LIBERTY UNIVERSITY


**Evangelistic Mentorship to Address Youth Decline at Dawn Baptist Church**


A Thesis Project Report Submitted to

the Faculty of the Liberty University School of Divinity

in Candidacy for the Degree of

Doctor of Ministry


by

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**Thesis Project Approval Sheet**

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Dr. Jack Steven Davis - Mentor

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THE DOCTOR OF MINISTRY THESIS PROJECT ABSTRACT
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This paper presents an intervention addressing young adults' tendency to leave the church after adolescence. This thesis project proposes that false conversion in a person's formative years drives young adult church departure. For those who have a relationship with Christ, the most probable cause for departure is the lack of sanctification and growth due to an absence of biblical training. Therefore, this project designed and implemented an evangelical mentorship program specifically designed for youth in the church. While the research approach focuses more on quantitative methods, it also has qualitative elements. This research is qualitative in many of the self-reflections and the researcher's journal assessments, but it also has quantitative elements such as spiritual maturity and growth assessments, which each utilize numerical data. The research focuses more on the quantitative elements to prove the intervention's effectiveness in a spiritual capacity. This thesis project presents tested ideas that other churches and ministers with young adult departure from the church. Evangelical mentorship designed and applied in this contextualized project can be applied in various youth ministry contexts.

## Acknowledgments

To my wonderful master, savior, friend, and God, Jesus Christ, Who has been incredibly patient with me through my twenty-six years. As the Forgaill wrote, "Continue to be my vision; my treasure, Thou art."

To my amazing wife and partner in ministry, who encouraged me to continue in seminary to this level, I am grateful to our Lord for bringing us together to serve Him.

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To my mentors and professors who have mentored me throughout the years, I am blessed to count you as my friends.

To my church, with whom I endeavor to serve our King, I consider myself highly blessed to serve with you. I am grateful to each one of you more than I can express.

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## Abbreviations

DMIN        *Doctor of Ministry*

ESV         *English Standard Version*

FBC         *First Baptist Church*

DNOW      *Discipleship Now*

# CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

## Introduction

Some church children grow into adulthood and leave the church and even the faith despite having been in church from birth. This departure seems sudden and unexpected to most faithful churchgoers, but the symptoms are present in the youth even while they participate in youth programs for over a decade. The youth who leave the church often experienced a false conversion, which not only leads to a decline of the church but can even culminate in the church closing its doors in the future. The consequences of youth departure are even more severe than a church possibly closing; the souls of the ones who leave are in jeopardy due to false conversions in their youth.

A decline in the population of emergent adults in the church body is not a new problem, but the consequences of the decline have proven to be severe over time. It is both a common issue and a serious one that impacts the church. Every year more church children reach adulthood and leave the church, only to return sporadically or not at all. These young adults often live in a way in which the church would not approve. They choose to cross lines of biblical morality. Emergent adults who have grown up in the church often leave suddenly after a period of decline during their late teen years. For these adults, as independence from their parents increases, their attendance at church decreases. This decline, and near non-existence, of young adults in the church poses many grave concerns, but among those, there is one chief concern: the salvation of the souls for which Dawn Baptist Church has both the opportunity and the obligation

to minister. Christian mentorship at Dawn Baptist Church will address the problem of youth leaving by helping the youth to come to a biblical relationship with Christ by modeling that relationship in a personal context.

A person's departure from the church never to return is often a visible expression of an inward reality, that conversion has not happened (1 John 2:19, English Standard Version). A church must implement attempts to counter the trend of emergent adult departures by ensuring that proper teaching and modeling of the gospel are being done in the most effective way. A church can borrow pedagogical concepts and best practices to formulate an evangelistic approach that can effectively disciple youth. The emergent adult population is leaving the church primarily due to many youths experiencing false conversions despite professions during childhood. This action-research project focuses on addressing both the issue, those who have false conversions, and a method of addressing the problem for the future through biblical and practical robust mentorship. The impacts of this action research project extend to the lives of the individual churchgoer, the new emergent adult, and the involvement of mentors addressing the spiritual development of emergent adult mentees.

The decline of the youth population as youth reach adulthood is much more significant than what is easily observable. The tangible side of the problem, church departure, is the easily observable metric that this research will use to determine whether the thesis has been successful in the long term. To understand the effects short term, the researcher will need to investigate apparent spiritual growth in the youth population as compared to the relative spiritual standings of emergent adults who have left the church. If the youth and the emergent adults have a comparable spiritual formation, it follows that helping the youth grow in their spiritual formations through evangelistic mentorship will result in a net change in the youth remaining in

the church. Evangelistic mentorship serves a two-fold purpose, addressing both the tangible and measurable side of emergent adults leaving the church, while also dealing with the more important and more invisible matter of salvation.

The problem on the surface is that the emergent adults leave the church. The departure begins spiritually when emerging adults are teens. The difficulty beneath the problem statement is that the young adults who leave the church after having been in the church since their youths are spiritually dead. A mentorship model would help the youth better understand the profession they can make. If Dawn Baptist Church implements an evangelistic mentorship program, it could evoke a positive response in the teen demographic, addressing and fixing the spiritual barriers prior to those barriers festering and resulting in leaving the church. A biblical mentorship program designed and executed to a biblical standard will address the underlying problems which manifest themselves in a person's leaving the church indefinitely. A revitalized mentorship model will address the root cause of declining church attendance in the emergent adult population because it will have established relationships between church members that model Christ and His compassion, effectively drawing the lost to Christ and the saved closer to Christ. There are a variety of barriers that impede youth at Dawn Baptist Church from coming to salvation, but as in all cases where someone has not been converted, the ultimate barrier is the heart that refuses to commit to Jesus and believe in Him for salvation; this action-research project employs a mentorship model that focuses on modeling godly, Christian relationships in order to teach Christ effectively and break down the barriers to salvation that may be present.

The proposed evangelistic, mentorship model will work in Dawn Baptist Church's youth ministry context. The members and children of the church share the same basic culture. The youth groups at Dawn Baptist Church are close-knit, just like the rest of the church, in part due to

the closeness of the family relationships as well as the small number of members. The small size of the church works in favor of the intervention because the small number of youths in the church helps to ensure that the needs of teens are not overlooked. The ministry context is a small, relationally close-knit church.

## Ministry Context

### Demographics

Dawn Baptist Church is a mostly homogenous church, consisting of mostly Caucasian people. The church has 484 members. There are two people in the younger demographic, the teenage demographic, that are mixed African American and Caucasian. The church is evenly mixed along ages, except for, the demographics under thirty years old, which are the emergent adults, the teens, and the kids and babies. The kids and babies' demographic is the largest of the three groups, followed by teens, and lastly, the emergent adults. The adult populations are divisible into the elderly, which are above sixty-five, the elder adults, who are between forty and sixty-four, and the adults, from ages thirty to thirty-nine. The approximate number of the elderly is around 150, and the adult population is nearly 300. Active members in the elderly demographic are about thirty, and the active members in the adult demographic consist of about 50. The men's and women's demographics are approximately evenly split. The number of regular members that attend stands in large contrast to the number of teenage members who are in regular attendance. The number of members in the teenage population is 10. There are 8 regular members of the teenage group. The income demographic of Dawn Baptist church is generally low-income or middle class. The church is made up of mostly day laborers and tradesmen such as carpenters, life-long farmers, and electricians.

**Teen Demographic**

The teen demographic consists of people who are thirteen to seventeen years old. The normal progression of teens at the church is for the teen to announce that he or she has been saved and then join the church as a member. Dawn Baptist Church's teen member population is currently 9. The teen demographic experiences the most fluctuation in its activity rate as churchgoers that stop coming to Dawn Baptist Church begin the process during the teen years This group is currently homogenous with two in the teenage class that are mixed black and white. This group is evenly split sexually, 50% female and 50% male. The teen demographic leads to the emergent adult demographic, a group of people from ages eighteen to twenty-nine.

**Emergent Adult Demographic**

The emergent adult demographic is a group of people at the church who are eighteen to twenty-five years old.[1] The emergent adult demographic can also be individuals from ages eighteen to twenty-nine.[2] For the purposes of the project, the researcher considers the latter definition to be the most appropriate. Of that group, there are many who are members, around thirty, but only three are regularly active members. This group mainly consists of college-age students and newly married adults. Most of this group stopped attending in their teen years. Some have renounced the faith entirely. This demographic is homogenous racially, all white. This group is mostly female. This group is about 30% male and 70% female.

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[1] Ze′ev Hochberg and Melvin Konner, "Emerging Adulthood, a Pre-Adult Life-History Stage," *Frontiers in Endocrinology* 10 (2020), para 1.

[2] Jeffrey Jensen Arnett, *Emerging Adulthood: The Winding Road from the Late Teens through the Twenties* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2015), 7.

The emergent adult demographic is important because these are the freest members who have the most to give to the church. When they leave either just prior to emergent adulthood or during emergent adulthood, their absence is felt by the other members. This demographic is not only an encouragement to the other members but also a welcome relief; this demographic can take on the jobs of the older members who either grow too old, too sick to continue, or pass away. The vacancy of the emergent adult population has caused further declines and has hindered the ministry in other ways. Visiting emergent adults do not often remain at Dawn Baptist Church for long due to the lack of the emergent adult demographic remaining there. The issue perpetuates itself in the way that a strong base of emergent adults must be present for visiting ones to stay. The salvation of these individuals is also important as a forsaking of the assembly of the saints is indicative of a spiritual problem, and that problem begins during their formative years. Ken Ham argues that youth often leave the church spiritually during their youth, but it goes unnoticed until they leave physically as well.[3] The spiritual departure may be a consequence of a non-Christian cultural and environmental influence on youth as well as cynicism.[4] The solution must involve leading youths to salvation while they are teens and then mentoring them prior to them reaching emergent adulthood in order to have an established group of emergent adults that visiting emergent adults could join.

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[3] Ken Ham, Britt Beemer, and Todd Hillard, *Already Gone: Why Your Kids Will Quit Church and What You Can Do to Stop It* (Master Books, 2009), 32.

[4] Francis Jae-ryong Song, "Why Young Adult Believers are Turning Away from Religions: With a Focus on Religious Congregations in Downtown Seoul," *Religions* 10, no. 9 (2019): para 1.

Location

Dawn Baptist Church is in Rockmart, Georgia, off highway 101 that connects

Cedartown, Georgia, to Rockmart, Georgia. Dawn Baptist Church is one of many Baptist

churches in the area and helps to serve the city of Rockmart's various communities such as

downtown, Antioch, Calloway, Stringer Road, Belleview, Clarkwood, and Polk County in

general.

History

Dawn Baptist Church began as a tent revival meeting led by a pastor from a church in

Rome, Georgia. It became a church in the 1950's. The membership of the church has grown

steadily over the last seventy years. As time has progressed, Dawn Baptist Church has

incorporated youth programs and has steadily developed its youth classes to meet the needs of

the community. Dawn Baptist Church began its van ministry in the 1990's to help teens and

children of the community make it to church when they did not have a way. In 2022, Dawn

Baptist Church has a variety of ministries focused on ministry to the teenage demographic.

**Problem Presented**

The problem is a matter of spiritual life and death: souls are in jeopardy, and the church

can work towards remedying the situation to avoid the consequences. Emergent adults leave

Dawn Baptist Church despite having been involved in youth programs since their childhoods.

This may reflect poor discipleship at home, but the church could revitalize its own mentorship

program to address the tendency of children leaving the church. The consequences for this

problem are incredible in significance as it is not merely a leaving of the church that is the

problem so much that it is the implications of leaving and not returning. A student's rejection of

the church in general is indicative of a rejection of Christ (1 John 2:19). It is not merely a matter of students leaving a church but more so a great fear for the souls of the people who are leaving. Leaving the church is the most obvious symptom and one that must be prevented to help this demographic effectively. The manifestation of the problem is the emergent adult's leaving of the church, which bespeaks of a problem within their spirits; the worst-case scenario is that the emergent adult who has been raised in the church has not experienced genuine conversion or suffers from insufficient biblical development. Although someone may give a variety of reasons for leaving the church that are nonspiritual on the surface, the reasons for church leaving all stem from the same root spiritual issue. The problem is that emergent adults who have attended Dawn Baptist Church since childhood leave and do not return due to false conversion.

The problem compounds itself: the absence of emergent adults creates an environment in which visiting emergent adults do not want to fellowship. These young adults are lacking in part because there are few emergent adults to build a large enough group for visitors to join. While the numbers are important as the consequences of declining numbers could prove catastrophic for the ministry, the numbers are only a secondary concern. The problem goes much deeper than teenagers leaving the church as emergent adults. While it is distressing to see numbers going down, it is heartbreaking for many congregants that the children who have been at the church for over a decade suddenly leave and do not return.

The problem goes much further than the external symptom of church leaving. This decline in the youth occurs long before the child leaves the church as an emergent adult, and youth ministries in the church have done little to build a foundation that fosters longevity. The reasons for leaving emerge in childhood but are present long before the person leaves. Ken Ham et al., argue that children leave the church in every way but physically prior to their emergent

adulthood.[5] It is when they reach emergent adulthood that they can choose whether to go to church: the roots of this problem are ingrained in the youth before they leave the church. Consequently, the church must intervene while these children are in the building to win them to Christ. The root cause is a lack of conversion in youth during their time in Sunday School and youth programs.

The primary concern and the root cause of most of the church leaving in the emergent adult demographic is false conversion during youth, as evidenced by emergent adults that come from the church often forsaking the church and the faith entirely. The problem has deeper ramifications as the teenagers who leave do not replace the older adults in the church body, and as a result, some members take on many different jobs. Most importantly, teens that leave the church send the message with their actions that they may not have truly been saved, even though during their childhood or teen years they may have made a profession of faith and even participated in singing with the choir. The action of leaving the church and not returning to the church, or any church, casts doubt on the salvation of the emergent adults who have been in the spiritual care of the church for their entire childhoods. The most significant impact of these teens becoming emergent adults and their subsequent departure is that their claims of salvation are suspect based on 1 John 2:19.[6] For many congregants, the idea that the children of the church could truly be lost is heartbreaking. While 1 John 2:19 does not necessarily teach that someone leaving a particular church is unsaved, it does suggest that leaving the church and the faith are

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[5] Ken Ham, Britt Beemer, and Todd Hillard, *Already Gone: Why Your Kids Will Quit Church and What You Can Do to Stop It* (Green Forest: Master Books, 2009), 32.

[6] "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us. But they went out, that it might become plain that they all are not of us" (ESV).

connected as the action of leaving the church to never return also violates Hebrews 10:25.[7] These

emergent adults have become the mission field instead of becoming workers in the church. Jones

explains that many congregations are ineffective at teaching or persuading the youth to receive

the gospel.[8] An intervention must be implemented in the youth population to prevent a future

departure. It is possible that a sizable percentage of these emergent adults who leave have had a

false conversion yet believe they are converted. The ramifications for this problem are deep and

eternally significant.

There are a variety of potential reasons for this problem, but all of them stem from a

common root. Teens have job concerns as they age that sometimes require that they work on

Sundays and Wednesdays. Some teens might become jaded by the politics of many of the

members of the church, who tend to lean politically right or conservative. Some teens might also

be upset by church politics, holding grudges against certain church members for legitimate or

illegitimate reasons. Others may leave because of growing up through the church youth programs

and suddenly having an abrupt introduction to the adult side of the church. They become adults

in the church with limited knowledge of what the church is and who all the adults are in the

church; emergent adults will have few if any relationships with adults outside of their immediate

family. This lack of outside of the family relationships makes it easier for the emergent adult to

fall away because there are fewer ties and less of a relational motivation for them to keep

coming. Building up these relationships will be a critical factor in a successful intervention.

Other emergent adults may have other reasons for leaving the church that do not fit into any of

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[7] "Not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near" (ESV).

[8] Marion D. Jones, *Youth Decline in Church Growth and Attendance* (ProQuest, 2020), 3.

the previous categories, but the underlying reason that motivates the rest of the given reasons is an issue with the spiritual formation and biblical knowledge of the emergent adults. This action research project will seek to design a mentorship model specifically designed to help lead youth to genuine conversion.

The researcher has designed a mentorship program in which older adults of the church are trained in educational principles to help mentors override generational gaps between mentor and mentee. Mentors will benefit from theological training in this program, and they will also be privileged to work in persuading mentees to follow Christ. The researcher combines training in both education and theology to create a program that will enable older adults to help the youth of the church overcome barriers to a saving relationship with Christ. An evangelistic mentorship model is the best approach to addressing emergent adult leaving because it addresses all the causes, including the problem that has the most significant eternal consequences.

## Purpose Statement

The current mentorship program in the church is an outgrowth of individual familial discipleship more than a mentorship program that can benefit the children of the church. Mentorship in this way is effective for the children that it focuses on, but it does not focus on the children who are most at risk. If mentorship is created along biblical lines, then there is potential that the church would see a reversal in dropping attendance due to a reversal in the spiritual health of those who would end up leaving. The spiritual barriers that emerge in youth during their formative years must be addressed in any successful intervention. Mentorship would be the ideal solution. To form the mentorship model in the church, it is likely that it would need a curriculum and potential assignments as well as volunteers for the role of mentorship. It is critical that mentors of the church be the most spiritually mature and biblically astute people in

the congregation to guide a younger person to a state of better spirituality. Students who have not received biblical mentorship during their youth express many reasons for leaving the church that biblical mentorship could address. The purpose of this DMIN action research project is to intervene in the lives of youth at risk of spiritually and physically departing the church.

Dawn Baptist Church can institute a mentorship model that is intentional and dedicated to seeking the lost, but the lost in this program will be the unsaved children in the church. This action research project will institute a mentorship model that is evangelical in nature for the purpose of leading youths to Christ before they reach the age that they can no longer be reached. This action research project will investigate and seek to prove both the fruits of a biblical mentorship model on a person's spiritual health; more specifically, this action research project will seek to establish the positive effect that such a model could have on the spiritual health of Dawn Baptist Church's teen and eventual emergent adult demographics. This action research project will be designed to use mentorship primarily apparatus for evangelization of younger people in the church.

## Basic Assumptions

The purpose of this project ultimately is to participate in the Lord's commission to seek and save the lost while also honoring the Lord's high regard for children.[9] This action research project's purpose carries with it some basic assumptions, many of which are biblical. One of the primary biblical assumptions considers attendance and participation in the local church to be highly important not only to the church but also to the believer's spiritual welfare. The purpose of this research project also assumes that, based on 1 John 2:19, those who leave the church were

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[9] See Jesus' remarks regarding children in Mark 9:42 and Matthew 25:40.

not genuine converts. 1 John 2:19 likely means the faith in general, which is why emergent adults who have left Dawn Baptist Church for another Bible-believing church are excluded from the research. This action research only addresses emergent adults who have left the church and the faith entirely. This action research's purpose, to seek and save the lost, targets the youth to ensure that the church is doing all in its abilities to lead the youth to Christ before they become emergent adults because it is assumed that those who leave the church entirely are not genuine converts and would meet the description of those who leave from 1 John 2:19.

This action research assumes that the emergent adults who have fallen out of the church entirely have never received salvation. The primary assumption for this research is that the emergent adults who have left the church have abandoned the faith. This assumption could lead to labeling unfairly a person as lost, so special care must be taken to prevent unfair judgments. The evangelistic mentorship model operates under the assumption that emergent adults are leaving the faith in their adult years, evidenced by their leaving of the church. The evangelistic mentorship model also assumes that targeting the youth specifically can prevent the church departure by leading the youth to Christ in a way that is effective for the youth.

**Definitions**

This project concerns itself primarily with the teen ministry at Dawn Baptist Church. Throughout the project, terms are used to explore the elements of the faith and biblical doctrine thought to be important in both the spiritual formation of youth as well as in biblical mentorship and what those terms will mean for Dawn Baptist Church. Key terms used in this project include sanctification, spiritual formation, and other terms significant for analyzing the problem and providing evidence for the possible solution.

*Biblical Mentorship*. A practice in which an elder in the faith establishes a caring

relationship with someone younger that is based on and devoted to helping the mentee grow in

holiness, or to salvation if the mentee is unsaved, by teaching mentees and providing a model for

mentees to follow. The term "Biblical Mentorship" is not used in Dawn Baptist Church, nor is

"mentorship." This project will design a mentorship model for the church and begin to

implement the concept. David Robinson argues that mentoring is mostly based on compassion,

but it also requires the elements of leading and teaching mentees in wisdom and discipleship.[10]

*Emergent Adult.* This demographic is ages eighteen through twenty-nine. Arnett argues

that this demographic could be either eighteen to twenty-five or eighteen to twenty-nine on the

basis that American adults on average are entering marriage and parenthood around age thirty.[11]

*Sanctification*. This is an aspect of the Christian life in which a believer grows in Christ's

likeness in that he or she begins to give up sin gradually and steadily behave and believe in ways

more consistent with biblical and moral principles. Norman Geisler concludes that sanctification

is "deliverance from the power of sin" and "is a present and continuous process of believers

becoming Christlike, accomplished by the Holy Spirit's power and presence."[12]

*Scaffolding.* This is the practice of gradually withdrawing supports from the student so

that the student eventually can perform the task or skill without assistance. This research uses

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[10] David Robinson, *Soul Mentoring: Discover the Ancient Art of Caring for Others* (Cambridge, UK: James Clarke, 2016), 1.

[11] Jeffrey Jensen Arnett, *Emerging Adulthood: The Winding Road from the Late Teens through the Twenties* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2015), 7.

[12] Norman L. Geisler, *Systematic Theology: In One Volume* (Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House, 2011), 806.

scaffolding in the educational and emotional senses for the purpose of cultivating a strong

relationship between mentor and mentee and for the purpose of training.[13]

*Spiritual Formation.* This is the quality of a person's spirituality or walk or relationship

with Christ which can be observed in a Christian's character, wisdom, and faith. The chosen

definition is vague because the definition for spiritual formation is inexact. James Wilhoit

describes spiritual formation as "the pathway to flourishing in Christ" but also declares that it

"remains a messy and imprecise business in which character, wisdom, and faith play a more

significant role than theories and techniques."[14]

## Limitations

There are a variety of possible limitations to this research. It is highly possible that the

size of the research regarding participants will be small. Dawn Baptist Church is a small church.

The sample size should be suitable given that the emergent adult population includes people

from ages eighteen to twenty-nine. As a contingency, the field of study could be opened to those

who have well surpassed emergent adult parameters if those adults professed faith in Christ as a

child, grew up in Dawn Baptist Church, and then stopped coming to church altogether sometime

in their emergent adult years. Size is a limitation because a small size could cause the data to

skew more toward the shared position of a few rather than the consensus of the whole or

majority. Dawn Baptist Church is a small church with several interconnected families who have

been members of the church since the church's founding.

