reporting to say there were a few participants who did not fall into this category to express this. Instead, however, the overwhelming majority said this, you know, if that makes sense, I just think that'll make it a more of a an honest result.

**Researcher:** Got it. Yes.

### **Sermon Analysis Data**

**Peer Debrief:** My only question about the sermons is who chose the sermons?

**Researcher:** They did.

**Peer Debrief:** Did they do it before or after the interview?

**Researcher:** Before, I knew they would skew the data if they knew the questions.

Peer Debrief: Excellent, okay, perfect. That was where I was headed alright. Great!

### **Worship Principles Data**

**Researcher:** I'm not going put all of them. I don't think. I might put it in the appendix, but I will use my finding section Chapter 4 to just focus on which principles did come up.

**Peer Debrief:** Well, and even framing it in a way of like each pastor mentioned at least one principle of worship, or at least a certain number, because they're not going to do all of that. But if they do get some of them, it's important to know. Yeah.

**Researcher:** Right, right.

### **Use of Specific Terms in the Sermons**

**Researcher:** Okay. And then I did capture like I said the number of times that people said certain words....How many times in their sermons they might have mentioned the worship. But, as you can see, 27 times, it's not mentioned at all.

**Peer Debrief:** Right now, is it possible that they used a different worship, like worship is a lifestyle? Is it possible that somebody said, like holistic worship? Or, if they said it in a different way, full life worship, or something, would that be counted here?

**Researcher:** Yes, it would have but they didn't, honestly...I didn't fast forward the service I sat from the moment they said, open up your Bible till they started the altar call, or they started

praying or they said amen, or whatever they significantly said it that ended the sermon portion. I counted deviations if they said worshiper, worshiping in here as well, and I even noted, I have a separate paper that tells me where I captured it. It's all combined in terms of what they did say.

**Peer Debriefers:** Awesome. Yeah, you did a lot with this.

### **Summary Reports of Findings**

**Researcher:** Then the last thing I did was I took that information, and each one of them received a letter, a summary of my findings with the interview. This section was evident. If it was partial, I didn't put it on the letter. However, you'll notice it'll say what their 3 sermons are, and it says evident or partial, and then I noted that each one for them of the areas, and then even the sermon content included the following principles, and which sermons that apply to.

**Peer Debriefers:** Have you received responses from this?

**Researcher:** Yeah, the few that have they're more like, wow, this is good. Okay, alright and that is where I've been keeping track with this document here. If they're green, that means they're good. They don't need a follow-up. The rest of them, I'm waiting to hear from them.

### **Closing Feedback**

**Peer Debriefers:** I think this is this is really well done. It is well thought out. So as far as the peer, debriefing goes, I think you thought through your bases, and you really are trying to mitigate any personal bias.