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[13] Johanna Lönngren et al., "'Taking Emotions Seriously in Sustainability Education: A Theoretical Exploration of 'Emotional Scaffolding' and How It Can Be Used in Research and Practice," *European Conference on Education Research*, 2021.

[14] Jim Wilhoit and Dallas Willard, *Spiritual Formation as if the Church Mattered: Growing in Christ through Community* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2022), 3.

Youths involved in the intervention might attempt to fake a change or certain beliefs to appease their mentors or their family. Not much can be done about this other than the intervention because these individuals have been practicing faking it throughout their childhoods. The researcher cannot directly make the mentees be completely candid about their beliefs, nor can the researcher cause spiritual change. The change must come because of the work of the Holy Spirit. The mentor can work, through a relationship with the mentee, to overcome their mentee's defenses.

Another possible limitation is the willingness of the emergent adults to participate. If this happens, the researcher could expand to the adults beyond the emergent demographic if these adults left the church in their emergent adult years after spending their childhoods at the church. There are some emergent adults who may feel offended being asked to participate as they would not consider themselves out of the church, even if they are. The researcher's asking of a prodigal emergent adult could very well be met with offense and deepen the divide between the emergent adult and the church. The emergent adult might refuse due to other concerns as well as an apathy toward the church, or the researcher, or the research. Increasing the amount of people interviewed in this process decreases the likelihood of not gathering enough suitable data.

Another limitation could be a participant's willingness to be forthcoming and honest. An emergent adult in this study will have been raised in the church and would likely know the answers that the researcher would view as correct or preferable. Accordingly, it is possible that such emergent adults, to avoid offending the researcher or the members of the church, would be reluctant to be candid with answers regarding faith and feelings about the church. Although the participants in this research would be those who have fallen away from the church, it is not necessarily the case that the emergent adult wishes to cause offense to the researcher or the

church, largely because in most cases the church is still made up of many of the participant's family members. A participant could be reluctant because of fears of inadvertently revealing beliefs of which his or her family would disapprove.

The most important limitation to this research is perhaps God's sovereign design and saving at the time and place He wills. While the research project proposed and implemented can evangelize and minister to the youth in ways that are faithful to biblical and extra-biblical wisdom, it is ultimately up to God to draw someone to salvation and then to save. No project or researcher can save anyone. God's choice in saving is considered a limitation in this case because God determines the effectiveness of this project regarding salvation. Although God uses human means to evangelize the lost, God alone causes salvation: the best this action research project can do is to be faithful and hold to biblical principles expressed in relevant Scriptures regarding mentorship.

**Delimitations**

There are a variety of elements that are within the researcher's control. The researcher can control the parameters by which the research participants are selected. The parameters must be set in such a way to ensure there is an evident spiritual problem. As such, the participants in research must not have left Dawn Baptist Church to join another biblical church. Those who have left Dawn Baptist Church to join another congregation are not included in this research. This research's basic assumptions regarding the salvation of the emergent adults only works if the emergent adults in question have fallen out of the church entirely, not if they have moved to another church that is doctrinally orthodox.

Also within the researcher's control is the demographics chosen for this research. There are four demographics needed: the adult demographic of all subdivisions, the emergent adults,

the teens, and the pre-teen demographic (9–12). All must be assessed for beliefs, understandings, and spiritual formation. It is important to assess these facets because the emergent group will reveal what deficiencies in their spiritual formation caused them to fall out, whereas teens and pre-teens will give mentors a picture of how to guide their mentees away from the same result. Mentors can address the spiritual struggles that their mentees face while giving them a model of Christ that they can see, so it is important that mentors have a high degree of spiritual formation.

The researcher also has control over the variety of instruments and assessment items that will be used in gathering data from participants as well as the method by which those assessments are completed. The researcher will implement educational strategies such as modeling, scaffolding and student engagement and active learning, and will train mentors to also use these strategies. Teens will be assessed in their Sunday School or Wednesday Night classes. Emergent adults will complete their survey virtually.

## Thesis Statement

Biblical mentorship in the church results naturally in cultivating more biblical thoughts regarding the church as well as creating positive relationships that will benefit children prior to becoming emerging adults. A mentorship model will help promote spiritual growth, which includes both relationally and in biblical education. Primarily, restoring a biblical mentorship model will be a means of evangelization. 1 Peter 5 and Titus 2 are starting places in Scripture for building a mentorship program to be effective. Biblical mentorship has a variety of benefits and can adequately fulfill a desperate need in the lives of the youth population. Although an instituted, evangelistic mentorship program would be unlikely to completely stop the young adult population from leaving once that population reaches emergent adulthood, it would unravel several of the major contributing factors that the emergent adult population gives for leaving the

church. If a biblical mentorship model is implemented, then more youth will remain in the church at emergent adulthood.

Biblical mentorship has a variety of benefits for the children involved which all stem from relationships and advanced biblical knowledge; this tool can be effective in evangelizing the youth. Emergent adults who have come through a biblical mentorship program will have benefitted from the mentor's biblical knowledge and wisdom to the degree that the emergent adult will be able to apply the Bible to their lives and have the motivation to do so to pursue a stronger relationship with Christ and other believers, which will dissuade them from leaving the church. Biblical mentorship will influence children and teens to establish not only a relationship with more adults in the church but also help them to strengthen their relationships with God: as a result, these teens as emergent adults will not as likely depart the church because they will have grown a relationship with God during their formative years through the modeling of the relationship. Biblical mentorship will lead to children's and teen's sanctification if the person is genuinely saved, and it will be conducive to the end of the person's receiving salvation if he or she is not already saved by the time the program begins.

Salvation of souls is the paramount concern for this intervention. It is not that this intervention will make people saved, but rather, this intervention will be dedicated to honoring God by giving children and teens what they need from a spiritual, emotional, and educational sense. In this way, the mentorship program will help to draw youths to a saving relationship with Christ, but this will not be without God's direct involvement in the program. If the mentorship program is successful, it will only be because of God's grace on the children in the program and his grace on the Dawn Baptist Church. As a result of God's gracious saving of young souls, God will use this intervention to build up the emergent adult population at Dawn Baptist Church as a

natural consequence of more youths receiving genuine salvation and being taught by this project's mentorship model.

Salvations, especially those of children, are always important for any healthy church. On a practical level, Dawn Baptist Church is especially in need of this intervention in respect to growing the emergent adult population which has dwindled in previous years. At Dawn Baptist Church, the consequence of this dwindled emergent adult population is that the elderly generation is not being replaced by upcoming adults, which means the church is slowly declining. Members often pass away without being replaced by a new member of the church who is younger and can take on the responsibilities that the older member held. This action research project is timely for the church. While meeting the church's desire to reach the lost and helping to fulfill its felt needs, the intervention also promises a potential practical benefit which is increased membership and continuation of Dawn Baptist Church into the future.

This action research project will benefit the church in a variety of ways. The elder adults in the church will have the opportunity to share the gospel with children; these adults, most of whom have adult children, would benefit as well in their sharing of experience and wisdom with younger people. Children would benefit from this program as, in addition to learning from their mentors' experience, they will be learning about Christ and receive a physical model of Christ and His love to imitate. Truly, the children of this program would act like the Corinthians in Paul's first letter to the Corinthian church, and the mentors would take the place of Paul; children would imitate their mentors as the mentors imitate Christ.[15] The church will benefit from this project because it will improve the quality of the children's ministry. Children of the church will

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[15] See 1 Corinthians 11:1 regarding Paul's exhortation to the Corinthians to imitate him as he imitates Christ.

begin imitating Christ in a way that is consistent with their mentor's example. The children of the church will receive what they need from the adults of the church, which is a Christian example to imitate inside and outside of the church.

Imitation is one of the keys of this action research project's success because imitation of a model is an element in the biblical mentorship model proven effective in a variety of fields. Modeling and imitation work together in practice. Whereas with modeling, a teacher demonstrates or shows an example, with imitation, the student is supposed to copy or imitate the teacher's model. The action research project depends on Scripture for instructing mentees in godliness, such as 2 Timothy 3:16–17, which states that "All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work" (ESV). This project also depends on principles that are considered best practices within the field of education regarding delivery. Scripture determines the content of what is delivered to the mentees, but the process of how it is delivered comes from an approach that uses Scripture in cooperation with educational best practices such as modeling, scaffolding, and creating active learners.

Paul's writings suggest a mentorship model with Timothy and other believers that was undoubtedly beneficial for his mentees' spiritual welfare. It is probable that this kind of mentorship model that has dimensions of spiritual fatherhood and friendship would be beneficial for the children and teens of Dawn Baptist Church in much the same way that it was beneficial for Timothy. This thesis will be proven or disproven after the researcher investigates the frequency of the emergent adult and teenagers' leaving the church in a few years, but also, the researcher will be able to use surveys and observation to assess the results of the intervention. Although the long-term effects will not be evident until later, there should be short-term results

of the intervention that are positive. Teens undergoing mentoring could be given surveys that address their spiritual health, understandings of spiritual and biblical concepts, and their general dispositions toward the church. The mentors could also keep track of their mentees' progress: surveys will give an indicator of whether the teen will leave the church when he or she becomes an adult. The data collected from the emergent adults is important for this part of the intervention. Youth data will be compared to emergent adult data to find trends and commonalities that are indicative of potential church departure.

Data is important for the tangibility of demonstrating youth's spiritual progress; it is also useful in quantifying their spiritual health in comparison to the spiritual health of the current emergent adults. If youth progress spiritually past their emergent adult counterparts, then it is likely that the youth involved in this intervention will not end up leaving the church. Mentorship has a host of benefits if done biblically. When done with the youth, it will prevent the youth from developing the spiritual stumbling blocks that have affected the emergent adults. When Dawn Baptist Church initiates this evangelistic mentorship intervention with the youth, it will begin to retain emergent adults as the youth age up into the emergent adult demographic. If biblically based, evangelistic mentorship for youths is implemented in Dawn Baptist Church, then more youths will be genuinely converted, and church decline will diminish.

**CHAPTER 2: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

A consensus of the literature reveals that there is little disagreement regarding the

efficacy of mentorship in any organization, including the church. Mentorship has a variety of

benefits if done correctly, regardless of the specific model of mentorship chosen. The focal point

of this research is specifically to discover the effectiveness of mentorship on the youth

population, but data and research outside of the realm of the church and church mentorship are

also considered as a source for analyzing the common elements that have proven effective in

mentorship. Mentorship is effective for helping mentees in any area to conform to expectations

of the organization in which it used. 1 Peter 5:1–5 is helpful in forming a picture of biblical

mentorship as Peter gives a brief statement on the roles of the older and younger Christians in

relationship to each other in a church body.[1] 1 Peter 5 focuses on the topic of biblical

mentorship, which is one of the responsibilities of older, wiser, and more experienced

Christians.[2] Mentorship is founded on a relationship between individuals which produces

learning, which leads naturally to imitation. Biblical imitation leads to sanctification which

coincides theological growth. Theological growth is important for youths forming a biblical

identity which produces growth evangelistically and in the church. Spiritual parenting, which

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[1] "So I exhort the elders among you, as a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, as well as a partaker in the glory that is going to be revealed: shepherd the flock of God that is among you, exercising oversight, not under compulsion, but willingly, as God would have you; not for shameful gain, but eagerly; not domineering over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory. Likewise, you who are younger, be subject to the elders. Clothe yourselves, all of you, with humility toward one another, for "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble" (ESV).

[2] Dean K. Thompson and D. Cameron Murchison, *Mentoring: Biblical, Theological, and Practical Perspectives* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2018), 52.

requires the mentee to be instructed and raised in the admonition of the Lord (Eph 6:4) by a natural or spiritual parent, is efficacious for producing a variety of spiritual fruits in the life of the youth, but salvation itself is the most significant fruit produced by God's use of mentorship.

## Literature Review

Mentorship is an important tool for empowering believers to live and believe biblically because it is predicated on human relationship and man's desire to imitate the object of his affections.[3] Mentorship is a God-ordained means by which people can train one another to believe and behave in proper ways where the mentee's inexperience is the contributing factor to incorrect beliefs and incorrect behaviors. The biblical version of mentorship takes a deeper approach to mentorship, that is caring for the soul of the mentee through teaching and guiding founded on a loving relationship between two individuals.[4] The literature review analyzes mentorship and its fruits in many areas as well as what pertains and does not pertain to mentorship. The literature discusses the efficacy of mentoring and the effective elements of mentorship, but it neglects to directly discuss using mentorship as an evangelistic tool; the use of mentorship as an evangelistic device proves to be a unique use of mentorship.

### Efficacy

According to Elizabeth Raposa et al., "youth mentoring programs show great promise as a low-cost intervention for youth at risk," and "Recent research has highlighted the positive

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[3] Fred P. Edie and Mark A. Lamport, *Nurturing Faith: A Practical Theology for Educating Christians* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2021), 149.

[4] Dean K. Thompson and D. Cameron Murchison, *Mentoring: Biblical, Theological, and Practical Perspectives* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2018), 30.

impact of one-on-one mentoring relationships for children and adolescents."[5] Youth mentorship

has been used to reach and correct young people, and it has proven effective in reaching various

youths and helping them to overcome various challenges. Sarah Schwartz et al., suggest that

youth mentoring benefits mentees psychologically: it has a positive impact on their self-esteem,

which can impact other areas of their lives such as beliefs, skills, and accomplishments.[6]

Mentorship has proven to be effective in a variety of fields such as nursing, military, educators,

and others. Linnea C. Ehri and Bert Flugman" report the results of a mentorship program

involving educators; they say, "Teachers began the program with limited knowledge and skills,

and many became proficient by the end of the year and held views highly consistent with

principles of high quality systematic phonics instruction."[7]

Despite the strong promise of positive results because of youth mentoring, there is the

possibility that mentoring can be ineffective. David DuBois and Michael Karcher explain that

positive outcomes are unlikely to come from a mentoring program that does not have a strong

relationship based on positive qualities such as trust and empathy.[8] Christine Pfund et al., concur

with the importance of a relationship: they contend that "Strong mentorship has been linked to

enhanced mentee productivity [and] self-efficacy," and also to "a sense of fulfillment, through

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[5] Raposa, Elizabeth B., et al., 'The Effects of Youth Mentoring Programs: A Meta-Analysis of Outcome Studies." *Journal of Youth and Adolescence* 48, no. 3 (2019), abstract.

[6] Sarah E. Schwartz, Sarah R. Lowe, and Jean E. Rhodes, "Mentoring Relationships and Adolescent Self-Esteem," *National Institute of Health*, April 1, 2012, para 7.

[7] Linnea C. Ehri and Bert Flugman, "Mentoring Teachers in Systematic Phonics Instruction: Effectiveness of an Intensive Year-Long Program for Kindergarten through 3rd Grade Teachers and Their Students," *Reading and Writing* 31, no. 2 (2017): 425–56, https://doi.org/10.1007/s11145-017-9792-7, para 80.

[8] David L. DuBois and Michael J. Karcher, *Handbook of Youth Mentoring* (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 2005), 31.

knowledge and skill sharing, sharpening of leadership skills, and increased awareness."[9] A

strong relationship in a mentorship is paramount to the success of the program as the warmth and

support offered by mentors helps mentees to grow to meet goals. A mentorship must foster

growth through the vehicle of positive relationship that teaches and models scriptural principles.

## Importance of Relationships

The relationship factor is the most prevalent element throughout the literature, which

suggests its importance: without a positive relationship, mentorship will not be effective. Sharon

Straus and David Sackett explain that mentorships that are effective can be either short or long-

term.[10] As long as the relationship is one where the two individuals genuinely seek the other's

wellbeing in a robust friendship, the mentorship should have an impact.[11] If the older participant,

the mentor, has a strong relationship with Christ, which is manifest in the life and wisdom of the

mentor, then the relationship should be a positive one for the mentee's spiritual formation. The

relationship between mentor and mentee is likely the element that affects the most change and

the most potential for change, not a specific strategy or approach; David Robinson suggests that

love and compassion for another human being, when expressed in a correct relationship, is the

catalyst for necessary changes.[12] Beth Seversen articulates this point in a direct way when she

argues that relationships initiated by mentors are a direct contributor to young adults' abilities to

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[9] Christine Pfund et al., "Defining Attributes and Metrics of Effective Research Mentoring Relationships," *AIDS and Behavior* 20, no. S2 (2016): 238–48, https://doi.org/10.1007/s10461-016-1384-z, 2.

[10] Sharon E. Straus and David L. Sackett, *Mentorship in Academic Medicine* (Chichester, SXW: Wiley Blackwell, 2013), 8.

[11] Scott J Anson, "Philosophy of Teaching and Student and Peer Mentorship: A Christian Perspective," *Christian Engineering Conference*, no. 3 (2017), 10.

[12] David Robinson, *Soul Mentoring: Discover the Ancient Art of Caring for Others* (Cambridge, UK: James Clarke, 2016), 1.

grow into leaders.[13] Human beings seek to not only imitate the ones they love but also to act in ways that elicit the approval of the one they love; therefore, it is a logical progression that a loving relationship between mentor and mentee would be critical to causing positive change. Mentors are not necessarily a fixed person either, but rather, mentorship is flexible, shifting to the one in the relationship with the most experience. While generally, this will refer to the older person in the relationship, it is not necessarily the case that the mentor will be older.

In contrast to the understanding that the mentor is not necessarily older, Michael Goodman and Justin Dyer liken the mentoring relationship to a parent and adolescent relationship: the warmth of the relationship indicates the effectiveness of the mentorship.[14] Paul understands mentorship in this way as well, when he describes Timothy as his "true child in the faith" (1 Tim 1:2, ESV). Warmth can correlate to the freedom the mentor and mentee feel in the exchange of experiences. Goodman and Dyer are not attempting to lay a framework for the ages of the mentor and mentee but instead for the quality of the relationship that should exist between them. The literature suggests that the mentor can also shift depending on the situation: the mentee, on occasion, mentors the older person. Mentoring is not dependent on the age of the person, but rather, it is based on the experience in a particular area or scenario with the precondition being love for the person being mentored. Paul echoes the sentiment that age should not determine mentorship capabilities in 1 Timothy 4:12; Paul writes, "Let no one despise you for your youth, but set the believers an example in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity" (ESV). While the inversion of ages is not to be seen as normative for a mentorship, it is evident

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[13] Beth Donigan Seversen, *Not Done Yet: Reaching and Keeping Unchurched Emerging Adults* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2020), 3.

[14] Anson, "Philosophy of Teaching and Student and Peer Mentorship: A Christian Perspective," 180.

that mentorship is based on experience and relationship and not merely age. John Stott contends that respect is critical in 1 Timothy 4:12, for both elders and younger people, just as respect is important between believers as well as toward non-believers.[15] Paul's mentorship model is one that has reached the peak of relational importance and power: he assumes the role of a father instructing his child.[16] Both Paul and the authors of the literature acknowledge the compassion between individuals is the focus of the mentoring relationship because the relationship enables the fruits of the mentorship to grow, such as imitation and learning among others. Mentoring relationships are built on trust as well as respect for one another, regardless of age.

Regi Campbell argues that, for mentorship to occur, commitment is required.[17] Commitment on the part of the mentor requires a commitment to Christ and the mentee. A mentor must look for the mentee's best interest and spiritual good. The mentor's commitment should reflect the commitment that Jesus has for the church, which is a commitment so strong that it requires self-sacrifice. The mentor must be willing to make sacrifices for the benefit of the mentee. A.W. Tozer argues that this level of commitment is necessary to lead like Christ: he argues that biblical leadership requires sacrifice.[18] The mentee must have a commitment to learn, grow, and change if needed as well as a commitment to the mentor. A lesser relationship can lead to a greater one. A mentor's lesser relationship with a mentee can lead to the mentee's greater relationship with Christ. It is possible that a mentee could attempt to fake a change or

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[15] John W Stott, *The Message of 1 Timothy and Titus: The Life of the Local Church* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2021), 126.

[16] Christian Smith and Amy Adamczyk, *Handing Down the Faith: How Parents Pass Their Religion on to the Next Generation* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2021), 5.

[17] Regi Campbell, Richard Chancy, and Andy Stanley, *Mentor Like Jesus: His Radical Approach to Building the Church* (Atlanta, GA: RM Press, 2016), 66.

[18] A. W. Tozer and James L. Snyder, *Lead Like Christ: Reflecting the Qualities and Character of Christ in Your Ministry* (Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House, a division of Baker Publishing Group, 2021), 137.

beliefs to appease his or her mentor or his or her family; mentors will be made aware of this and asked to look for the fruit accompanying the Holy Spirit's work in their mentee's life. In Matthew 3:8, John the Baptist commanded the Pharisees and Sadducees to "Produce fruit, then, in keeping with repentance" (ESV), and Paul listed the of the fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5:22–23. It is paramount that the relationship between mentee and mentor become so close that the mentee has a difficult time harboring secret beliefs.

According to Raposa et al., mentorship is a program that pairs youth with adults who are not the youth's parents to promote development in a positive way.[19] A biblical mentor is parent-like in some respects, but it is not a parenthood in other areas. It is appropriate for a Christian mentor to view himself as a spiritual father, as Paul did for Timothy (1 Tim 1:2). Some aspects of parenthood do not cross over to mentorship, but all aspects of mentorship apply to parenthood. The mentoring relationship should not take on the negative tones that are associated with the parental role of disciplining or rebuking. Rather, mentoring relationships are limited to positive correctional techniques. These positive correctional techniques are based on what Joan Durrant would consider a warm relationship, where understanding, listening, and support are prioritized and where consistent structure is provided.[20] Positive discipline is consistent with the teaching techniques in the literature explicitly describing mentoring. Positive discipline techniques in which scriptural concepts are communicated are the primary method of implementing correction of faulty thinking in mentees. Mentees learn through a scripturally sound, positive relationship

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[19] Elizabeth B. Raposa et al., "The Effects of Youth Mentoring Programs: A Meta-Analysis of Outcome Studies," *Journal of Youth and Adolescence* 48, no. 3 (2019), abstract.

[20] Joan E. Durrant, *Positive Discipline in Everyday Parenting* (Ottawa, ON: Canadian Association of Family Resource Programs, 2016), 23.

with a mentor that imitates the care that a parent would have for a child. In this case, a mentor becomes a spiritual father or mother who teaches and engages the learning process in mentees.

Teaching and Learning

A mentorship relationship is also one of a teacher and a student. Brad Johnson and Gene Andersen elucidate the effectiveness of mentoring in the military: a good mentor helps a student to learn to think for himself or herself and to think strategically through the imparting of wisdom in a particular area or field.[21] Due to the compassionate care a mentor has for the mentee, the mentor should impart the lessons of acquired wisdom to help the mentee learn to make better choices. The mentee has the advantage of learning from his or her mentor's experience. Phil Newton contends that if the mentorship setting is one where the mentor is imparting biblical truth, the mentor will not only help students to learn a biblical perspective intellectually but he or she will also help students to learn the skill of thinking scripturally in such a way as to apply it to life.[22]

Alton Chua and Pelham Lessing describe the specific components of mentorship regarding teaching and learning; Chua and Lessing identify instruction, encouragement, and inspiration as the three elements of learning that can be done through a mentorship.[23] They contend that instruction is based on the authority of the mentor in the relationship. Chua and Lessing's understanding of this element of mentorship directly contrasts James Nathan Boldt's

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[21] Johnson, W. Brad, and Gene R. Andersen. "Mentoring in the U.S. Navy: Experiences and Attitudes of Senior Navy Personnel." *Naval War College Review* 68, no. 3 (2015): 81.

[22] Phil A. Newton, *The Mentoring Church: How Pastors and Congregations Cultivate Leaders* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 2017), 38.

[23] Alton Chua and Pelham Lessing, "A Biblical Model of Mentoring with A Knowledge Management Perspective," *Journal of the South African Theological Seminary*, (March 1, 2013): 97.

understanding that the younger person in the relationship could, at times, become more of the mentor.[24] Chua and Lessing explain that encouragement is the aspect of mentorship that builds the relationship by the mentor's demonstration of respect for the mentee as well as trust in his or her current capabilities. Students must be given opportunities to show their skills and must be trusted to perform those tasks. Inspiration is the aspect of mentorship that requires that the mentor set goals for the mentee and continuously push the mentee toward the realization of those goals. Biblical mentoring requires that the learning revolves around spiritual growth and instruction no matter the relationship: the mentor has the obligation to help the mentee grow spiritually.[25] The mentee has an obligation to be teachable.

Both members in the relationship should exhibit traits of humility and teachability, but this is especially true of the mentee. If the mentor is teaching, but the mentee is not listening or obeying instructions, then there is less benefit and increased exasperation. Azaria Otula et al., expand upon this concept using Scripture when they point to the example of Moses' teachability when Jethro gives him advice.[26] Moses received revelation from God, and likewise the mentee should have the guidance of a pastor's sermons as well as a revelation in God's Word. The mentee should be humble like Moses, not to disregard mentorship because he had other, more significant mentorship elsewhere, but to treasure it as a gift.[27] Robinson explores the possibility of a master-apprentice model for mentorship that has been "abandoned in the past few centuries,

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[24] James Nathan Boldt, "Spiritual Fatherhood, Mentorship, and Relational Reciprocation: Examining the Apostle Paul's Relationship to Timothy as a Model for Church Leadership Development," *Reformed Theological Seminary*, (2020): 12.

[25] Anson, "Philosophy of Teaching and Student and Peer Mentorship: A Christian Perspective," 180.

[26] Azaria O. Otula et al., "Biblical-Theological Strategies Appropriate for an Effective and Viable Mentorship Program in the Church Community," *Edition Consortium Journal of Philosophy, Religion and Theological Studies* 2, no. 1 (2022): 7.

[27] Thompson and Murchison, *Mentoring: Biblical, Theological, and Practical Perspectives*, 79.

though this approach to mentoring has historic merit."[28] The mentor, the one with wisdom and knowledge, condescends to the mentee to help guide the mentee to new knowledge, like a parent helping a child learn to be successful. Smith and Adamczyk protest the notion that parental mentoring and general mentoring are comparable to this master-apprentice model along the lines of significance: Smith and Adamczyk argue that parental mentoring is much different from an apprenticeship, but rather, it is more practical.[29]

In the context of spirituality, mentoring teaches a student to live out his or her faith beyond intellectual assent. The student can see how faith and biblical knowledge should be applied with wisdom in any life situation. Although Smith and Adamczyk would differ from Robinson along the lines of specific mentorship, both a parental model and an apprentice model would drive the mentee to practice learned skills. The apprentice model and the parental model differ only in the way that a parental model is natural by birth; however, an apprentice model could be argued to be effective due to a relationship based on the believers' new birth. A mentor who is not physically related to a mentee is only barred from spiritual mentorship if he or she is not reborn in Christ. A blended approach to mentorship is possible based on the premise that those in Christ are not only family but also laborers in the field, therefore able to be both apprentice-like and parental. The adage "it starts at home" seems apt in that the apprenticeship model and parental model are not mutually exclusive; instead, the two forms of mentoring are complementary. Silvka argues that each form of mentoring should supplement the other because the church is responsible for teaching the parents, and the parents, in turn, mentor or teach the

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[28] Robinson, *Soul Mentoring: Discover the Ancient Art of Caring for Others,* 4.

[29] Smith and Adamczyk, *Handing Down the Faith*, 14.

children the elements of the faith.[30] The reverse is also true. If there is a disconnect from church

to parent, then children will likely experience a larger disparity between their taught beliefs and

church and biblical beliefs.

Biblical mentorship is mentoring in which the mentor assumes the authority to use

Scripture as given in 2 Timothy 3:16-17 to care for the soul of a younger mentee. A biblical

mentor also, as Paul did, exerts a parental-like care of his or her mentees. As a result of this

loving relationship, knowledge is transmitted primarily to the mentee but also to the mentor: both

parties learn and benefit from the other and grow in holiness. This knowledge is not merely for

the intellectual side of the Christian faith. Knowledge imparted becomes knowledge practiced;

because the mentee has gained appropriate knowledge, the mentor will soon find himself being

imitated as Paul urges in 1 Corinthians 11:1; Paul writes to "Be imitators of me, as I am of

Christ."[31] Straus and Sackett's understanding of mentorship as either being long-term or short-

term can be further refined according to Robinson's view of mentoring and also by Smith and

Adamczyk's contrasting view.[32] Robinson's apprenticeship method would likely be more short-

term given the nature of an apprenticeship: an apprentice learns the skills to leave the mentor and

practice on his or her own. Smith and Adamczyk's parental model would likely be long-term as a

parental relationship to a child is naturally longer-term, usually from the birth of the child until

the death of the parent. The nature of biblical mentoring is somewhat blended between the

parental and the apprentice models. A biblical mentor cares for his or her mentees like his or her

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[30] Daniel Slivka, "Examining the Interplay of Church and Family in Cultivating the Faith in Teenagers Towards a New Strategy," *European Journal of Science and Theology* 14, no. 3 (2018), 59.

[31] 1 Corinthians 4:16, which says "I urge you, then, be imitators of me." (ESV), is also important Scripture for exploring the concept of imitating a mentor, in this case, Paul.

[32] Robinson, *Soul Mentoring: Discover the Ancient Art of Caring for Others,* 8.

own children while teaching them how to live out their faith in a practical way. It is natural, then, that a mentee would express the traits of his or her spiritual parent just as a natural child imitates his or her own natural parents.[33] Biblical mentoring fosters the imitation and acquisition of skills and traits. The students become reflections of their masters, as their masters are to be reflections of the Master (Luke 6:20).

Imitation

If someone's mentor and the object of his or her imitation does or does not do something, then the mentee will likely imitate that behavior. Jesus taught that the disciple is not above his master and the student is not above his teacher (Matt 10:24). The world will hate the believer because the world hates the believer's Master. The believer will behave and think in ways that are distinct or holy, different from the world. Thompson and Murchison state this implicitly by discussing the incident where Jesus washes the disciples' feet; the command is that the disciples should condescend to one another and serve because Jesus Himself did, but also, imitation of Jesus marks the believer when the believer serves in the same way that Jesus did.[34] It stands to reason that mentees, at least in small ways, will reflect their mentors. Mentors should practice servant leadership as Jesus did, and as a result, the mentee should begin to practice servant leadership. A mentor is a leader to serve, not to be served, and to be imitated.[35] Furthermore, Günter Krallmann describes Jesus as a mentor when he states that "He mentored through

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[33] Samuel Jonathan Barry, *Exploring the Key Elements of Southland's Church Renewal Mentorship Model for Adaptation into Mentorship Model Practices with the Evangelical Missionary Church of Canada* (Ontario: Tyndale University, April 2021), 73.

[34] Thompson and Murchison, *Mentoring: Biblical, Theological, and Practical Perspectives*, 50.

[35] Gabriel Kofi Nsiah, "Leading as Jesus Led: Christ Models of Leadership," *Open Journal of Leadership* 02, no. 04 (2013): 103–5, https://doi.org/10.4236/ojl.2013.24016, 104.

prototype, precept, prayer, and power from on high."[36] Paul seems to acknowledge this fact when

he places himself in the position of a mentor and urges believers to imitate him as he does Christ

(1 Cor 11:1). Ideally, mentees will imitate their mentors' positive attributes, such as faith and

positive ideals of the Bible and church attendance. If Christians imitate Christ, they will imitate

His disciple-making practices. Jesus taught His disciples to be reproductive spiritually and

ideologically: in a sense, His Great Commission gives a new dimension to the old command, "be

fruitful and multiply" (Gen 1:28, ESV). Similarly, Samuel Jonathan Barry argues that

mentorship is a reproductive act, much like that of childbearing, wherein Christian leaders create

other Christian leaders who are to go on and do the same for others.[37] Boldt agrees with Barry in

this assessment as, inevitably, the student begins to bear the fruits of imitating his mentor like a

son does a father, and inevitably, the son becomes like his father who goes on to have spiritual

children as well.[38] Paul's exhortation to imitate him served his mentees as a more attainable goal

than directly seeking to imitate Jesus: Paul used himself as a living analogy for his mentees to

imitate.[39]

Mentoring has in its focus a goal to model and to help mentees to act according to a

model.[40] Models are helpful for people to see what behaviors are beneficial to imitate, but the

reverse is also true as well: modeling helps a student to see what behaviors he or she ought not to

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[36] Gunter Krallmann, *Mentoring for Mission* (Waynesboro, GA: Gabriel Publishing, 2014), 6.

[37] Samuel Jonathan Barry, "Exploring the Key Elements of Southland's Church Renewal Mentorship Model for Adaptation into Mentorship Model Practices with the Evangelical Missionary Church of Canada," 74.

[38] James Nathan Boldt, "Spiritual Fatherhood, Mentorship, and Relational Reciprocation: Examining the Apostle Paul's Relationship to Timothy as a Model for Church Leadership Development," 12.

[39] Paul Douglas Gardner, *The Gifts of God and the Authentication of a Christian an Exegetical Study of 1 Corinthians 8-11:1* (Eugene, Oregon: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 2017), 77.

[40] Brian E. Wakeman, "A Christian Perspective on Mentoring," *Transformation: An International Journal of Holistic Mission Studies* 29, no. 4 (2012): 280.

imitate. David Robinson likens a mentor that mentors someone into his bad qualities to one who destroys the water source rather than leading his mentee to it.[41] Yet, despite the presence of substandard biblical models, mentorship still seems to have a net positive effect in relation to the organization in which it is practiced. The benefits of good mentoring models in any organization include productivity and satisfaction as well as responsible mentees.[42] A mature Christian mentor is critical in the process of mentoring the young so that they will grow to be more like Christ.

## Sanctification

As a believer grows in imitating his or her mentor, the believer will also grow in Christlikeness. In John 17:17, Jesus prayed that believers would be sanctified by God's truth because His Word is truth.[43] Jesus' prayer indicates that someone can be sanctified by truth because that is the mode through which God performs the sanctification of the believer. The mentor can share his experience and his learnings amassed through a longer relationship with Christ and the study of Scripture. Even if the mentee is not saved, the Holy Spirit's working through the mentor could cause the student to come to salvation, and if the mentee is saved, the Holy Spirit could use the mentor for the spiritual growth of the mentee. It is true in the secular world that mentoring is effective for growth.[44] It is much truer for the church that mentoring would be beneficial for spiritual growth. Bobby Harrington and Alex Absalom explain that

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[41] Robinson, *Soul Mentoring: Discover the Ancient Art of Caring for Others,* 6.

[42] Sharon E. Straus and David L. Sackett, *Mentorship in Academic Medicine*, 8.

[43] R. C. Sproul, *1–2 Peter,* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2011), 212.

[44] Johnson, W Brad, and Gene R Andersen. "Mentoring in the U.S. Navy: Experiences and Attitudes of Senior Navy Personnel," 81.

Elijah and Elisha as well as Paul with Titus and Silas are examples of mentoring relationships that resulted in the growth of mentees.[45]

If a mentor imitates Christ, and a mentee imitates the mentor, then the mentee will experience sanctification as he or she slowly becomes more like Christ. Mentoring causes the mentee to practice the disciplines of the faith, the same disciplines that Jesus and the early Christians practiced. Through practicing Christian disciplines, the believer becomes sanctified because of the Holy Spirit's ongoing, spiritual transformation in a believer's life.[46] While in one sense, the believer is transformed immediately at conversion, mentoring is a means by which God transforms peoples' lives progressively. Robinson agrees with the assessment that mentoring contributes to spiritual change as it encourages believers to practice spiritually healthy habits.[47] Sanctification is important because the believer grows in Christlikeness, and in doing so, the believer identifies with Christ.

<div align="center">Importance for Youth Identity Formation</div>

People's struggle for finding identity is a known problem of the human condition: since the Fall, people have attempted to find their role and identity. The identity of a Christian is found with Christ and among a community of Christ. Any identity outside of Christ is doomed to suffer from meaninglessness. The literature suggests that mentorship is critical in helping youth discover their own identities and in helping them find their identities in Christ. Seversen explains that a mentor is a positive influence in Christian communities because the mentor helps the

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[45] Bobby Harrington and Alex Absalom, *Discipleship That Fits: The Five Kinds of Relationships God Uses to Help Us Grow* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2016), 166.

[46] Fred P. Edie and Mark A. Lamport, *Nurturing Faith: A Practical Theology for Educating Christians*, 192.

[47] Robinson, *Soul Mentoring: Discover the Ancient Art of Caring for Others,* 71.

mentee to internalize correct beliefs and behaviors.[48] Due to the mentee's learning and imitative

relationship with the mentor, he or she will begin to practice Christian disciplines and believe

biblical truths taught by the mentor. Much of the literature deals with the effects that mentorship

has on the youth and the importance of finding a way to help the youth. Daniel Slivka contends

that the stakes are high for failing to help the youth in their identity formation because many

young adults become "spiritually disengaged at some point in their twenties."[49] Davielle Lakind,

Marc Akins, and J. Mark Eddy draw a connection between mentorship and a response to

environmental and community factors; mentorship has a specific purpose in counteracting the

youth's environment and the environment's influence on youth identity formation.[50] Greg Forbes

contends that 1 Peter 1:22-25 admonishes believers "to love those in the Christian community,"

which further supports the importance of the community in the Christian life.[51]

Slivka argues that emerging adults leave because, even though the ones that leave may

have identified as believers, the majority of the young people who leave churches have not

devoted time to spiritual growth, nor have they felt connected to spiritually mature believers who

have made a connection with them.[52] Bennie Van der Walt argues that emerging adults leaving

the church to find themselves is a result of incorrect worship, worshiping independence.[53]

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[48] Beth Donigan Seversen, *Not Done Yet: Reaching and Keeping Unchurched Emerging Adults* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2020), 19.

[49] Daniel Slivka, "Examining the Interplay of Church and Family in Cultivating the Faith in Teenagers Towards a New Strategy," *European Journal of Science and Theology* 14, no. 3 (2018), 54.

[50] Davielle Lakind, Marc Atkins, and J. Mark Eddy, "Youth Mentoring Relationships in Context: Mentor Perceptions of Youth, Environment, and the Mentor Role," *Children and Youth Services Review* 53 (2015): 52–60, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2015.03.007, abstract.

[51] Greg W. Forbes, *1 Peter* (Nashville, TN: B & H Academic, 2014), 193.

[52] Ibid.

[53] Bennie J. Van der Walt, "Sharing an Integral Christian Worldview with a Younger Generation: Why and How Should it be Done and Received?" *In Die Skriflig/In Luce Verbi* 51, no. 1 (2017), 7.

Misplaced worship that is often at the heart of the search for identity is something that could be

unveiled and corrected in a biblical mentorship relationship. Sarah Schwartz, Sarah Lowe, and

Jean Rhodes argue that the mentoring relationship has the benefit of having a positive effect on

the dimensions of adolescent development, which includes identity development, as well as

social-emotional and cognitive.[54] Boldt seems to concur with the point that mentorship can be a

crucial tool in forming identity because mentorship enables the mentee to assume responsibilities

of the mentor.[55] A mentee who becomes an adult in a church would not be disengaged, but

rather, he or she would have the ability to assume a place in the church for which he or she has

been prepared through mentoring. As a result of not being disengaged spiritually, having strong

spiritual and identity formation, and having a clear place in the church, it is unlikely that the

mentee would fall away. Mentorship, if started from an early age, can remove these motivators

for a child's leaving the church before they have begun emerging. Thompson and Murchison

contend that mentoring cannot rightly be done or described apart from Jesus and His life, death,

and resurrection.[56]

Without Christ, a mentorship cannot be effective in a spiritual sense; although mentorship

is effective for non-spiritual development, its impact on spiritual growth must be predicated on

Christ and His teachings. Mentorship has undeniable roots in theology because mentorship is

within the character of God Himself. God is relational but also imparts wisdom, which are the

two essentials for a mentor to possess. Scripture is replete with examples of God as teacher. God

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[54] Sarah E. Schwartz, Sarah R. Lowe, and Jean E. Rhodes, "Mentoring Relationships and Adolescent Self-Esteem," *National Institute of Health*, April 1, 2012, 5–6.

[55] James Nathan Boldt, "Spiritual Fatherhood, Mentorship, and Relational Reciprocation: Examining the Apostle Paul's Relationship to Timothy as a Model for Church Leadership Development," 12.

[56] Thompson and Murchison, *Mentoring: Biblical, Theological, and Practical Perspectives*, 68.

teaches Moses in Exodus 4. The Psalmist describes God as a teacher and one Who chastens. The

Bible notes, "He who disciplines the nations, does he not rebuke? He who teaches man

knowledge" (Ps 94:10, ESV). The writer of Hebrews draws the connection between one who has

a relationship of compassion, which even involves discipline, in addition to a teaching

relationship to a youth as one like a father (Heb 12:10). God's relational and parental nature is

seen in His discipline, both positive and negative: Michelle Segundo concludes that the author of

Hebrews "exhorts believers who are in the process of suffering by affirming their legitimacy as

sons of God who otherwise would be illegitimate, undisciplined children."[57] God's relationship

with His children is disciplinary.

God is clearly relational as He existed from before time began in relationship in the

Trinity (John 1). God's nature as a relational, disciplining, teaching God makes God Himself a

mentor to all people. Jesus, God incarnate, acted as mentor to a variety of people, His own

disciples and even people who were not alive to personally see Him, modern Christians. Jesus

Himself mentors through His Holy Spirit and His Word.[58] He promised that He will never leave

or forsake those who trust in Him.[59] Christ is the ultimate mentor for the believer but also the

unbeliever because Jesus draws the sinner closer. God's mentorship has elements of positive and

negative discipline because of God's perfect knowledge and justice. A mentorship between a

parent and child has elements of negative and positive discipline, but the general mentorship

focuses on positive discipline. Mentoring youth is a unique form of mentoring that draws from

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[57] Michelle Gonzalez Segundo, "Leading by Enduring: An Analysis of Hebrews 12:1–15," *Biblical Organizational Spirituality*, 2022, 341–71, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-04006-1_18, 26.

[58] Adele Ahlberg Calhoun, *Spiritual Disciplines Handbook: Practices That Transform Us* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2015), 165.

[59] "I will never leave you nor forsake you" (Heb 13:5, ESV).

many of the elements of God's mentorship principles, but it cannot perfectly imitate God's

mentorship, nor can the general mentorship completely imitate a parent's mentoring influence.

While Christ draws sinners to Himself, Otula et al., contend that mentors should chiefly

be evangelists, leading the person who sinned to Christ.[60] Otula makes a connection to God's

response to Adam and Eve when Adam and Eve commit the first sin: He does not berate them,

but instead shows compassion and mercy to them even though they have done something

grievous to God. In the same way, Christian mentors should act like God, humbling themselves

to care for the souls of mentees. Mentorship is theologically founded on God, Who He is, and

what He has commanded for man. Godly humility must be practiced in order to receive benefits

of mentorship; a person must reject his own will and submit to the will of one more wise. Just as

one humbles himself and receives an identity in Christ, humility must be present in a mentorship

for the mentee to take on an appropriate identity.

Identity in Christ

The identity found in something other than in Christ is a false identity and one that cannot

satisfy. Van der Walt argues that the modern identity that is outside of Christ is based on an

unbiblical notion of independence and supremacy of happiness.[61] Believers receive an identity of

sonship, and as such, the identity of a Christian is one that is not focused on happiness or

independence, but rather, it is one that focuses on doing what pleases God. The writer of

Hebrews argues that believers are sons if they have been disciplined by God because God

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[60] Azaria O. Otula et al., "Biblical-Theological Strategies Appropriate for an Effective and Viable Mentorship Program in the Church Community," 4.

[61] Bennie J. Van der Walt, "Sharing an Integral Christian Worldview with a Younger Generation: Why and How Should It Be Done and Received?", 7.

disciplines His those who have the new identity as His children (Heb 12:6–11). Paul argues that the new identity in Christ is one opposed to a spirit of slavery or fear. Instead, the new identity is one of adoption and sonship.[62] In Galatians 4:6, Paul revisits this theme of sonship. The Father Who has adopted believers is the King of all creation. When a believer understands His identity in the kingdom, the result is peace. Biblical mentoring is necessary for a believer to begin to understand that his identity is in Christ and have peace that passes all understanding.[63] Humility is necessary for someone to be willing to come to Christ and take on a new identity hidden in His. It takes true humility to learn, change, and practice new convictions as well as to form a new identity based in Christ. Derek Tidball argues that the identity found in Christ is one that experiences change from the old pattern of life.[64] Biblical mentorship requires helping the believer grow and change in their new identity of Christ, or if the mentee is not yet a believer, biblical mentorship requires a mentor encourage the mentee toward taking on that identity. In other words, a mentor's first responsibility is to evangelize the lost mentee; then, the mentor's next responsibility is to lead his or her mentee in Christ and to help the mentee understand his or her identity in Jesus.

## Humility

An important part of mentorship is humility, something that Christians must possess.[65] Both a mentor and a mentee must exhibit marks of being humble, that is being willing to lower

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[62] "For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, 'Abba! Father'" (Rom 8:15, ESV)!

[63] "And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus" (Phil 4:7, ESV).

[64] Derek Tidball, *Called by God: Exploring Our Identity in Christ* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2021), 15.

[65] ". . . with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love" (Eph 4:2, ESV).

themselves down to being taught or doing whatever service needs to be done. A mentee must

accept on faith that the mentor knows what is best; this kind of humility, Stephen Cherry

suggests, is one of the most difficult virtues for a Christian to practice, but it is also the most

central to Christian character.[66] A person must admit that God knows best and exercise that

conviction for God's mentorship to be effective in that person's life. Without humility, the

relationship is not a mentorship but something completely different and will bear bad fruits or

have negative results. Stephen Pardue argues that "early Christian reflection on humility cannot

be understood apart from the canonical Scriptures."[67] A mentor and mentee must be humble

enough to submit to Scripture. Sproul argues that Peter commands followers of Christ to be

clothed in humility in a reference to 1st Peter 5:5.[68] Scripture is replete with examples of the

humble receiving blessing.[69] Humility in a mentorship relationship functions in much the same

way, it requires biblical humility. It is willingness to learn from a more learned elder that

provokes change in the life of the mentee; the mentorship becomes the catalyst for change in

practice as well as in belief. Although there are many other portions of Scripture which could

claim the same, Micah 6:8 is pregnant with action-oriented language regarding humility: man is

required to walk humbly with God.

Discipleship

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[66] Stephen Cherry, "Discipleship and Christian Character," *Theology* 119, no. 3 (2016), para 16.

[67] 1. Stephen T. Pardue, *The Mind of Christ: Humility and the Intellect in Early Christian Theology* (London, UK: Bloomsbury, 2013), 26.

[68] R. C. Sproul, *1–2 Peter*, 186.

[69] "If my people who are called by my name humble themselves, and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land" (2 Chron 7:14, ESV).

Mentorship is necessary for discipling young Christians. Greg Ogden argues that discipleship is critical for transforming Christians in a variety of ways: discipleship helps to develop biblical literacy, helps to create deeper church connections and affinity for the church, and helps to transform a Christian's witness to the world from passive to active.[70] Mentorship and discipleship are related concepts; mentorship is a way to disciple Christians and discipleship is often done through mentorship. Mentorship must include biblical discipleship for the mentorship program to be effective. According to Putnam, biblical discipleship is the process of Christ changing a Christian to be more like Him.[71] In that context, mentorship can be understood as the means of leading a believer closer to Christ, using means of discipleship and biblical training to help lead another, usually younger, believer in sanctification.

## Conclusion

The relationship between a mentor and mentee is critical to the success of the mentorship because the relationship is fundamental for mentoring biblically. The student will learn in proportion to the kind of relationship between the student and the teacher or mentor, and students will either imitate or renounce their teacher according to the warmth of the relationship with their teacher. Although learning can occur between a mentor and a student with a cold relationship, the literature argues that students will learn the opposite of the intended lessons from a cold mentoring relationship. The relationship present in mentorship is so important that it vitally affects all other fruits of the mentorship. Effective mentorship is predicated on the warmth of a

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[70] Greg Ogden, *Transforming Discipleship: Making Disciples a Few at a Time* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2016), 24.

[71] Jim Putman, *Real-Life Discipleship: Building Churches That Make Disciples* (Colorado Springs, CO: The Navigators, 2014), 17.

relationship because it is a warm relationship that causes people to make changes. The changes that a person makes in a mentoring relationship include the fruit of the Spirit, but specifically, the mentee will grow in his or her understanding of his or her identity in Christ as he or she imitates the faith of his or her mentor. As the mentee's mentor teaches, the mentee must show humility and the ability to receive correction. Humility can be encouraged by the positive relationship, which like Christ's relational work to His children, endears the mentee to the mentor and causes the mentee to be willing to make necessary changes resulting in sanctification.

## Theological Foundations

Throughout Scripture, God has designed and ordained mentorship using a variety of people who He mentored. These people often became mentors themselves, training a new generation of mentors. Mentorship is rooted in God's character. God desires to teach, and as the Creator of mankind, He understands how people learn. God has designed mentorship principles and demonstrates them throughout the whole of Scripture. Mentorship is founded upon God's nature as a teaching and loving God Who desires to bring His children closer to Him. Mentorship is man's imitation of God's sanctifying process. Naturally, many of the attributes of God will be present in any biblical mentorship program.

Mentorship is based on God's nature and reflected in Scripture. The attributes of God in mentorship are what makes mentorship effective. God by His nature is a mentor of His creation. Scripture describes God as One Who teaches or commands ocean waves where to stop (Job 38:11). He also shows the relational aspect of His nature in that He provides for even birds (Matt 6:26). Michael Rydelnik and Michael Vanlaningham state, God's "children are more precious to

Him than birds."[72] The theology of mentorship necessitates a mentor who imitates the love of the

Father for His Children. God demonstrates a variety of other elements that must be present in

any effective mentorship program; these components are present in mentorship programs

because their basis is God's design for mankind's learning. They are the blueprints of God's plan

for teaching His creations who are made in His image. The elements of God's nature are evident

throughout biblical mentoring because there are practical and relational components as well as a

focus on rescuing. Mentorship toward children is consistent with God's character because

Scripture describes God's high regard for children in Luke 17:1–2 and Matthew 19:14.[73] [74] Thus,

it is consistent with God's divine nature that children be involved in a mentorship program that

emphasizes relational and instructive elements toward the goal of correct instruction in

godliness. People cannot force God to save anyone, but Christian parents have an obligation to

train the youth from a young age. The responsibility to train the youth in godliness yields results

in the realm of salvation. God is ultimately the One Who saves, but that does not render any

efforts to lead children to Him inconsequential or unimportant; instead, Proverbs 22:6 suggests

that these trained children will remain in the instruction of those who have taught them until they

are old.[75]

Mentorship is derived from what man gleans from the combination of certain attributes of

God, namely the relational and instructive elements of His nature. God Himself therefore is a

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[72] Michael Rydelnik and Michael G. Vanlaningham, *The Moody Bible Commentary* (Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 2014), 1464.

[73] "It would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck and he were cast into the sea than that he should cause one of these little ones to sin" (ESV).

[74] ". . . but Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me and do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven" (ESV).

[75] Rydelnik and Vanlaningham, *The Moody Bible Commentary*, 943.

mentor in the perfect sense; His works in relating to and teaching men demonstrate that He

engages in the use of mentorship tools for the unsaved to draw them to salvation. Once someone

is saved, God uses mentorship toward the end of sanctification. The combination of God's

teaching and relational attributes mean that God is a mentor by nature, the wise and caring guide

Who teaches through modeling and encouraging imitation. God is a mentor by nature because of

the combination of His relational, instructive, and saving attributes working together toward the

end of leading His creations effectively; God chooses to save through teaching via a variety of

mentorship models, such as a model of imitation. God's use of imitation suggests its importance

as it can be used to effect a complete change in the person who is at first imitating another;

eventually the imitator adopts beliefs and qualities that he or she once merely imitated.[76]

Imitation is the most important action for mentors and mentees to perform: the mentor

imitates Christ, and the mentee imitates the mentor. Paul echoes the imitation exhortation in a

variety of other Scriptures, such as in 1 Thessalonians 1:6 and in 2 Thessalonians 3:9. Charles

Erdman also draws a connection between salvation and imitation of a spiritual mentor like Paul

who imitates Christ; he states, "Further evidence of this 'election' is found in the fact that the

imitation of Christ and his witnesses on the part of the Thessalonians made them models for

imitation by wide circles of believers."[77] In a biblical sense, mentoring is conducive to helping

the mentee to imitate the mentor, and mentoring is also productive in creating a firm believer

who will model Christ. Paul urges his mentees to imitate him as he imitates Christ, and in setting

[76] Phillip B Mortell, "A Socio-Rhetorical Interpretation of Paul's Theology of Christian Suffering in 1 Corinthians" (University of Limerick, 2020), 79.

[77] Charles R. Erdman, *The Epistles of Paul to the Thessalonians: An Exposition* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1983), 35.

up that model, he establishes that Jesus is the mentor over all mentors because He is the One to ultimately be imitated.

Believers imitate the model that is Christ because Christ is the perfect example: Gordon Fee concludes that Paul's imitation of Christ is with focus on His example, sacrificing Himself on the cross. The unconverted are drawn to Jesus and encouraged to submit to His teaching so that they may become an imitator of Him or a little Christ; the imitators give themselves as living sacrifices (Rom 12:1), laying down their old selves in pursuit of putting on Christ (Rom 13:14). The nature of imitation reflects the nature of repentance, which is an ongoing and repetitive occurrence in the life of the practitioner.[78] In order to imitate proper faith and possess godliness, God gives people Jesus' model which is a model of perfect humanity. Models are given to be imitated. Mentoring is often predicated on the notion that the mentor models the correct behavior or belief, and the mentee mimics it to develop the discipline necessary to become like the model. Scripture is also replete with examples of God forming lesser models to be His representatives to both Christians and the unsaved.

God expresses mentor characteristics in His dealings with the unconverted, just to a limited extent compared to His dealings with the saved. God Himself deals with His children in a mentoring capacity not only because God is relational by nature but also because God is a teacher and mentor by nature. God interacts with the saved and the unsaved somewhat differently: whereas God regards the saved as His children and mentors them as such by disciplining and instructing, God's dealings with the unconverted are limited to teaching them the way to salvation, normally through the service of believers. God desires all people to have a

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[78] Gordon D. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1993), 1764.

saving relationship with Him (1 Tim 2:4). The parental aspect of God's nature only applies to

His relationship with those who are saved; however, God draws the unconverted to Him through

the teaching of His Word. Clinton Arnold supposes that the unsaved have both a relational and a

knowledge problem, which constitutes their unbelief: he states, "They are ignorant of God

precisely because their hearts are hard."[79] Scripture is appropriate and effective for instruction in

godliness because, through it, God instructs, guides, trains, and corrects (2 Tim 3:16). God can

address both the heart and the mind with His Word and the relationship He has with humans.

Thomas Lea and Hayne Griffin Jr. draw the connection between 2 Timothy 3:16 and Ephesians

6:4 that God's Word is effective for training.[80] The Word of God is paramount for the training of

Christians in godliness, but also in drawing mentees to Christ.

Scripture is filled with examples of God mentoring His followers as well as leading the

unsaved into a right relationship with Christ. God Himself personally intervenes and affects the

worldviews of those whom He mentors, and mentors do the same to their mentees. A mentor

passes on his or her life experience as well as general knowledge and loves. Nan Thomas and

Thomas Trevethan use Proverbs 1 through 9 to explain the concept of biblical mentorship and

how God, YAHWEH, is the ultimate and perfect mentor; furthermore, the writers argue that

earthly mentors are imitators of God in mentoring others in such a way that those mentees would

grow in holiness.[81] The only way to begin growing in holiness is to become holy or righteous in

the first place, which can only be done when a person is saved or enters into a right relationship

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[79] Clinton E. Arnold, *Ephesians* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2010), 283.

[80] Thomas D. Lea and Hayne P. Griffin, *1, 2 Timothy, Titus*, vol 34, The New American Commentary (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1992), 238.

[81] Nan Thomas and Thomas Trevethan, "A Christian Theology of Mentoring," Intervarsity, August 31, 2017, https://gfm.intervarsity.org/resources/christian-theology-mentoring, para 8.

with Jesus. The Father draws unbelievers to be saved (John 6:44). In a similar way, a Christian mentor can lead his mentee closer to Jesus. The Father draws the unbeliever to Him through a Christian mentor. There are a variety of examples in Scripture of biblical mentoring as well as a host of elements that a biblical mentorship possesses in accordance with Scripture. Believers can effectively perform the duties of mentor because God Himself is the highest example of mentorship, especially in His work with believers.

<div align="center">Examples of Mentors in Scripture</div>

Biblical mentorship has its basis in Scripture; simply put, a good steward of souls and overseer teaches, guides, and trains younger souls for a purpose. Normally, that purpose is to be a successor in function and faith: the mentee is trained to grow into the faith of his mentor. Mentors strive to help their mentees become better representatives of God through imitation.[82] Paul urged imitation of his faith. Other biblical figures urged those who would listen to imitate their faith. Although these figures and examples are not explicitly described as mentors, Scripture is replete with both examples and concepts that mark a strong Christian mentor. God acts as a mentor to prophets and other believers. Christians go on to mentor other Christians.

Noah is an example of modeling and imitating faith, and he is one of the earliest examples of God directly mentoring a person in Scripture. The Bible gives the account of Noah in Genesis 6 though 8. God gives Noah specific directions in building the ark, mentoring Noah practically. Scripture does not speak on God mentoring Noah in righteousness or holiness, but Scripture does mention that "Noah walked with God" (Gen 6:9). Scripture only reveals the side

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[82] Charles R. Erdman, *The Gospel of John: An Exposition* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1983), 122.

of God's mentorship with Noah that is practical, but in God's mentoring Noah, God reveals that He is instructive even in the more minute details. God also revealed His reasoning for His command for Noah to build the ark. Rydelnik and Vanlaningham reveal an aspect of God's character that is important to consider within mentorship: God has a concern for His creations' actions and thoughts as revealed in the people who died in Genesis' flood account.[83] God also demonstrates a desire to save people from His just wrath, and He accomplishes this through mentoring or leading people to the ark of salvation. The salvation that God provides through mentoring is not merely intellectual or practical. God's mentoring has an important element of an intimate relationship as well: mentorship "appears to be a lot like friendship from the young person's perspective" as mentorship provides a young person with psychosocial support.[84]

Scripture offers the Israelite people in the Old Testament as an example of the need for mentorship while demonstrating that His attributes are mentor-like; many Scriptures instruct the reader to follow the Lord's instruction and to love the Lord. Deuteronomy 6:4–7 is important for illustrating the concepts that God desires both to teach His people, in particular children, and to have a loving relationship with those who follow Him. In Deuteronomy 6:5, God instructs Israel to love Him with every aspect of their beings, which necessitates that they be taught to worship Him with their minds. God performs the role of a mentor to Israel as well as to individual prophets at the same time. Isaiah 54:13 declares to Israel that its children will be taught by the Lord and He will also be the peace of those children. Isaiah, here, proclaims God's care for His people and for children as well as His desire to teach those in His care. Young concludes that

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[83] Michael Rydelnik and Michael G. Vanlaningham, *The Moody Bible Commentary* (Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 2014), 56.

[84] Thomas Leroy Barksdale, "Minister as Mentor: A Biblical Model for the Preparation of a Mentoring Ministry at First Baptist Church in Reidsville, North Carolina" (thesis, ProQuest Dissertations Publishing, 2019.), 14.

God is the source of teaching.[85] God's mentoring, therefore, is about Him and from Him; mentoring is giving God Himself to those who would receive Him and have a relationship with Him.

Although it is not explicitly labeled as mentoring in Scripture, Moses and Joshua have a relationship that could aptly be described as one between a mentor and mentee. Joshua would work as Moses' assistant and eventually become his successor, which echoes the mentorship expectation that the mentor trains the mentee to take his or her place: mentorship allows for faith and knowledge of God to be passed down generationally.[86] According to Rod Earls and Ed Stetzer, "Each generation must have deep and real experiences with God so they can genuinely and confidently proclaim Him (1 Pet 2:9)."[87] The books of Exodus and Numbers are replete with examples of Moses' mentorship of Joshua. The example of Moses and Joshua is a strong model of the element of mentorship that builds spiritual formation to the point where the mentee can act as a successor to the mentor. Douglas Stuart comments on Exodus 33:11, noting that God and Moses placed trust "in Joshua and his continuing importance as a leader."[88] Moses led Joshua to a similar level of faith in God which enabled Joshua to be able to lead the Israelites as Moses' successor.

Although verses discussing Deborah are limited, Deborah could qualify as a mentor to her peers. As a judge and prophetess, her mentorship to others is unique. Deborah's ministry to

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85 Edward J. Young, *The Book of Isaiah* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1992), 370.

86 Mipo E Dadang, "Raising Younger Generation in An Era of Violence in Today's Society: Implication for Biblical Mentoring of Emerging Leaders in Context of Christian Leadership," *Journal of African Interdisciplinary Studies* 6, no. 6 (June 2022): 4–17, 7.

87 Rod Earls and Ed Stetzer, *Spurgeon's Theology for Multiplying Disciples and Churches: The Story of How Spurgeon and the Metropolitan Tabernacle Followed Christ* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2022), 11.

88 Douglas K. Stuart, *Exodus,* vol. 2, The New American Bible Commentary (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2006), 698.

others is an image of a woman's mentorship and mentoring capacity. Jerusha Drummonds argues that Deborah fulfills the role of mentor in the same way that many of the men of Scripture do; she encourages and supports while creating a difference in the lives of those who followed her.[89] Deborah's ministry and role were unconventional as well as her relationships to the men that she led; similarly, a biblical mentorship can, at times, be unconventional. A biblical mentorship is predicated on dependance on God to raise up the mentor for the benefit of the mentee. Deborah's mentorship is like Paul's mentorship in encouragement but also in spurring her mentees to action.

Paul's writings exploring his relationships with Timothy and Titus model the paternal element of biblical mentorship. Throughout the Pauline epistles, Paul references Timothy's own mentorship experience as being mentored by his own mother and grandmother and then by Paul himself (2 Tim 1:5). Timothy had multiple mentors who not only led him to faith in Christ but also helped him to grow in that faith. Although Eunice and Lois were the physical mother and grandmother to Timothy, they also took on the roles of spiritual parenthood, just as Paul would. Biblical mentors take on the role of a spiritual parent to his or her mentees. Paul claimed this fatherhood role in 1 Timothy 1:2, when he wrote "To Timothy, my true child in the faith" (ESV). Paul would echo this sentiment of spiritual fatherhood in 1 Corinthians 4:16. According to Thomas R. Schreiner, "Paul's theology is Christ-centered, and the uniqueness of Jesus manifests itself in 1 Corinthians."[90] Schreiner's understanding of Pauline theology is foundational for a biblical mentorship.

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[89] Jerusha Drummonds, "Leadership Formation through Mentoring in The Old Testament," Regent University, July 6, 2022, https://www.regent.edu/journal/journal-of-biblical-perspectives-in-leadership/moses-and-joshua-relationship-leadership-formation-through-mentoring-in-the-old-testament/, para 36.

[90] 1. Thomas R. Schreiner, *1 Corinthians: An Introduction and Commentary* (London, UK: IVP Academic, 2018), 22.

Paul naturally modeled Christ, Who adopts all who are genuinely converted, and proceeded to spiritually adopt his own mentees in the faith. Here Scripture shows mentorship's capacity to lead someone to Christ as well as draw a person closer to Him after already having been converted. This spiritual adoption is consistent with what Scripture teaches about God and His omnibenevolence.[91] The fullness of God's love is present in the mentor's adoption of the mentee in a spiritual capacity. God's love is the most critical component for the Christian mentor to possess for the benefit of his or her mentees. Mentorship is based in part on God's love for mankind.

<div align="center">Elements of Mentoring</div>

Biblical mentoring at its core is predicated on the imitation of God's attributes as well as faithfully obeying the commands of God expressed throughout Scripture regarding teaching and instructing younger Christians. Mentors imitate the attributes of God's nature that God shares with man, which Mark Dever refers to as communicable attributes, which are attributes that may be shared with or communicated with men and women.[92] This imitation of God's attributes is an attempt at worship and having an intimate relationship with God. According to Tony Horsfall, "One of the Greek words for 'worship' is *proskuneo*, which literally means 'to blow a kiss.'"[93] Biblical mentorship is dedicated to helping the mentee to grow closer to God through the practice of Christian disciplines, such as imitation. Relationship is critical for the success of a mentorship because it is an important part of the worship of God; David G. Peterson states, "a

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[91] Norman L. Geisler, Systematic Theology: In One Volume (Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House, 2011), 585.

[92] Mark Dever, *Discipling: How to Help Others Follow Jesus* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2016), 23.

[93] Tony Horsfall, *Mentoring for Spiritual Growth: Sharing the Journey of Faith* (Oxford, UK: Bible Reading Fellowship, 2008), 126.

genuine relationship with God will be grounded in a life of personal prayer and praise."[94] The

relationship element of mentoring is especially important not only for the success of the

mentorship but also for the fidelity to the relationship God has with His children.

1 Peter 5:1–5 further explores the relationship element of mentorship as well as

introducing a corrective, teacherly dynamic. Peter explores the Christian relationship between

elder Christians and younger Christians: elder Christians are to shepherd the flock by exercising

oversight whereas younger Christians are to behave humbly. Thomas R. Schreiner explains that

readers "probably should understand Peter to refer to those who are literally younger, perhaps

because younger people would be more apt to act rebelliously,"[95] thus connecting the spiritual

fruit humility with the abstinence of rebellious acts. In this Scripture, the elder is presented as the

one who leads the way, while the younger one follows; however, the elder has a responsibility to

be an example and lead without being domineering. Peter assumes a version of mentorship in

this passage when he commands elders to oversee the youth; Peter describes both the older and

younger Christians' roles in their relationship. Sproul views this relationship as one that echoes

the relationship between the believer and Christ: the believer humbly submits to Christ and in so

doing, the believer casts his or her cares before Christ because of His great love for believers (1

Pet 5:7).[96] The elder in this case is imitating God's role in providing wisdom; the mentor is also

performing the role of being the vehicle through which wisdom is given.

Paul gives guidelines for mentors' conduct and provides mentors with a type of

curriculum to teach their mentees. Paul begins with the premise that mentorship is biblical to

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[94] 1. David Peterson, *Engaging with God a Biblical Theology of Worship* (Downers Grove, Ill: InterVarsity Press, 2014), 16.

[95] Thomas R. Schreiner, *1, 2 Peter, Jude* (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman, 2003), 237.

[96] R. C. Sproul, *1–2 Peter*, 187.

build a mentorship model. Paul designs this model by commanding believers to "train the young women to love their husbands and children, to be self-controlled, pure, working at home, kind, and submissive to their own husbands" (Titus 2:4, ESV). Iva Thomas states, "Titus 2:3–5 gives practical, but also a theological basis for mentoring of the younger generation of women."[97] Young men are to be instructed to be self-controlled (Titus 2:6). In accordance with Paul's parameters for mentorship in Titus 2, the Christian mentor must be one who is an elder in the church, not a new convert. The elder must be an older man, who is "sober-minded, dignified, self-controlled, sound in faith, in love, and in steadfastness," or the elder must be an older woman who is to be "reverent in behavior, not slanderers or slaves to much wine" (Titus 2:2–3, ESV). Paul exhorts mentors not only to teach younger Christians but also to be a model for younger Christians to follow. Mentors in this aspect of mentoring imitate God's righteous character and holiness by demonstrating it, but they also create a close-knit, almost parental relationship of self-sacrificial love for the mentee.[98]

[97] Iva Thomas, "Revitalizing the Women's Ministry: Women Mentoring to the Women–A Titus 2 Project" (diss., ProQuest, 2014), 8.

[98] Kenley Hall, "The Critical Role of Mentoring for Pastoral Formation," *Journal of Applied Christian Leadership* 11, no. 1 (March 2017): 42–53, 7.

God's Saving Nature

The desire behind the call for mentoring youth is also founded in Scripture, which comes ultimately from God's saving nature. In James 5:20, James writes that "whoever brings back a sinner from his wandering will save his soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins" (ESV). Scripture draws a clear connection between reaching the lost and saving a person's soul from death. The importance of reaching the lost, especially the lost who might leave from the faith, is paramount for any church. It is a matter of spiritual life and death, and the charge is given to churches to guard souls and seek souls in the ways available. Mentorship is the method by which Jesus and the Twelve Apostles often ministered prodigals and the lost, preventing spiritual death in the process of their mentorship ministries. James 5:20 is related to 1 Peter 4:8, which also expresses the idea that love covers many sins. Thomas Schreiner argues that love allows a Christian to overlook many sins.[99] God's great love and mercy are important in ministering to and mentoring children as well as those who have left the church because it will prevent the mentor from attacking or correcting every sin present in the child's life. Mentors reflect God's nature of mercy and overlooking some sins due to an abundance of love.

According to Douglas Moo, "Believers are encouraged to take action and turn around a sinner who has taken a wrong and ultimately ruinous path."[100] The method is seemingly left to the church left with the charge in the circumstance: specifics are not given on how to turn around a sinner. The church must search God's Word and look for His guiding regarding the correct approach. Mentorship is a method that is consistent with God's character. Clinton Arnold argues

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[99] Thomas R. Schreiner, *1, 2 Peter, Jude* (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman, 2003), 213.

[100] Douglas J. Moo, *The Letter of James* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2016), 250.

that seeking the lost, especially the lost who have left the fold, is the responsibility of believers.[101] The Scripture emphasizes the point that God truly loves the sinner, even the one that has left the fold; God's heart is such that He seeks the lost sheep (Matt 18:12), and it is evident that God desires believers to imitate Him in this rescue mission by imitating His heart for the lost. God mentors and raises up mentors for others because of His heart for the lost and desire that they would be saved.

## God's Regard for Children

God regularly elevates children and expresses a particular love for them. God shows His high regard for children when He focuses on them and their upbringing in Proverbs 22:6. The training God describes is consistent with the biblical image of mentoring as not only are parents to teach their children in a way that is instructive for their lives, but also, scripturally, parents are implied to exercise a relationship with their children that is warm rather than hostile (Eph 6:4). Scripture reveals God's desire for parents to mentor their children by bringing them up in the way they should go. Furthermore, God shows His love for children by comparing the kingdom of heaven to children (Matt 19:14). Jesus taught the disciples that they must become like children to enter the kingdom of heaven (Matt 18:1–3). God considers children "a gift from the Lord" (Ps 127:3). Because mentorship prioritizes imitation of God's loves and desires, a Christian mentor holds children in high regard; mentoring fosters a relationship of discipleship, which guides the child toward heaven.[102]

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[101] Clinton E. Arnold, *James* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2008), 253.

[102] Mark Dever, *Discipling: How to Help Others Follow Jesus* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2016), 44.

God often uses His children, the church, to show the unsaved the relationship available with Him through Jesus Christ. Millard Erickson concludes that it is the role of the church to educate through both evangelism and discipleship.[103] God indirectly mentors the unsaved through the relationships God's children have with the unconverted: this relationship is a dim reflection of the relationship they can experience with God through Christ. God mentors the unconverted by instructing through direct means, such as by a sermon or by a witnessing encounter, as well as indirect means. Throughout the whole of Scripture, God has developed mentorship practices which have been used to draw people closer to Him. God's mentoring appears to work in the unsaved to draw them to salvation, and it works on the saved to draw them to sanctification. Christians can be effective in exercising care for others' souls when Christians imitate God's model of mentorship.

In 1 Corinthians 11:1 and in 1 Corinthians 4:16, Paul urges his readers to imitate him as he imitates Christ, setting both himself and Christ up as mentors and models to be followed. Gordon Fee argues that 1 Corinthians 11:1 is a continuation of Paul's thought from 1 Corinthians 10:33. In 10:33, Paul expresses his desire for everyone to be saved. Then, immediately in the next verse, he repeats the exhortation he had given earlier in 1 Corinthians 4:16, to imitate him as he imitates Christ. Paul shows that the two have a clear connection in Scripture, salvation, and imitation of Christ. Gordon Fee acknowledges the connection when he states, in 11:1, "The language and argument are such that it seems clearly to conclude the parenesis of 10:23-33."[104] Imitation often leads to changes, and as such, God designates imitation as one of the types of evidence of salvation in His children. God's saving nature is the driving force behind His

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[103] Millard J. Erickson, *Christian Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 2007), 1064.

[104] Gordon D. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1993), 490.

mentorship to groups and individuals: His nature as a God Who loves to save the lost motivates

mentorship to those who benefit from it.

In Scripture, God has established a system of modeling and imitation. God either created

a mentor, such as a prophet for Israel and the apostles for the early church, or God adopted flesh

in the person of Jesus Christ to mentor specific individuals, namely the disciples. In both cases,

God commanded those who were mentored to obey Him by imitating the faith of the models. In

John 13, Jesus teaches the disciples that they are to do as He did for them because He gave them

an example to imitate. Charles Erdman explains that the purpose of imitation is to follow Christ

in loving service for the pursuit of spiritual cleansing of the one being served.[105] Erdman

concludes that the imitation has an even more significant purpose than even the spiritual cleaning

of others, but in addition, Christians are to imitate God and godliness because Christians are to

be God's representatives on the earth to each other and the unsaved.[106]

God Himself fulfills the instructive role of a mentor. God establishes a person's path (Ps

37:23). Isaiah 48:17 echoes the idea that God guides believers in a mentoring capacity, preparing

and revealing the steps that His mentee is to take. Edward Young elaborates by adding that "true

religion must be founded on instruction."[107] God also instructs believers and counsels them (Ps

32:8). According to Tony Horsfall, this element of counseling is critical to performing the role of

mentor as mentors are to offer their mentees wise counsel instead of trying to fix them or their

problems.[108] Mentors of children must offer correction and practical wisdom to fix problems

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[105] Charles R. Erdman, *The Gospel of John: An Exposition* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1983), 122.

[106] Ibid.

[107] Edward J. Young, *The Book of Isaiah* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1992), 260.

[108] Tony Horsfall, *Mentoring for Spiritual Growth: Sharing the Journey of Faith* (Oxford, UK: Bible Reading Fellowship, 2008), 40.

either by offering discipline or direct counsel because God corrects through His Holy Spirit and offers practical wisdom in Scripture.

Psalms 94:12 and Hebrews 12:10 contend that God disciplines those in His care to walk upright because He is a good father and desires that His followers imitate Him and share in His holiness. A good mentor leads his or her mentees in godly, spiritual disciplines to lead them closer into a relationship with Jesus. God's nature as both a relational God Who patiently instructs, guides, and corrects in addition to caring deeply for His children makes Him the perfect and ultimate mentor. God's own example enables believers to share in His holiness: He leads them through mentoring and conviction to a relationship with Christ, and then God sanctifies through His relationship with believers. Christian mentorship is based on God's attributes and has the goal of drawing the mentee closer to God and to make the mentee a more faithful representative to others both inside and outside of the faith. Christian mentorship is consistent with God's known desires for children to come to Him. Christian mentorship is a reasonable attempt at removing the hindrances that could prevent children from coming to God (Matt 19:14). The planning of the intervention is important for the formation of a mentorship program that appropriately mentors children in accordance with the mentor-like attributes of God.

## Theoretical Foundations

The review of literature explores a variety of elements that make mentorship effective for the program in which it is used. Mentorship is founded in God's nature, and consequently, Scripture overflows with examples of mentoring relationships and mentoring principles. For this action-research project, the Bible's mentorship prescription must be applied to the youth. Scripture expresses teaching practices regarding the youth with which the educational world

agrees, such as modeling and imitation. Modeling and imitation are effective teaching practices that foster learning and encourage a more positive student and teacher relationship.[109] Since mentoring is based in God's character as a teacher and guide of His sheep, it is reasonable that mentorship principles borrow from proven effective teaching principles. Imitation and modeling are necessities in mentorship, and they are biblically prescribed practices as well as educational best practices.

Mentorship is important as an intervention because it can be used effectively in a wide array of areas and fields: the church is no different. There are many components to include when this action-research project is taken and executed fully from the theological and educational fields. When taken fully, mentors will be an under-shepherd in obedience to Jesus, Who is the shepherd of all believers; John 10:11 states, "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep" (ESV). Charles Spurgeon says that "None but Jesus can reveal Jesus."[110] The mentor should model Christ and endeavor to do as much as possible to imitate Him so that Christ uses the mentor to evangelize the lost and shepherd the sheep. A biblical mentorship program requires that the mentor imitate Christ closely. There are a variety of elements that must be taken to ensure the implementation of this action-research project is faithful to the intent and to the Scriptures.

## Training Mentors

Throughout biblical history, God has trained mentors who served to mentor others, namely the prophets. God commands imitation of teachers of the faith (Heb 13:7). Michael

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[109] Jochanan Benbassat, "Role Modeling in Medical Education," *Academic Medicine* 89, no. 4 (2014), 550.

[110] C. H. Spurgeon, *12 Sermons of Comfort and Cheer* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1976), 135.

Martin and Jason Whitlark argue indirectly that the teaching in Hebrews 13 is direction to avoid

idolatry; the evidence of this conclusion, that imitation of teachers and mentors helps the mentee

to avoid idolatry is consistent throughout the Old Testament, particularly amongst the

Israelites.[111] The Israelites often failed to imitate the faith of their prophets. Morris contends that

the teachers of the Word of God are examples to be imitated.[112] Morris also concludes that "Faith

is the important thing, and the readers were being tempted to unbelief in falling back from the

Christian way. They should instead follow these good examples of faith."[113] Morris'

understanding of the readers' falling away suggests an attribute of God that is important for

mentoring: God desires to save those that fall away and prescribed the means of imitation to

prevent falling away. As a result of God's established model, mentors must be trained first, and

then, mentees are to be instructed to imitate the faith of their mentors.

Training of mentors is the first component of an effective mentorship model. Monica

Gandhi and Mallory Johnson state, "Successful mentoring requires skilled mentors. Mentorship

matters and mentoring mentors matters."[114] A mentor must be trained according to both the

principles of Scripture as well as the principles of best educational practices. Elders need to be

trained practically and theologically for the task that they will be undertaking.[115] Keith Edwards

bases his research on this step, the need for training or mentoring mentors in the church body.

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[111] Michael Wade Martin and Jason A. Whitlark, "Strengthened by Grace and Not by Foods," *Novum Testamentum* 65, no. 3 (2023): 350–80, https://doi.org/10.1163/15685365-bja10051, para 6.

[112] Leon Morris, "Hebrews" in *Hebrews–Revelation*, vol 12, The Expositor's Bible Commentary, ed. Frank E. Gaebelein (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1981), 148.

[113] Morris, "Hebrews," 148.

[114] Monica Gandhi and Mallory Johnson, "Creating More Effective Mentors: Mentoring the Mentor," *AIDS and Behavior* 20, no. S2 (2016): 294–303, https://doi.org/10.1007/s10461-016-1364-3, para 4.

[115] Alexander Strauch, *A Study Guide to Biblical Eldership: Twelve Lessons for Mentoring Men for Eldership* (Littleton, CO: Lewis & Roth, 1996), 15.

Edwards identifies the need for training for 'coaches' in the church planting process to help ensure growth for the church being planted.[116] The researcher begins here because it is the practical first step. Mentors must know both the mission and what is expected of them. Edwards research demonstrates that this training can be effective for the ends of church planting, so it is likely that it will be effective for evangelizing the youth at Dawn Baptist Church.

The researcher will assess the elders to determine whether they meet the biblical standard, ". . . sober-minded, dignified, self-controlled, sound in faith, in love, and in steadfastness" (Titus 2:2, ESV). Once the candidates are gathered, the candidates will meet several times a week to be instructed in both doctrine as well as practical applications for the selection of mentees as well as the curriculum for training those mentees. After an initial training period, the training of mentors will coincide with the actual mentoring beginning so that mentors are regularly refreshed with theological and practical instruction. The theoretical strength of mentoring has been supported in a variety of fields. Crystal Turner-Moffatt explains that mentorship has an empowering effect on women in the corporate environment. Mentorship in the church will help girls become Christian women because it can help Christian girls develop confidence that they may lack.[117] Mentor relationships are also powerful preventatives for negative youth behaviors as well as strong reinforcements for positive behavioral development.[118]

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[116] Keith G. Edwards, "Training Coaches and Mentors for Church Planters in the Assemblies of God" (dissertation, UMI, 2006), 12.

[117] Crystal Turner-Moffatt, "The Power of Mentorship: Strengthening Women in Leadership Roles," *Professional Safety* 64, no. 8 (August 2019), 17.

[118] Gizem Erdem et al., "Mentoring Relationships, Positive Development, Youth Emotional and Behavioral Problems: Investigation of a Mediational Model," *Journal of Community Psychology* 44, no. 4 (2016): 464–83, https://doi.org/10.1002/jcop.21782, abstract.

Imitation and Modeling

Modeling is a teaching strategy that is considered highly effective in the educational field. Warren Haston argues that "Whenever a teacher demonstrates a concept for a student, that teacher is modeling."[119] Good mentorship is a form of modeling, where a positive relationship between the mentor and the mentee is also present; the mentor is the model that the mentee imitates, and the relationship is such that it causes the mentee to desire to imitate the model. Through this modeling, a mentor gives a mentee the example to imitate to learn and become like the mentor. Mentorship is certainly used as an effective means to foster spiritual growth, but the practice can be taken further than general spiritual growth: it can be used as an effective means of bringing youth to genuine salvation, which will remedy the tangible symptom, church decline in the emergent adult population.

There is a need in this mentorship program to establish a model for female youth because Dawn Baptist church's structure could be understood as male-dominated: the deacons and pastor are all biblically male, so it would benefit the program and the church to designate female models for female youth to imitate. Turner-Moffatt's research focuses on male-dominated corporations and the effects that mentorship has had for women in those corporations; the issue for Turner-Moffatt is lacking confidence.[120] Turner-Moffatt's research supports the idea that mentorship would be beneficial for girls in general, and in the church, mentorship promises similar results. Mentorship yields results because it mixes modeling with the relationship of an older peer. The researcher's intervention will focus on these aspects of mentorship. The mentor

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[119] Warren Haston, "Teacher Modeling as an Effective Teaching Strategy," *Music Educators Journal* 93, no. 4 (2007): 26.

[120] Crystal Turner-Moffatt, "The Power of Mentorship: Strengthening Women in Leadership Roles," *Professional Safety* 64, no. 8 (August 2019), 17.

will provide a model and will establish a relationship that will encourage the mentee to follow the model established.

## Praise and Encouragement

Praise or encouragement is another element of mentoring biblically, as stated in Hebrews 10:24; Paul uses this tactic in Romans 15:14, in which he commends the church on being full of goodness and knowledge. Fittingly, praise and encouragement are effective teaching practices in which a teacher can positively impact a student's learning and advancement in social behaviors.[121] The modeling and imitation element couple with the praise and encouragement to form the relational aspect of mentorship, which is necessary for effective mentorship. In a letter to Timothy, Paul participates in encouraging the youth by exhorting Timothy to "let no one despise" him for his youth, and instead, Paul builds up young Timothy by urging him to be "an example in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, [and] in purity" (1 Tim 4:12, ESV). Timothy was not likely a child when receiving this letter because he was an active minister.[122] Despite not being a youth in the sense that the research demands, he still received encouragement based both on Paul's love for him and his youth. A mentor must respect and encourage his or her young mentees and look for ways to build them up rather than belittle them based on youth or inexperience. Respect in this way is crucial for relationship building. Biblical mentorship requires this positive relationship building through both correct biblical teaching and properly lived application of biblical teaching.

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[121] Yadi Sun, "The Effect of Teacher Caring Behavior and Teacher Praise on Students' Engagement in EFL Classrooms," *Frontiers in Psychology* 12 (2021), abstract.

[122] Charles R. Erdman, *The Pastoral Epistles of Paul: I & II Timothy; Titus* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1983), 57.

Throughout Scripture, God encourages believers when appropriate; this is a necessary step in maintaining and building a positive relationship between teacher and student. Anderson et al., connect praise or encouragement with attempting to reinforce a certain behavior, but mostly, praise or encouragement are meant to build a positive relationship between two parties.[123] 1 Thessalonians 5:11 says, "Therefore encourage one another and build one another up" (ESV). Rydelnik and Vanlaningham suggest that this portion of Scripture connects encouragement with building up relationships between Christians.[124] The encouragement component of mentorship cannot be overlooked not only because it encourages correct behavior, beliefs, and practices, but it also builds a crucial relationship.

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[123] Rajen A. Anderson, Molly J. Crockett, and David A. Pizarro, "A Theory of Moral Praise," *Trends in Cognitive Sciences* 24, no. 9 (2020), abstract.

[124] Rydelnik and Vanlaningham, *The Moody Bible Commentary*, 1889.

Positive Relationship Building

Since God is relational and has designed man in His image, it is rational to conclude that human beings have a need for and benefit from community and relationships (Gen 1:27). Man's need for relationship is especially evident when God creates Eve because, as God says, "It is not good that the man should be alone" (Gen 2:18, ESV). God demonstrates the need and benefit of man to have relationship and community, so mentorship must cultivate a positive relationship between mentor and mentee. Research in education also agrees with the benefit of relationship building for teaching and guidance to be effective. According to Andrew Martin and Rebecca Collie, "when the relational balance became predominantly positive, students' engagement was higher."[125] While mentorship focuses on the teaching of Scripture and teaching the practices of the faith, biblical mentorship must also emphasize and prioritize positive relationships.

Mentorship consists of many elements joined together: positive, biblical relationships, teaching of Scripture, modeling, and imitation. Other researchers have attempted to use mentorship in a similar way and in a similar context that this action research will. Patrice Hunter uses mentorship to engage the youth; the researcher remarks that "there is a paucity of research that analyze the critical role mentors and role models play in youth engagement in the church and community."[126] Hunter's research primarily focuses on using mentorship as a tool for engaging the youth. Keith Edwards also recognizes the effectiveness of mentorship in the church. He argues that leadership in the church needs to be mentored by older and wiser Christians in order to prevent ministry burnout and other spiritual maladies and to encourage effective church

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[125] Andrew J. Martin and Rebecca J. Collie, "Teacher–Student Relationships and Students' Engagement in High School: Does the Number of Negative and Positive Relationships with Teachers Matter?" *Journal of Educational Psychology* 111, no. 5 (2019), abstract.

[126] Patrice Turnbow Hunter, "Church-Based Mentoring Program: Increasing Youth Engagement" (diss., University of Dayton, 2022), 12.

planting.[127] Other research on the topic follows the same pattern; it either addresses a component

of mentorship, uses mentorship to spiritually grow adults, or uses mentorship in order to grow

youth spiritually, but this action-research project is dedicated to being a tool by which God draws

youth to conversion and disinclines church leaving. This action-research project recognizes the

benefits and the components of biblical mentorship and surmises that biblical mentorship for the

youth can be effective evangelism.

Biblical mentorship is comprised of a variety of elements that are conducive to the

spiritual growth of mentees because mentorship uniquely counters the components that motivate

emergent adults to leave the church. Ken Ham, Britt Beemer, and Todd Hillard suggest

mentorship as a way to curb emergent adult departures from the church; they suggest that a

church that leads by setting a high regard for apologetics and the authority and sufficiency of

Scripture helps to slow and deter emergent adults from leaving because apologetics and a high

regard of Scripture affirm a person's faith.[128] David Kinnaman and Aly Hawkins argue that there

is a cultural disconnect between the older and younger generations that cause three barriers to

emerge, which contribute to a new adult leaving the church: access, alienation, and authority.[129]

Mentoring has an element of biblical counseling as a counselor is to care for the soul of another.

Bob Kelleman contends that the Bible helps believers to "grow in counseling competence" and,

as 2 Timothy 3:16-17 teaches, is sufficient for all instruction and training in godliness.[130]

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[127] Keith G. Edwards, "Training Coaches and Mentors for Church Planters in the Assemblies of God" (diss., UMI, 2006), 1.

[128] Ken Ham, Britt Beemer, and Todd Hillard, *Already Gone: Why Your Kids will Quit Church and What You can Do to Stop it* (Master Books, 2009), 32.

[129] David Kinnaman and Aly Hawkins, *You Lost Me: Why Young Christians Are Leaving Church. . . and Rethinking Faith* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2016), 57.

[130] Robert W. Kellemen, *Scripture and Counseling: God's Word for Life in a Broken World* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2014), abstract.

Forming strong relationships is not exclusive to an effective mentorship model: strong, positive relationships between authority figures such as teachers and their learners are crucial in promoting positive outcomes. Trust is critical in building positive relationships. Irene García-Moya, Carmen Moreno, and Fiona M. Brooks argue that "Building positive relationships with students was considered beneficial for the students' learning" in that positive relationships allow for teacher and student or adult and child to develop trust.[131] While Irene García-Moya, Carmen Moreno, and Fiona M. Brooks argue that positive relationships are both positive and negative to both the child and the adult, a biblical mentorship does not suffer from the same detrimental aspects of positive relationship building. Peter Hudson shares the perspective that building positive relationships is critical to trust and respect; his "findings reveal that positive relationships required the achievement of trust and respect by sharing information, resources, and expectations."[132] Forming strong relationships is not only an important aspect of an effective mentorship program, but also the process by which these relationships are formed is critical. A mentorship relationship requires a deep trust between mentor and mentee; mentors must be given and must use tools and strategies purposed toward building this level of trust. W. Brad Johnson and Charles R. Ridley argue that "Trust is the fabric or glue that binds mentor and mentee together in a safe, productive, and committed relationship."[133]

Aisha Griffith, Reed Larson, and Haley Johnson contend that an adult must grow the youth's trust by cultivating it in various ways: growing trust requires an adult to empower youth

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[131] Irene García-Moya, Carmen Moreno, and Fiona M. Brooks, "The 'Balancing Acts' of Building Positive Relationships with Students: Secondary School Teachers' Perspectives in England and Spain," *Teaching and Teacher Education* 86 (2019): p. 102883, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2019.102883.

[132] Peter Hudson, "Forming the Mentor-Mentee Relationship," *Mentoring; Tutoring: Partnership in Learning* 24, no. 1 (2016): 30–43, https://doi.org/10.1080/13611267.2016.1163637.

[133] W. Brad Johnson and Charles R. Ridley, *The Elements of Mentoring: 75 Practices of Master Mentors* (New York, NY: St. Martin's Press, 2018), 173.

to reach their goals, participate in a variety of experiences in which the youth is enabled to develop trust, support the child in the process of working on his or her goals, and to be interested in the child holistically.[134] Mentors must also develop trust of their mentees in order for mentees to trust their mentors. Joanne Leck and Barbara Orser argue based on Mayer's research that mentor trust in their mentees is initially based on mentee's ability and integrity as well as the mentee's respectfulness or kindness.[135] As the relationship grows, however, trust is either gained or lost as the mentee proves himself or herself trustworthy. Regardless, mentor and mentee trust must always be maintained during a successful mentorship program. Alice Donlan et al., advocate for the TRICS model as a means to build trust in these relationships: these include respect, consistency, and support among others.[136]

**Conclusion**

Since God's prescribed methods of shepherding are effective regardless of field, the field of education can give valuable insight into the effectiveness of these practices. Mentoring biblically does not use scriptural principles in tandem with educational principles because the Bible is sufficient; however, biblical mentorship can gain clarity from the work done in the field of education because educational best practices often are elaborated biblical principles of teaching. The most important elements of mentoring work to produce fruit in the life of the

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[134] Aisha N. Griffith, Reed W. Larson, and Haley E. Johnson, "How Trust Grows: Teenagers' Accounts of Forming Trust in Youth Program Staff.," *Qualitative Psychology* 5, no. 3 (2018): 340–57, https://doi.org/10.1037/qup0000090, abstract.

[135] Joanne Leck and Barbara Orser, "Fostering Trust in Mentoring Relationships: An Exploratory Study," *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion: An International Journal* 32, no. 4 (2013): 410–25, https://doi.org/10.1108/edi-01-2010-0007, 414.

[136] Alice E. Donlan, Elana R. McDermott, and Jonathan F. Zaff, "Building Relationships between Mentors and Youth: Development of the TRICS Model," *Children and Youth Services Review* 79 (2017): 385–98, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2017.06.044, abstract.

mentee, but these fruits are a result of the most significant result of mentorship, namely, God's granting salvation to the person who has received Christ. God is the One Who saves. Mentorship cannot be understood to save anyone. However, God can use mentorship and mentoring relationships to accomplish the necessary groundwork for drawing someone to salvation. A mentee benefits in this way by being shown salvation and the effects of it, and at the same time, the mentee is shown a relationship by which he or she will be drawn to receiving Christ. The mentor is Christ's representative. Christ reveals Himself through a mentor, and Christ, through the mentor, effects salvation. Mentorship's other positive effects are well-documented and well-supported benefits, but the primary one for this research and in all is the faithfulness to Christ and to Scripture in evangelizing the lost effectively. In the case of this action-research, mentorship is the tool by which youth may be reached more effectively.

The intervention will emphasize a relationship with Christ and receiving the gospel: mentorship in this project is unique in that it focuses more upon true conversion than merely on spiritual growth. This intervention is designed to foster growth in prayer, Scripture reading, and other elements of spiritual formation by teaching mentors how to mentor in a way that is grounded in biblical teaching. As a result, this mentorship model is gospel-focused and making converts through a personal, inside, and outside of church, modeling, mentoring relationship that causes the mentor to become like Christ for the mentee in ways that are practical and visible. The mentor models the person of Christ, teaches like Christ, and, above all, loves like Christ in such a way that he or she is focused on the salvation of his or her mentee. The reason for youth leaving the church when they reach emergent adulthood is because of false conversion during their youths. In order to address this, the researcher has developed a mentorship program which trains elders to use effective educational principles and motivates them to use them to mentor the youth

in theological principles; this program will allow mentors to overcome the gaps between the

older adults and the youth in order to create a relationship between them that will draw a young

person to Christ and, as a result, discourage a youth from leaving the church.

## CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

Dawn Baptist church experiences high dropout rates in the emergent adult demographic. False conversion during adolescence is the primary cause; therefore, revitalized biblical mentorship was used as an evangelistic model. This approach, rather than just a spiritual growth program was the best intervention that could be implemented to ensure that the youth of the church were experiencing genuine conversions. If youth experience genuine conversions during their teen years, they are unlikely to fall out of the church when they become adults. The uniqueness of this intervention was in the use of mentorship to evangelize the youth. Mentorship was chosen for its relational and teaching components, drawing upon the spiritual wealth of the wisdom of the elders of the church. Mentorship normally is geared toward leading a mentee in performing a practice, but in Christian literature, mentorship is purposed toward spiritual growth. The steps in this methodology were a unique use of mentorship with the goal of drawing youth to genuine conversion and a genuine relationship with Jesus.

It is critical to have husband and wife mentorship teams for this intervention for safety and accountability. Consequently, mentors were expected and encouraged to work as a spousal team when they were performing mentorship tasks with their mentees. When mentors were paired with mentees, there was an understanding that while the mentor of a boy was the husband, the husband's wife also was to fulfill a role in the mentorship as well. The reverse is true as well, as the girl's mentor was the wife, but the wife's husband had an impact as well. The primary responsibility of the mentorship being done was placed on the one to whom the mentee was assigned. A boy was assigned to the husband, and a girl was assigned to the wife.

In the beginning stages, mentors were trained according to the researcher's own developed intervention protocol and principles (see Appendix L). The researcher's background both in doctoral-level religious studies and in master's level studies in the field of education led the researcher to design a mentorship program where the mentors exercised personal care for their mentees. A variety of educational best practices were in focus, such as scaffolding; mentors often performed scaffolding by gradually removing help from their mentees to strengthen mentees to do more on their own. The researcher's model also emphasized personal responsibility and empowerment of children to become active participants in their learning; these elements could be seen in the mentees' requirements to take the lead in jobs performed by their mentors as well as in the mentees' assignment to design and lead a Bible lesson with mentors. Mentors were instructed according to the researcher's developed principles; that is, mentors learned how to develop a biblical relationship with people several decades their junior. Mentors were introduced to educational practices such as scaffolding, encouraging active learners, and modeling to effect change. Mentees were trained during the presentation of the project upon the meeting with their parents. Mentees were given guidelines and expectations to help mentees to grow spiritually (see Appendix M). Mentees were given the charge to help their mentors to do the task they have been assigned.

Mentor training consisted of following a training outline of helping which helped mentors relate to their mentees while also using educational practices of scaffolding, modeling, and student engagement. In the first meeting, mentors were given the need for mentorship to address the problem, but they also needed to be instructed that there is still hope and that young people are not too far gone. Older people sometimes have the tendency to assume that working with youth is unimportant or that their job is to simply tell them about the Bible rather than modeling

Christ in a practical way. Mentors were, in the first meeting, instructed on the severe need of the youth population. Mentors were made aware that children in the church were rejecting salvation; as an elder Christian in the church, the mentor was helped to understand that he or she had a responsibility and that he or she should have compassion for the lost. In short, the mentors had the privilege of being the one God used to reach youths who otherwise might not have received the gospel. Mentors then, in week 2, were instructed on the mentee's culture and having compassion for their mentee's culture. Mentors were made aware that mentees often do not have a typical family structure, certainly not like the mentors' family structure. The youths of the church often have blended families where they have never seen their biological mother and father in the same house modeling Christ's relationship with the church. Mentors were charged to model this relationship in their own homes, especially in the presence of their mentees.

The researcher's developed mentorship program added educational practices such as modeling, scaffolding, and student engagement to the mentorship intervention to make the mentorship more engaging and effective for kids and more fulfilling for adults. Through these educational practices, mentors were able to build a stronger relationship with mentees in which they could see the growth of their mentees toward the goal of their salvation. In effect, this specific mentorship model focused on best educational practices to build the mentor relationship that resulted in drawing a young person to a relationship with Christ. The researcher's mentorship program was a display of the researcher's experience and education in both the realms of seminary and education in that the mentorship program used the distinctive best practices of education to reach and teach youths more effectively.

The researcher, through personal experience and professional training, saw the efficacy of mentor modeling for effective education and persuasion of another person, especially youths.

Educationally, modeling is an effective teaching strategy where the person modeling performs an example or becomes an example for a student to imitate. The researcher blended this educationally best practice into theological training and the realm of the church. The researcher trained mentors how to model, simply by helping them to understand modeling and the importance of it. It was important for mentors to lead by their example. Mentors were instructed to present Christian disciplines and practices that their mentees may never have experienced, such as a daily Bible reading, daily prayer time, or a family meal in which the mother and father contribute, and both display Christian love for each other. Scaffolding was important for mentors to guide their mentees slowly into new areas of service. Scaffolding was critical because slowly, the mentor took away support and allowed the mentee to use his or her own skills without help. Student engagement was an effective principle in this mentorship program because every activity was designed to turn a mentee from being a passive recipient of the gospel into an active worker and learner.

Mentees were given instructions to follow that helped mentors establish a relationship with mentees. Mentees were instructed to enthusiastically accept opportunities to serve when the mentor instructed. Mentees were encouraged to take note of the practices that their mentors did and to try to understand why their mentors were performing their tasks. Mentees were given a list of questions (see Appendix K) to help foster the relationship and open communication between mentor and mentee. Since there was a possibility that it would be difficult to overcome barriers in communication, mentors and mentees were encouraged to talk face-to-face and avoid using technology more than necessary to set up meeting times and dates. Mentees did what they do naturally as children, observe and imitate a respected adult. Mentors were to be respected adults.

Mentors were instructed that their actions, regarding mentees, would often speak more profoundly than words. If a mentee felt that a mentor was acting hypocritically, the mentorship would not have the desired effect. Mentors were informed that their actions are more significant to youths, most of the time, than their words would be. The researcher used this to explain to mentors the importance of modeling Christian truths during the mentorship intervention. In other words, mentors were instructed that their words would fall short if they failed to demonstrate their spoken convictions because youths tend to have an attuned ear for adults who contradict their spoken beliefs. Mentors were instructed that, to have a genuine relationship with their mentees, mentors had to be willing to model Jesus, whose actions revealed the earnestness of his words. The training also helped mentors to see that they could be just a good example and expect mentees to be benefitted. Mentors were required to use both words and their actions to convey truth. Mentors were asked to hold themselves to Jesus' standard of compassion for the lost, such that mentors become patient, kind, not envious or boastful, or rude. Mentors were instructed to not insist upon having their own way or creating a younger version of themselves, and mentors were instructed to have interactions with mentees that are not irritable or resentful when a mentee does something incorrectly (1 Cor 13:4–5).

During the third week, mentors were instructed to continue showing their compassion for the youth as potentially lost people by being instructed to learn who the youth is as a human being. Youths often want their backstories or experiences to be validated, so mentors were instructed to, so long as the youth experience is not illegal or sinful, validate experiences and background. Youth often have a broad range of interests that older adults may not understand; mentors were instructed to show grace and compassion on certain elements of culture that may not exactly be sinful but might be contrary to the mentor's taste. These elements of culture may

be taste in music, humor, recreation, and even politics, to name a few. Mentors were instructed to

be careful not to criticize these cultural elements expressly, or if a mentor had to do so, he or she

were to do so graciously and kindly. Not only is being gracious and kind a biblical principle, but

it is also an effective practice for helping youths to change in the ways that matter. Youths often

see their cultural affinities for music, entertainment, and politics as an extension of their own

identities, and as such, mentors were encouraged to avoid engaging in extra-biblical issues, such

as entertainment preferences that were not inherently sinful. The intervention had to be focused

only on drawing the youth to a relationship with Jesus, and then, as an extension, a stronger

relationship with Christ. Mentors had to avoid trying to fix everything about their mentee, which

is so often a temptation, but rather, the mentor was required attempt to only correct spiritual

misunderstandings and communicate biblical truths.

In the fourth week, mentors were instructed to demonstrate their compassion for Christ

through their compassion for their mentees. Mentors were instructed to allow mentees

opportunities to perform certain tasks once the mentor has instructed them. Throughout the

course of the mentorship, mentors were asked to model Christ by giving mentees a job to carry

out, teaching them through the experience of service, like Jesus did in Matthew 10, Mark 3, and

Luke 6. Mentors were instructed to not attempt to intervene when their mentees were attempting

to do a job that the mentee has been instructed to do. It could be a tendency of someone older

and more experienced to step in when a youth is doing something incorrectly, but the mentor was

encouraged to resist the urge to intervene unless it was absolutely necessary. If mentors were to

intervene before a mentee has the experience of learning, the mentor would communicate distrust

in the mentee's capabilities and hinder the mentorship. Mentors were instructed that mentees

would be working toward spiritual growth, just as mentors would be working toward leading the mentees.

Strengthening the relationship between mentor and mentee is critically important because the lesser relationship between the mentor and mentee is a model, in the mind of the mentee, of a possible relationship between the mentee and Christ. The mentor and mentee's relationship must be one that faithfully reflects the mentor's relationship with Christ. This requires the mentor sacrifice in some ways: not in terms of morals or doctrine. The mentor was required to be patient with their mentees in terms of elements of culture that are not explicitly sinful but at the same time are different from the older adult's culture. The older adult had to exercise grace and understanding in their mentee's personal lives with activities and interests that the mentor might not otherwise like or understand, such as music or video games. The mentor also had to resist the urge to be a corrective force of everything wrong in the mentee's beliefs and behavior. Rather, the mentor corrected the most significant errors in the mentee's thinking or practice, but he or she was also an encouragement for correct beliefs in theology and correct practices.

In the fifth week, mentors and mentees met together for the first time in an official capacity. Mentors and mentees were given the mentee rules and guidelines here (see Appendix M). Mentee's guidelines and requirements encouraged the mentee to help the mentor to accomplish his task. Mentees were instructed to view their mentor like a grandparent, which was important for the relational dynamic. Mentees were informed to do their best to do what their mentor asked of them, but not to be afraid to ask for help. Youths may have needed help completing a task or an activity but may have been unwilling to ask for help because of a fear of embarrassment. Mentees were instructed that their mentor was to be like a family member: a

mentee understood that they should ask for help if they need it, but also that they have the trust of their mentee, their parents, their church, and the researcher to perform tasks.

In the sixth week's training session, the researcher focused on training mentors to serve mentees and mentees' families graciously and kindly in their own homes. Mentors were trained on the importance of modeling kindness and service outside of the church. Mentors needed to know that youths often need to see the reality of something demonstrated for them: it is not enough to tell them that being kind to others is important, rather, a mentor was required to demonstrate kindness and service. Youths often imitate what they see more than what they are told to do. Mentors were informed that their example is paramount to this intervention's success in promoting change in the mentee. If the mentor's practice did not match their profession, mentees would not respect their mentor's profession or their attempts to teach biblical concepts.

For weeks seven through twelve, mentors reviewed the ideas of forming relationships with their mentees. Mentors formed these relationships and deepened them by becoming involved in the mentees' lives and taking a genuine interest in who they are. Mentors were instructed to not view their relationship with mentees like that of a teacher and a student in the respect that the mentor was supposed to tell the mentee everything he or she was doing that was right or wrong. Rather, the mentor was to act much like a grandparent but with a spiritual emphasis. The mentor was instructed to be willing to be taught by their mentees. They were also instructed to allow their mentees the autonomy to work in assigned capacities, working in some role that the mentor deemed appropriate. Mentors were instructed to be a continually positive influence rather than a negative one; a mentor's job was not to correct every single error that his or her mentee has, but rather, a mentor was to communicate the gospel through words and through actions that proved the reality of his or her inward profession.

Mentee requirements focused on trying to relate to their mentor as a grandparent, while mentor requirements attempted to bridge the gap between themselves and mentors by serving and modeling Christ in a way that was kind and compassionate. Mentors were to refrain from criticisms about entertainment, unless the entertainment was expressly sinful. Mentors were to create opportunities to have their mentees teach them about their favorite things, such as video games and music. Mentors could use their mentees' affinities for entertainment in order to help mentees see Jesus' compassion for the lost, and in so doing, mentors could lead their mentee to a relationship with Christ. There were several difficulties for the mentor to navigate. Primarily, the mentor must have prayerfully considered what was a primary issue, an issue that must be addressed, and what was a secondary issue, an issue that might not need to be addressed. Mentors were instructed to speak more in the positive, making suggestions and alternatives, rather than in the negative, which would be criticisms. Mentors also were to consider and understand their mentees' backgrounds: mentors were to exercise genuine compassion for those children who have grown up in an atmosphere of technology and often biblically aberrant parental structures. Mentees may never have had a meal prepared by their mother and father, nor may mentees have seen their mothers and fathers interact kindly with each other; mentors were highly effective in bringing their mentees to Christ by modeling service and kindness.

Scripturally, there is much to support this intervention, but particularly, there is the declaration in Proverbs 22:6, which describes how children should be raised: they should be trained in the way they should go, and when they are older, they will not depart from that training. If youth are trained in Christ and brought to Christ during their youths, they are not likely to leave Him but remain in Him, which is visible in part by that person's obedience to the Scripture. In this research's case, 1 John 2:19 and Hebrews 10:25 were instructive toward the

end that if a youth receives Christ truly, he or she will not leave Him or the church. It was therefore the unique approach of this intervention that mentors seek the salvation of their mentees; mentors saw mentorship as an evangelistic approach, not merely the sharing of wisdom.

The methodology detailed the use of a variety of instruments to assess participants. The youths' spiritual status were assessed by Regular Baptist Press' Build UP Youth Spiritual Maturity Assessment (see Appendix A); this was used as a pre-assessment and post-assessment and gave the researcher and the mentor a basis for understanding current level of spirituality. In addition, mentees were given the Lifeway Spiritual Growth Assessment (see Appendix B) as a means of tracking growth throughout the program. For consistency, the Lifeway Spiritual Growth Assessment is also a Likert assessment. Emergent adults were given a survey (see Appendix C) as a means of guiding the intervention for the youth. The information gleaned from the emergent adults in the questionnaire helped the researcher to make needed changes during the intervention. The researcher kept a running journal of informal assessments and changes made should they occur, such as a participant's change in mind or the inability of a mentor to continue the research project. The researcher gained emergent adult consent through a personal letter to the participant with the consent form (Appendix D). The researcher then, after receiving consent documents, sent out the Emergent Adult survey (see Appendix C).

**Intervention Design**

The design of this action research project intervention focused largely on the idea that an elder leader must lead by example and develop a relationship. This intervention combined the elements of mentorship, which required a relationship between the mentor and mentee, imitation where the mentee began to imitate the mentor, and a teaching and learning dynamic where

spiritual and practical truths were imparted from the mentor to the mentee. The intervention required that the mentor intervene in the lives of their mentees to affect the spiritual end of genuine conversion and rule out false conversion. Mentors were also an active presence outside of the standard Sunday and Wednesday church life; this was to help communicate to mentees that genuine spirituality is not compartmentalizable and worth applying to everyday life. The design required that both the researcher and the mentor use assessments at planned intervals as well as informal assessments to evaluate the effectiveness of the intervention.

The nature of the program was highly evangelistic and soteriological. Mentors were instructed to place primary emphasis on salvation, which required someone to know his or her need before God, how to be saved, and the results of salvation. Mentors did this by forming a relationship with their mentees and modeling Christ to them through teaching and example. Mentors showed the application and drew connections from the realities of the gospel and Christ's love to the realities of outside-of-church life. Elder Christians, male and female, of the Fifty-five and Alive group were paired with a youth from ages nine to seventeen who were involved in the youth group programs in the church. This intervention is unique in the respect that it uses mentorship to evangelize or to bring youth to salvation; other research does not attempt to use mentorship in this way.

Most research uses mentorship as a means of leading mentees in sanctification. This research focused on creating an effective evangelistic model for the youth that helped to ensure that mentees were truly saved, which in turn promises to yield an increase in church attendance when those youths turn eighteen; young adults who have truly received Christ experienced a change in desires that served to motivate them to remain in the church rather than leave it. If someone has received Christ, his or her life demonstrates the reality of 1 John 2:19, and the

convert demonstrates obedience to the command in Hebrews 10:25 regarding not forsaking the assembly. A convert to Christ loves His bride, the church. As a result of bringing a child into a relationship with Christ, he or she will not abandon the church in general, which is what so often occurs in the emergent adult population of Dawn Baptist Church. Mentorship was effective in this end because it was geared specifically to meeting youths on an individual level, modeling Christ because He meets all converts as individuals, and caring uniquely for each person in order to draw the person to salvation. The heart of this action-research and intervention is the heart of evangelism and drawing those who do not yet know Christ to Him through modeling the relationship, application of the relationship, and persuading youths to have a relationship with Jesus.

First, the researcher discussed the problem and the plan of intervention with the pastor of the Dawn Baptist Church and secured a letter granting permission to perform the research and intervention in the church (see Appendix G). Then, after obtaining IRB approval, the researcher ensured that the deacons were also well-informed as to the project, the goals, and the Scripture to support the intervention. To ensure transparency to the highest degree possible, deacons were given a step-by-step packet of the plan, timeframe, participants, and list of instruments used; these were developed by the researcher and given to ensure that the deacons, as well as the elders, were on the same page with the procedure. The researcher then gave a presentation to the church on a Wednesday night to inform the congregation of the project. Most of the members in attendance were mentor prospects, but the researcher also sent out an information letter to the other prospects who were not in attendance on the date of the presentation.

Next, the research began with informed consent documentation and procedures. To start, the prospective mentees, the children of the church from ages nine through eighteen, were

invited to a meeting during Sunday School with their parents and the researcher. The researcher presented the youth with the same information presented to the adults, albeit using plain language as defined by the IRB, including the problem and proposed intervention. The youth were asked if they had any questions: then, the researcher explored elements of the law and requirements of the research. Parents and children were given the child assent form (see Appendix F). All participants were informed that their anonymity would be maintained in the project by changing their names in the research report. The project moved on by assessing the emergent adult group through a questionnaire on Facebook after gaining their consent by virtually sending consent forms to them (see Appendix D).

After the initial assessing phase, the researcher began to implement the intervention. The intervention, a revitalized mentorship program for the youth of Dawn Baptist Church, was implemented using the data from the initial assessments to pair mentors with mentees. Mentors met with the researcher every Sunday at 5 p.m. to be given guidance as well as to bring up concerns and deliberate with the group on the proper approach. Mentors met with the researcher and each other thirteen times over the course of the project; these began four weeks prior to the intervention beginning and lasted until the week after the intervention ended. Mentors had one meeting per week in which they discussed Scripture and discussed their impact on their mentees. Early in the intervention, the researcher made two nights for mentors to meet with the researcher and receive training: this change ensured that mentors had the opportunity to fulfill training obligations. The researcher recorded notes from these meetings in a journal (see Appendix J).

The mentors and mentees were required to meet at least once per week to study the Bible together. This part of the intervention was designated as extra planning time as well as a buffer designed to ease mentors into the process. The researcher also used this time to work on

preparing mentee introduction to the program. The mentor functioned as a tutor for the mentee

reading the Bible; mentors were given a weekly plan with Scripture to read and a topic to discuss

during Bible lesson time. Mentors were not to make their Bible lessons extend beyond the

bounds of fifteen to twenty minutes, at least in the beginning, because the Bible lesson was not to

be viewed as a long or boring chore that the youths must do. Bible lessons were permitted

beyond twenty minutes based on youth engagement or questioning.

Mentors were required to work with the parents in interacting outside of normal church

time in meaningful ways that were spiritually instructive. These spiritually instructive activities

were devised by the researcher and given to the mentors (Appendix L). For example, a mentor

could invite the family of the mentee into his or her home for a meal. The researcher assisted in

this process by directing mentors toward talking about specific activities. Mentors completed all

the activities at least once with their mentors along biblical precedents. Mentors spiritually

influenced their mentees; mentors were encouraged to invite mentees to serve with them in their

committees or roles in the church. For example, a female mentor might have invited her mentee

to assist the WMU in serving food for a funeral. A male mentor, if he is a choir director, might

have given his mentee the opportunity to lead a song during the worship service. Activities of

mentee assistance were progressive in nature; as mentees grew, they were given more

responsibility under the direct supervision of the mentor. Progressive ability to handle the

responsibilities of the mentor indicated a growth in knowledge, and an increase in desire to

perform these tasks could indicate spiritual growth. Mentors were to resist the urge to take over

for their mentee, even if their mentee was not performing a task perfectly. Mentors should only

have taken over a church task from their mentees or step in to help, at later stages in the

intervention, if it was necessary.

**Implementation of the Intervention Design**

The intervention was implemented in a week-by-week format beginning immediately after IRB approval and beginning with an introductory mentor training period; a chart was made (Appendix I) and given to mentors to help guide the intervention. During week one of the intervention, mentors were given a summary of the project and the goals. In the first four weeks, mentors were be led through lessons in Alexander Strauch's Biblical Eldership Study Guide. In week two, the researcher gave mentees the BUILDUP Spiritual Maturity Assessment during Sunday School (see Appendix A). In week three, the researcher analyzed the data from assessing both mentors and mentees. The researcher invited emergent adults via Facebook to partake in a questionnaire. The researcher in week four began to analyze these results and then revealed mentor and mentee assignments to the mentors. Training on best educational and mentorship practices and theology was conducted at 5 p.m. in the fellowship hall of the church. Table 1 shows an abbreviated schedule of the intervention.

Table 1. An abbreviated schedule of the intervention

| | Intervention Activities | Expected Impact |
|---|---|---|
| Week 5/Week 1 of Mentorship | Mentor/mentee combined meeting. Mentor leads a Bible lesson created by mentor on biblical inspiration based on 2 Tim 3:16. Mentor emphasizes the gospel (Romans 6). | Mentee takes BuildUP spiritual maturity assessment. The mentee understands both the gospel and why the Bible can be trusted. |
| Week 6/Week 2 of Mentorship | Mentor has a significant interaction with mentees outside of church besides a Bible lesson on the Law of God (Galatians 3) and the Law of Grace (Acts 2). | The mentee understands how he/she has personal guilt before God and what gift God has offered to the mentee. |
| Week 7/Week 3 of Mentorship | Mentor has another outside of church interaction; mentors are encouraged to have a meal at their homes with the mentees and their families. Mentors give spiritual growth assessment. Mentor teaches Bible lesson on the wages of sin and a relationship with Christ. Mentor invites mentee to sit with him/her in church service. | The mentee learns about consequences of sin and the nature of the gift offered by Christ. Mentee's spiritual growth in the last couple of weeks is noted. Mentee benefits from observing the model of Christian practice in an environment outside of his/her normal environment. |
| Week 8/Week 4 of Mentorship | Bible lesson on Jesus' restorative power and the gospel based on Rom 6:23 and | Mentee learns more about Jesus' role in restoring the destruction caused by sin. |

| | Rom 3:23. Mentees sit with mentor in church service. Mentees perform one of the mentor's typical tasks in the church. | Mentees begin to experience church service which helps them to gain a sense of community and responsibility. |
|---|---|---|

During week five's meeting, mentors and mentees were invited to partake in an introductory meeting. For the first interaction, the researcher facilitated a meeting between the mentor and the mentee and his or her parents. Mentors were asked to record notes of the interaction and turn them in to the researcher. Mentors took this opportunity to learn about their mentees in such a way as to build rapport. Mentors were required to, at some point during the week, lead a Bible lesson with the mentee on biblical inspiration, according to the curriculum given to them (Appendix I). A focus this week, and every week, in the Bible lesson was the gospel. A mentor was instructed to find the connections in a mentee's life to draw their mentee to the gospel and to a relationship with Jesus. Mentors were equipped with a knowledge of how to use the Scripture to draw someone to Jesus; mentors were taught and understood how to use the Law of God to reveal a mentee's need and then the Law of Christ to show a mentee how to be saved. Mentors were instructed to communicate the gospel in a way that was relevant to the mentee's life and in a winsome way, not in an overbearing way but in a way that was kind. A mentor was instructed to not attempt to fix every sin or quirk that the mentee revealed all at once because, although it would be well-meaning, the attempt would not likely be effective.

During week six and every week after, mentors met with the researcher to discuss the mentorship program so that adjustments could be made to the outside of church activities. Week six required mentors not only to do a Bible lesson with their mentees but also to find a way to interact with their mentees outside of the church environment. The researcher worked with the mentors to figure out what interaction worked the best for them in the mentors' and mentees' lives; preferably, the mentor invited the mentee and his or her family to a meal at the mentor's

house. This particular activity, as far as the researcher was aware, never occurred during the intervention although other interactions did. During week six, mentors focused on the topic of the Law of God; mentors used the Law as a tutor for students to evaluate themselves (Gal 3:24, New King James Version). Mentors needed to use the law of God to reveal to any potential convert their need before God and to communicate to youth that the gospel is truly "good news." Mentees were to be instructed by the Law because it can reveal their need of salvation, which promotes conversion. The Law used will establish in the minds of the mentees the need caused by sin. Mentors then shifted to showing mentees the answer for their sin and the debt incurred through breaking God's Law, which is a saving relationship with Jesus (Appendix I). Mentors taught again on the gospel and on Christ's law of grace.

During week seven, mentors were trained on how to give an assessment to their mentees. Mentors were asked to give their mentees the Lifeway Spiritual Growth Assessment (Appendix B). Mentors led their mentees in another Bible lesson created by the researcher (see Appendix I), this time focusing on the wages of sin as described in Romans 6:23, and then, mentees were directed in the cure for sin's wages, a relationship with Jesus Christ. The researcher was also instrumental in this step, helping the mentee to see the connection between mentees' lived realities and the Law. Mentees were challenged to see their own personal need before God as well as their own responsibilities: to receive Christ and serve Him. Mentors were challenged to help students see how they well they imitate Christ in their interactions outside of church time. Mentors, during this week, encouraged their mentees to sit with them during church and introduced the idea of participating in one of the mentor's roles in the church as the mentor deemed appropriate.

During week eight, mentors discussed the results of their mentees' spiritual growth assessments with the researcher. Researchers were reminded the goal and reasoning for the project. Mentors were asked to share their perspectives on the intervention, since this week served as the midpoint. In this week, mentors led a Bible lesson on sin and repentance. Mentees understood the biblical perspective on sin as rebellion from God, which results in both physical and spiritual death: reference verses are Romans 6:23 and Romans 3:23. A focus in this week was Jesus' restorative power and His desire and ability to save. Mentees were expected to perform one task that their mentors normally performed during church service. Mentors were expected to plan an outside-of-church interaction with mentees; this could constitute another family meal in one of their homes, but it could also constitute the families going out for a night of a recreational activity. Mentors were encouraged to help mentees draw biblical connections to the activities done outside of the church environment.

During week nine, mentors were again to assess their mentees using the spiritual growth assessment. Mentees were expected again to do one task that their mentors normally performed, but this week, the mentees were encouraged to seek more opportunities to serve the church and in their service capacities. Mentors helped mentees to study the Bible for themselves this week by guiding mentees through a pertinent selection of Scripture in the relevant Scriptures list for mentees (Appendix N), emphasizing different hermeneutical strategies the mentors use to search the Scriptures. Mentors helped mentees to create a Bible lesson that he or she would lead at their next Bible lesson time. Mentors would be encouraged to find ways to interact with mentees at least once outside of the scheduled church time. Many mentees were involved in extra-curricular activities for school: mentors were encouraged to be present at these events if possible. This

aspect is to further demonstrate to the mentees that there is genuine compassion for them in all aspects of life, just as a father or mother would care for his or her children.

During week ten, the researcher met with the mentors to help mentors reflect on the developments in the intervention. Mentors were encouraged to evaluate their mentees according to their perceptions and encouraged to talk about what they think works and what does not. Mentors were again required to meet with their mentees outside of the church context in some capacity. Mentees also completed a church-related task normally performed by the mentor. Mentees had the opportunity to lead a Bible lesson with their mentors this week over the topic of prayer and its significance.

During week eleven, the researcher met with mentors in a similar way as the previous weeks. Mentors gained encouragement to keep going through this process from the researcher and from other mentors by studying the Psalms, the words of Jesus in the Gospels, and elements of Paul's writings such as 1 Thessalonians 4:18, which focuses on genuine love between believers and between Christ and his Church. Mentors met with their mentees outside the church context in whatever way was appropriate for the families of both parties, as fit the schedules of the parties. Mentors again led a Bible lesson focusing on the topic of the church and the relationship between the church and Christ. Mentees were instructed on the biblical expectations of them in the church. Mentors encouraged mentees to find a place that they could use their God-given abilities to serve Him at Dawn Baptist Church.

During week twelve, although the formal research period of the intervention was nearing completion, mentors and mentees families decided if they wanted to continue with this intervention indefinitely. Mentors and mentees agreed. Mentors led a lesson recapitulating the previous twelve weeks and finding the gaps in knowledge that mentees still have. Mentors

assessed mentees once more using the Regular Baptist Press' Build UP Youth Spiritual Maturity

Assessment (see Appendix A). The data was used to assess the effectiveness of the mentorship

program. Mentors still met with mentees once outside of church and either led a Bible lesson or

helped the mentee to prepare another Bible lesson that was intended to be given in the mentee's

Sunday School class. Table 2 shows an abbreviated schedule of weeks five through eight of the

intervention.

Table 2. An abbreviated schedule of weeks five through eight

|  | Intervention Activities | Expected Impact |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Week 9/Week 5 of Mentorship | Bible lesson on the gospel. Mentor shares his or her process of studying Scripture. Mentee begins preparing a Bible lesson for next week. Mentor has an outside of church interaction with mentees. Mentees take the same spiritual assessment from Week 7/Week 3 | Mentee knows the gospel well enough to teach it. Mentee can begin preparing his/her own Bible lesson. Mentee sees the Christian faith modeled to him/her as a reinforcement of concepts learned. |
| Week 10/Week 6 of Mentorship | Outside of church interaction with mentees: mentors ask mentees to do one church-related task befitting their area. Mentees lead the mentor in a Bible lesson on mentor/mentee-selected Scripture. | Mentee applies what he/she has learned so far. Mentee demonstrates knowledge by using learned hermeneutics to prepare a Bible lesson. Mentee is empowered as he or she uses and strengthens new skills. |
| Week 11/Week 7 of Mentorship | Outside of church interaction with mentees: mentors ask mentees to do one church-related task befitting their area. Mentees progressively take on more responsibility in their tasks. | Mentees gain more responsibility in the tasks they perform; mentors begin to decrease influence to allow mentors to work. |
| Week 12/Week 8 of Mentorship | Bible lesson on topic of choosing or help mentee prepare a lesson for Sunday School. Outside of church interaction with mentees. Mentors ask mentees to do one church-related task befitting their area. | Mentees demonstrate their learning and growth from the past several weeks by opting to prepare a Sunday School Lesson. Mentees also demonstrate their growth by their self-directed service in the church. |

At the thirteenth meeting, the researcher found that throughout the program, two of the

youth involved in the program were found to not be saved; one of the mentees did get saved by

the end of the program. The facts of mentees either coming to a relationship with Christ or

recognizing they did not have a genuine relationship with Christ proved the thesis; mentees who

were genuinely saved whose relationships with Christ grew stronger benefit from the program as well but in a way outside of the scope of this research. The research concluded at this thirteenth meeting, but the intervention has continued in the church indefinitely. This mentorship intervention had a variety of benefits undoubtedly, but the most significant impact was drawing the youth to a genuine relationship with Christ Jesus. This intervention helped the church and the youth reveal false conversions, and then, it helped draw mentees to Christ. The uniqueness of the intervention is in using mentors as an evangelistic model for the youth, a way to preach Christ to the youth in a more effective way.

The researcher planned to demonstrate efficacy by looking at the frequency of professions of faith that occur during this eight-week period of intervention and evidence of conviction in young persons involved in the intervention. These evidences include a passion for the church as well as new practices of spiritual disciplines and an apparent new fervor for Jesus. The researcher used a formal assessment which is the spiritual growth assessment (see Appendix B), and the researcher used informal assessments of parent observation and mentor observation of newfound conviction present in the mentee's life. Growth on assessments demonstrated efficacy of the mentorship intervention. If the results were inconsistent or if mentee's behavior or beliefs remained the same or even worsened, the researcher would know that the intervention did not have the desired effect. This approach could be established as a key approach to this problem by the researcher's demonstration that the created mentorship model and principles were effective for persuading young people to receive the gospel. There are plenty of auxiliary effects of mentorship that are positive, but the one that most effectively proved the effectiveness of this mentorship intervention is the evidence that youth began to receive Christ's free gift of salvation after being mentored.

**CHAPTER 4: RESULTS**

Chapter 4 will explore the data gleaned from the Emergent Adult Questionnaire and compare it with the results of the spiritual maturity assessment given to the mentees in Appendix A. As time goes on and children age to adults, their conceptions about the church and elements of the faith often change, often negatively, unless acted upon by some stimuli, such as a program designed to address difficult matters of the Christian faith. The participants who admitted to no longer attending the church, regardless of their reasons, decreased in their theological understandings and practice of spiritual disciplines when compared to children who were currently and regularly attending church. In short, as children, the emergent adults likely had a more biblical understanding of the faith that they rejected. The evidence for this is found by comparing the data between the current children of the church with the past children of the church. The results of the various instruments used were insightful as they offered the researcher a new understanding of the usefulness of the mentorship program.

The instruments used show the progression of the children in sanctification, but the instruments not only assessed the mentees, but they also offered insight into other parties as well, specifically, the emergent adults. The emergent adults are those who are former children of the church: the results of these participants' assessments offer insight into their spiritual health. Emergent adults often expressed disbelief in critical components of the faith; other emergent adults indicated decline of faith or some loss in faith. Table 3 compares the results of the BuildUp Spiritual Maturity assessment's theological items between Youth and Emergent Adults. For the sake of assessing emergent adults more easily, the BuildUp Spiritual Maturity assessment

was converted to a digital format. Table 3 takes the most important component of the assessment, the questions regarding salvific beliefs, and compares the youth to the emergent adults.

## Initial Findings

Table 3. Comparison of youth to the emergent adults

| Question | Youth Disagree | Emergent Adults Disagree | Youth Agree | Emergent Adults Agree |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Acknowledges personal guilt of sin and need of salvation | 38% | 40% | 62% | 60% |
| Believes faith in Christ is the only way to heaven | 0% | 25% | 100% | 75% |
| Has trusted Christ as Savior | 13% | 38% | 87% | 62% |

Some of the data is inconsistent. Some of the research participants contradicted themselves with their answers: for example, some participants would say that he or she has trusted Christ as Savior but would strongly disagree that he or she has personal guilt of sin. This inconsistency indicates the participant does not understand the gospel. The parents' input, which will be a feature of this project, will be important in assessing a child's spiritual state to this point. It is possible that the child misunderstood the survey question. It is reasonable to conclude that, if a respondent answered in disagreement with the questions in Table 3, he or she was likely not saved as the questions in Table 3 are some of the critical doctrines to salvation. This being true, the researcher found the overall percentage of emergent adult respondents who were likely unsaved given their answers. One-third, around thirty-four percent, of emergent adult respondents answered in a way that indicates that he or she was unsaved. The percentage of youth that indicated they were unsaved by their answers was seventeen percent. The researcher

arrived at this data by adding together the percentages of each demographic's who disagreed and then dividing by the overall, total possible percentage points, 300.

The potential error in the research findings at this point might be due to a misunderstanding on the part of the respondents. Parent findings will help to make the distinction between apparent confusion and outright disagreement. While there is no way for parents to help clarify the emergent adult data, emergent adults would be less likely to err on the questionnaire due to their ages. Due to the children's ages and incomplete education, it is more likely that the children assessed will have difficulties in their assessments and produce unreliable results. There is an unknown margin of error that can result from the questionnaires. Parent and mentor findings will be necessary to help the researcher to clarify the data.

The parent's findings are critical to this research and will allow the researcher to gather a more holistic look at the youth's spiritual development. Some youth who were given the initial BuildUp assessment rated themselves a 5 on every or nearly every category, which indicates an overestimation on the part of the survey-taker. It is paramount for the researcher's understanding of the child's actual spiritual progression that the parents of the child also provide their inputs. The researcher will be able to analyze the results of parent findings and the BuildUp assessment to infer that some children are developing spiritually. Spiritual change will be consistent in the home and outside of the home. Some children may have a change that happens merely in the church world, but this project's success comes from change that is genuine, which is marked by spiritual fruit being borne both inside and outside of the church environment. The parent's record is important data for the researcher because it allows the researcher to isolate a specific event that God used to bring a child to salvation, or it will allow the researcher to mark the specific event that caused great spiritual growth.

The BuildUp survey's major questions, identified in Table 3, are those that pertain to salvation. The other assessment items focused on revealing spiritual maturity and development. Table 4 compares the results of the survey's other important items regarding behavior. These results were more difficult to assess because of the possibility of the participant's overestimation or underestimation, but in general, most participants rated themselves high in all areas.

Table 4. Comparison of additional important items regarding behavior

| Items | Youth Average | Emergent Adult Average |
|---|---|---|
| 12-22 (Biblical Ethics) | 4.02 | 3.93 |
| 23-33 (Internalizing Godliness) | 3.85 | 3.53 |
| 34-44 (Learning Doctrine) | 3.85 | 3.18 |
| 45-55 (Developing Life Skills) | 4.30 | 4.11 |
| 56-66 (Uplifting Others) | 4.10 | 4.12 |

In general, the youth show an initial average that is above the emergent adult average in every category. This is perhaps because of the youth's ongoing Sunday School and church experience whereas the emergent adults have lower averages due to their absence from the church. There also could be another explanation to the statistics: both groups might be overestimating, but the emergent adults might be overestimating to a lesser degree due to a combination of life and spiritual experience, humility. It is difficult to assess humility in this research.

Since emergent adults are restricted to self-reporting, the researcher surmises that the youth may have overestimated themselves spiritually. Overestimation would explain high averages despite visible fruits of contrasting actions. Nevertheless, emergent adults tended to rate themselves higher on elements of the assessment that were not explicitly related to Scripture. In other words, emergent adults rated themselves higher on life skills and uplifting others which are

not often seen to be explicitly Christian values. The latter items of the assessment are implicitly

Christian, not obviously. The implicitness of the items' Christian foundation could have

impacted the results. The earlier items are explicitly based in Christian doctrine: emergent adults

rated themselves lower on these items.

Outside of noticeable fruits that the participants display in their daily lives, it is

impossible to know if these numbers truly reflect the reality of their spiritual states, at least if the

only perspective is the youths. The youth participants have the benefit of parents who can

provide insight into their spiritual formation. Mentors' perspectives on their mentees' spiritual

lives also provide important information into the spiritual growth of mentees. Some participants

only answered portions of the assessments with 1's, or 3's, or 5's. Answers of both those

emergent adults and youth who answered frequent 1's, 3's, and 5's were discounted and

considered unreliable. Since data up until this point has been gathered from self-assessments, it

becomes necessary at this point for the researcher, the mentors, and the parents of the

participants to begin assessing the youth.

Table 5. Youth assessment

| Items | Mentor Assessment of Youth (Avg) | Parent Assessment of Youth (Avg) | Youth Self-Assessment (Avg) |
|---|---|---|---|
| 12-22 (Biblical Ethics) | Developing | Developing | 4.02 |
| 23-33 (Internalizing Godliness) | Minimal | Minimal | 3.85 |
| 34-44 (Learning Doctrine) | Minimal | Developing | 3.85 |
| 45-55 (Developing Life Skills) | Minimal | Minimal | 4.30 |
| 56-66 (Uplifting Others) | Developing | Proficient | 4.10 |

Mentees completed the Lifeway Spiritual Growth Assessment to reveal trends in spiritual

formation. This assessment will be important for analyzing and understanding a child's spiritual

development throughout the assessment. The most frequent trends in the assessment were a neglect of Scripture reading, then lack of evangelism, and then anxiety and depression. Surprisingly, anxiety and depression were the least frequently reported of the three trends. Table 6 explores the Lifeway Spiritual Growth Assessment results. Mentees believed that, prior to the mentorship intervention beginning, that they were strongest at building godly relationships but weakest at witnessing to the world. Consistently, except in uplifting others, the youth rated themselves much higher than what their mentors and parents rated them. The only exception is the Uplifting Others category, in which the mentees and parents agree.

Mentors and parents rated mentees qualitatively to help the analysis of the data but as well to see their thoughts behind the data; nevertheless, to compare datapoints, it became necessary for parents and mentors to assist the researcher translate qualitative data into a reasonable number. These words were "minimal," "developing," "intermediate," "proficient," and "advanced." Mentors and parents put a numerical value out of 5 for their qualitative rankings. The researcher, parents, and the mentors concluded that a "minimal" was a ranking of a 1, "developing" was a ranking of a 2, intermediate was a ranking of a 3, "proficient" was a ranking of 4, and "advanced" was a ranking of a 5. Table 6 shows an adjusted Table 5.

Table 6. Youth assessment with adjustment

| Items | Mentor Assessment of Youth (Avg) | Parent Assessment of Youth (Avg) | Youth Self-Assessment (Avg) |
|---|---|---|---|
| 12-22 (Biblical Ethics) | 2 | 2 | 4.02 |
| 23-33 (Internalizing Godliness) | 1 | 1 | 3.85 |
| 34-44 (Learning Doctrine) | 1 | 2 | 3.85 |
| 45-55 (Developing Life Skills) | 1 | 1 | 4.30 |
| 56-66 (Uplifting Others) | 2 | 4 | 4.10 |

It is important to consider the brevity of the mentorship program and the limited capacity in which mentors worked with the mentees: it could explain the reason for the disparity between parents and mentors. Mentors, due to their limited time with their mentees, rated their mentees lower than the mentee's parents in every category. Some elements of the assessment were not easily observable by the mentors, but the mentees' parents could more easily observe other areas of the children's lives simply because of the amount of time the parents have spent and invested into their children. Whereas a mentor may have had a few hours per week with their mentees, the mentee's relationships with their parents are significantly different, especially in the amount of time. The parents' assessments of their children should not necessarily be considered more reliable than the mentors' just as the mentors' assessment data cannot be interpreted without looking at the parents' and the mentees' assessments. It was necessary to look at all the data side by side to come to a better understanding of the mentees' spiritual states.

Table 7 shows the results of a spiritual growth assessment, which was intended to ascertain the progress of mentees at the endpoint. This instrument was used to help the researcher and the mentors to understand the mentees' progress, but they were also used to help the mentors to find the specific category with which mentors could help the most. Interestingly, mentees ranked themselves highly with this assessment, but their averages were lower than other assessments. It is not apparent why mentees' results are lower in Table 7 than they often were in Table 6. It is possible that the reason is because the categories are different or because the wording is different between the two assessments.

Table 7. Results of a spiritual growth

| Items | Average |
|---|---|
| Abide in Christ | 3.92 |
| Live in the Word | 3.59 |
| Pray in Faith | 3.86 |
| Build Godly Relationships | 4.12 |
| Witness to the World | 3.50 |
| Minister to Others | 3.9 |

By the midpoint in the research, the mentees took the spiritual growth assessment to further investigate the specific areas of their spiritualities that could be developed. The data shows a trend of mentees who are weakest in living in the Word and in witnessing to the world, which may suggest that these two aspects of the Christian life often cooperate and coincide with one another. Mentees who grow in their biblical knowledge will doubtless have an enhanced ability to witness to the world. Interestingly though, mentees ranked abiding in Christ, ministering to others, and building godly relationships as higher than the other categories. Prior to the intervention, mentees believed that they built strong, godly relationships and ministered to people within those relationships. The difference between ministering to others and witness to the world is largely the component of salvation. Mentees believed that they were more effective at ministering to their Christian friends rather than their unsaved ones.

This tool offered a variety of insights that were not readily apparent from the other instruments. In particular, mentees felt strongest in their building of godly relationships; they did not feel as strongly about witnessing to the world. This result could imply that mentees already felt more comfortable with relationships formed with other believers and less comfortable with the relationships they formed with peers of different faiths. The possibility that mentees were more comfortable with other Christians than their peers of different faiths is encouraging because

it is evidence of conversion in a person. It also reveals the potential for growth as mentors could more easily form stronger relationships with their mentees. This result also reveals the probability that mentors could help mentees with their evangelism when they interact with the unsaved.

## Findings at the Midpoint

Overall, by the midpoint the mentees displayed growth in their character both outwardly and inwardly. As far as the children's general demeanors, they have become more positive and interactive with the researcher, their mentors, and other members of the church both familiar and unfamiliar. As the mentorship program continued, the children who became mentees grew noticeably in conduct and demeanor and seemed to possess more confidence and more comfort as they interacted with adults of the church.

By the midpoint, the children of the mentoring program had experienced the county's Discipleship Now (DNOW) conference with their mentors. The children were able to articulate the positives and negatives of the conference, even using it to discuss spiritual matters with their mentors. Mentees were able to discuss the spiritual and theological problems such as man-centered theology and irreverent worship of God at several instances during the service, but the mentees also reasoned from Scripture about the positives of the conference regarding the fellowship that they had with other young believers. Mentees' biblical and spiritual training had progressed to the point that they were able to look at an unfamiliar event with a spiritual lens.

By the midpoint, mentees have had opportunities to work with their mentors and glean wisdom from them in their spiritual lives. Mentees generally seem spiritually stronger: their increased fervor to evangelize evidences their spiritual health. Joy, a spiritual fruit, was also more noticeable, as the mentees exude more enthusiasm and joy in their church engagement than

before the mentorship program began. Mentees also displayed an eagerness to begin taking on more responsibilities in the church both during the service and outside of the standard service. Several mentees benefited from the mentorship program by developing confidence in their faith and the reasonableness of their faith. This result is largely due to the combination of regular biblical influence as well as a relationship building.

Mentors and mentees have demonstrated the capacity to deepen their relationships with each other in Christ through fellowship and the learning of Scripture and Theology. One student, who will be identified as Sarah, grew in her relationship with her mentor and her mentor's husband and even the researcher and other Christians. She became more open to discussing biblical issues as well as her own understandings, especially in the areas of liturgy and biblical worship. Sarah was not alone in growth relationally. Another mentee, who will be called Gail, changed in her demeanor. While her willingness to discuss theology and her views on Scripture had been evident even before the mentorship began. What was lacking, however, was gentleness, though often being biblically correct. By the midpoint, Gail showed great gains in gentleness and compassion, especially toward other believers. Her way of interacting with others, which could at times seem aggressive and blunt, became gentler, more patient, and more kind. Mentees also grew in a variety of ways that are not exclusive to their relationships; mentees also grew in boldness and willingness to share their faith.

One mentee, who will be referred to as Nick, demonstrated newfound boldness to not only evangelize by sharing gospel tracts, but also, he began to prepare to teach a Sunday School lesson on his own volition, without even the encouragement of his mentor. These developments seem to be a result of the Holy Spirit's influence in their lives. Nick began to imitate his mentor, who is a Sunday School teacher and often evangelizes by using gospel tracts. Another mentee,

who will be known as Cayla, demonstrated an increased vigor and interest in finding her own ministry by asking to join the sound and visual team during a church service. The mentorship program to this point has accomplished its goal, motivating mentees from inactive and passive churchgoers to active participants in serving Jesus.

## Mentorship Program Research Conclusion

The final half of the mentorship program showed more of the same types of progress. There were some moments when the program waned, and the results were not as anticipated. Mentees at times were tired, but they also showed great growth and willingness to participate. Mentors also struggled at times to meet the demands of the project as daily life often hindered both mentors and mentees from being able to meet. However, the times that mentors and mentees were able to sacrifice other commitments to work together showed the benefits of the program.

Around week 6 of this research project, one mentor announced his call to preach and began to preach at Dawn Baptist Church and in other ministry contexts. One of his mentees, Nick began to teach more regularly in Sunday School, helping to lead the youth class through Scripture. By week 8, Nick was able to take the place of his mentor in his mentor's absence; his mentor was unable to fulfill normal duties during this Sunday, teaching in Sunday school and operating the audio and technology center in the church. Nick also began to take more initiative in planning and asking for opportunities to teach in his Sunday school class; often, he began to suggest such lessons to his classmates and mentor. The mentorship program has had an impressive impact on Nick in particular. Nick also, by week 8, began to study his Bible daily, albeit for short increments of time. Nick also expressed an increase in his prayer life, praying daily and regularly throughout the day, a practice that his mentor that his mentor recommended

to him. Nick's growth throughout the research project has been the most dramatic in terms of the

life of a saved person. Nick started as a Christian who never prayed or read Scripture and became

a confident teacher who regularly reads Scripture and prays.

Cayla also demonstrated promising growth as well. Nick's spiritual growth informed the

visible fruits he displayed in the form of new service in the church, but Cayla's spiritual growth

encouraged the display of fruits in the form of increased interest in performing a ministry. These

ministries are the technology center or sound booth of the church and in the Women's Missions

Union (WMU). Throughout the course of the mentorship program, Cayla's curiosity and interest

grew in finding the ministry in which God called her to serve. Especially since Cayla is the

youngest of the mentees, her interest in serving in a ministry and her enthusiasm in serving God

is a positive sign.

Emma's growth is much less observed than Cayla's. Emma was saved during this

program as she received Christ in the latter portion of the mentorship. As a result, her growth is

not as well observed as other mentees who were saved prior to the beginning of the program.

Emma's salvation is a blessing from God. It does not definitively prove that mentorship was

conducive to this end: however, her mentors were effective in sharing the gospel with her on a

few occasions. It is unclear whether it was the mentorship, the preaching at the service during

which Emma was saved, or if it was a combination of those and more influences that God used

to draw her to receive Christ. Even still, the mentorship program had one effect on Emma that it

did on Cayla and Nick, progress in sanctification. Although Emma was the only mentee to be

saved during this program, it is still reasonable to conclude that Emma's salvation was in

accordance with this research's idea that mentorship can be evangelical: Emma came to salvation

after a mature Christian mentored her. It is again important to note that Emma did not come to

salvation because she was mentored; God brought her to salvation during the mentorship program.

Emma's conversion was an interesting development, as up until this point, Emma claimed to be saved. Emma believed that she was saved prior to the Good Friday service, but during this service, she realized she had not yet been converted. It is unclear to what degree the mentorship program encouraged her to be saved, but it is evident that the mentorship program had some level of impact on her understanding of salvation as well as the fruit of the Spirit. After Emma's conversion, her demeanor and interactions with other mentees and mentors changed in a positive way. Emma's conversion could be considered a positive proof of the claim that biblical mentorship can draw a person, and in particular a child, to Christ. The dramatic growth in both Nick, the oldest member, and in Cayla, the youngest member, demonstrates the effectiveness of mentorship in discipling young Christians to the point of resisting departing the church.

During the latter half, Gail did not grow as much as was expected given the progress in the first half. Gail's practice of reading Scripture was daily in the first half of the program, and her prayer life was consistent. In the latter half, there has been no noticeable change in her besides the addition of an increased prayer life and her interactions with others. During the latter half, her positive demeanor grew into a positive and encouraging attitude. The expression of her growth in faith in the latter half of the program was her growth in grace and love toward other believers.

Martha experienced similar growth as Gail did. Martha's growth throughout the program was more in maturity. Martha and Gail each began to evangelize through the use of tracts, during the program. Martha, however, was the more vocal of the two. Martha engaged in personal evangelism throughout the program and was consistent in sharing her faith. She was also

consistent in strengthening her faith through reading Scripture and prayer. Martha became a more zealous witness for Christ during the mentorship, but she also developed a more gracious demeanor as the mentorship program was approaching its end. Martha was knowledgeable in Scripture and in prayer before the mentorship program began, but Martha's growth was in the grace revealed in the practice of her faith.

Sarah's progression throughout this program was more in her confidence and boldness to share the gospel, especially with friends of hers that were not believers. Sarah also grew more confident in her daily interactions with her mentor and others in the mentorship program. Sarah participated more in the evangelical method of sharing gospel tracts. Sarah also began to study Scripture and pray more, which undoubtedly led to the promotion of her faith and practice. Sarah benefitted from the mentorship program in her sanctification; she displayed the fruit of boldness to share the gospel as well as a general confidence in her daily life.

Arnold's progress is an anomaly to the mentorship program: his mentor was unable to meet with Arnold for almost the first half of the program. Arnold received a new mentor at about the halfway point in the research. Arnold was generally positive and joyful, and although his time with a mentor was short, he also showed fruit of sanctification. Throughout the program, Arnold grew to be more serious in demeanor and fervent in defending Scripture. Arnold demonstrated a willingness to defend Scripture early in the program, but toward the latter end of the program, he seemed to experience a growth in maturity, characterized by seriousness when appropriate and willingness to learn and apply what he has learned from Scripture. Arnold's time with his mentor was short, but God still caused a change in Arnold's life through the program.

Dylan's faith is unclear. While some mentees developed in the program minimally, Dylan progressed the least in terms of sanctification and in growth towards Christ. His mentor even

remarked that he was unsure of whether Dylan had been saved. Dylan never indicated that he was, nor did he display the fruit of someone who is saved. Whenever Dylan was asked, the question was met with avoidance. Dylan serves as a type of control for the research. While there were changes in a positive direction at the surface, there did not appear to be a change at the spiritual level. While Dylan did benefit from the mentorship program, he did not seem to come to faith in Christ. While this reality is troubling, this mentorship program has been used by God as another means by which to plant the seeds of faith, which God can use to bring to life in the future.

There are some differences between Emma and Dylan that could have influenced Emma's conversion; it is possible that Dylan will eventually receive Christ. Emma had been in church and heard the gospel her whole life; she, as well, had believing parents who mentored her during her younger years. Unlike Emma, Dylan's upbringing was not traditional; he experienced trauma that could have resulted in a hesitance to receive the gospel. Arnold, who is his older brother by one year, had received the gospel prior to the mentorship program and displayed visible growth throughout the program. The facts about Arnold and Dylan's salvation experiences are proof positive that it is God Who works in the heart of the unsaved to bring them to salvation: God saves despite trauma, in Arnold's case, but He does not save at the same time or by the use of the same vehicles. The mentorship program in its limited time has not been able to help Dylan overcome spiritual challenges in his upbringing, but it is possible that this will change as the mentorship program continues.

Table 8. Qualitative and quantitative results

| Post Assessment Items | Mentor Assessment of Youth (Avg) | Parent Assessment of Youth (Avg) | Youth Self-Assessment Avg) |
|---|---|---|---|
| 12-22 (Biblical Ethics) | Intermediate | Intermediate | 4.32 |
| 23-33 (Internalizing Godliness) | Developing | Developing | 4.13 |
| 34-44 (Learning Doctrine) | Developing | Intermediate | 4.09 |
| 45-55 (Developing Life Skills) | Developing | Minimal | 4.47 |
| 56-66 (Uplifting Others) | Intermediate | Proficient | 4.28 |

Table 8 shows the results of the assessments given to mentees and contains both

qualitative and quantitative results. Youths consistently rank themselves in the higher category,

the 4 to 5's, but it is important to compare that to the mentors' and parents' assessments for a

clearer picture of reality. There is a disparity between what mentees feel about themselves and

what the adults in their lives assessed about them. Developing Life Skills was the category that

showed the most disparity between the adults' assessments and the mentees' self-assessments.

Uplifting Others showed the most agreement between adults and mentees. The parents either

agreed more with their children or mentors on these assessments, but mentors never agreed with

the mentees overall. Table 9 offers a comparison between Table 5, which was administered

weeks prior, and Table 8, which was administered at the end of the intervention.

Table 9 offers a comparison of the different perspectives of the participants in the

research project. Each stakeholder comes to different assessment conclusions. The mentors tend

to rate their mentees low. Parents tend to rate their children low in the middle of the possible

choices. Mentees consistently rank themselves high in every category. The focus at this point

becomes the rate of change, not necessarily the current results.

Table 9. Comparison between table 5 and table 8

| Items | Mentor Assessment of Youth (Avg) 1st | Mentor Assessment of Youth (Avg) 2nd | Parent Assessment of Youth (Avg) 1st | Parent Assessment of Youth (Avg) 2nd | Youth Self-Assessment (Avg) 1st | Youth Self-Assessment (Avg) 2nd |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 12-22 (Biblical Ethics) | Developing | Intermediate | Developing | Intermediate | 4.02 | 4.32 |
| 23-33 (Internalizing Godliness) | Minimal | Developing | Minimal | Developing | 3.85 | 4.13 |
| 34-44 (Learning Doctrine) | Minimal | Developing | Developing | Intermediate | 3.85 | 4.09 |
| 45-55 (Developing Life Skills) | Minimal | Developing | Minimal | Minimal | 4.30 | 4.47 |
| 56-66 (Uplifting Others) | Developing | Intermediate | Proficient | Proficient | 4.10 | 4.28 |

Table 9 shows the comparison between Table 5 and Table 8. Table 9 shows demonstrable growth between the administrations of the Lifeway Spiritual Growth Assessments as well as the mentor and parent assessments of mentees. Parents and mentors, apart from the Uplifting Others category in the parent assessments, assessed the mentees to have grown by one level in each category. Parents assessed their children to have remained the same in the Uplifting Others category over the course of the program. Interestingly, none of the adults rated mentees more than a single level up, and none of the adults found that mentees digressed, and only stayed the same in a single case.

The culmination of assessment data demonstrates growth in every category by varying degrees. Even in Uplifting Others, mentees showed growth. Even though the parents' assessment suggests a degree of stagnancy, the mentors' assessment, as well as the growth percentage, proves that there was growth, even if it was marginal. Although parents recorded no progression in the Uplifting Others category, it was not the category with the lowest growth. Despite the

variability of growth, the presence of growth is evident in each assessed category. The rate of growth is displayed in Table 10. It calculates growth by finding the difference between the initial and results, then dividing the outcome by the original result and multiplying by 100.

Table 10. Efficacy of this mentorship program

| Items | Youth Self-Assessment (Avg) 1st | Youth Self-Assessment (Avg) 2nd | Growth Percentage (%) |
|---|---|---|---|
| 12-22 (Biblical Ethics) | 4.02 | 4.32 | 7.46 |
| 23-33 (Internalizing Godliness) | 3.85 | 4.13 | 7.22 |
| 34-44 (Learning Doctrine) | 3.85 | 4.09 | 6.23 |
| 45-55 (Developing Life Skills) | 4.30 | 4.47 | 3.95 |
| 56-66 (Uplifting Others) | 4.10 | 4.28 | 4.39 |

Table 10 shows the efficacy of this mentorship program. Mentees showed growth in all areas of the spiritual growth assessment, but mentors grew in the areas of Biblical Ethics and Internalizing Godliness. Developing Life Skills was the category in which mentees ranked themselves higher than all the others, but it is the lowest in terms of growth, which suggests an inverse relationship between what mentees self-assess and how much they progress. Mentees ranked themselves lowest on Learning Doctrine in both assessments, but the growth between the two data points revealed a high growth: this number was the middle out of the five values.

In all, the data shows that children who have been mentored in this evangelistic method benefited in a spiritual way because of this research. Out of eight mentees, two mentees were identified as unsaved at the beginning of the mentorship program. At least one child was saved

during the program. This child had previously thought she was saved but realized she was not during the church's Good Friday service. Twenty-five percent of the mentees were unsaved at the beginning of the research program. By the end of the program, the percentage of participating mentees who were unsaved dropped to twelve and a half percent. This conclusion is important because the mentorship functioned successfully as both a diagnostic tool and as a tool to help guide a child toward salvation. The mentorship program was also effective in leading already-saved children and teens toward sanctification, learning about Scripture, and their faith.

The most important result of the research is the apparent growth of mentees. Seventy-five percent of the participating mentees were saved prior to the beginning of the mentorship program. The number of saved, child participants grew to eighty-seven and a half percent. These participants also benefitted from the mentorship program. While mentees only grew slightly in some of the categories, mentees still showed growth in all categories, which is promising, considering the short length of the intervention. The growth of mentees proves the effectiveness of the program and helps the researcher to reasonably conclude that mentees will likely remain in the church after reaching emergent adulthood. Mentees' growth is important because the intervention's effectiveness is assessed by the apparent sanctification of participants. While not every mentee showed such growth, it is evident that most mentees experienced growth in a variety of categories related to elements of the Christian faith. The evident sanctification of mentees helps the researcher to conclude that the mentorship program is an effective means of encouraging mentees' growth in Christ and encouraging them to remain in the church upon reaching adulthood.

Mentors themselves also benefitted from the mentorship program in a variety of ways. Although the researcher did not explicitly investigate the mentors' growth, the mentors did

exhibit growth, at least observationally. Mentors grew in their interactions with other church members, specifically the mentees, the mentees' siblings, and the mentees' parents. Many mentors demonstrated evidence like increased joy, more love for others, and fulfilling their ministries in more meaningful ways. While this aspect was not explicitly researched, the effectiveness of the mentorship program in helping mentors to develop spiritually was too evident to ignore, as the growth of the mentors seemed to impact the mentees. The mentees' growth seemed also to encourage the mentors' growth. Mentors and mentees formed the function of the community of faith, to help encourage one another in the faith as they walk toward Christ.

This evangelistic mentorship program was effective in building the mentors' spiritual formations. One mentor was emboldened to begin a preaching ministry. Other mentors began to study their own Bibles more and pray more. Mentors also became more involved in the church and the church's other programs. Many of the mentors also became more involved in the lives of other mentees. While mentees mostly benefitted from their own mentors' influence, mentees also enjoyed interactions with the other mentors. Although mentees were assigned to a mentor, they were not limited to that mentor; mentees and mentors often participated in other activities throughout the program, such as the trip to the Discipleship Now (DNOW) conference and Dawn Baptist Church's annual Valentine's Banquet. While the program was designed to benefit the youth, they were not the only benefactors.

The participants, including the mentors, also experienced much noticeable spiritual growth. The results of this project included spiritual growth on the part of the already-saved children and conviction on the part of children who were not yet saved. As the mentorship program goes on past the scope of this research project, the result should inevitably yield young people who become emergent adults who do not leave the church but instead remain active

members and devoted followers of Christ. While no data has been collected on mentors, as they were not the focus of the research, their spiritual growth is evident and cannot be discounted because of this mentorship program. Scripture says that iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another (Prov 27:17). It is evident that mentors have also been sharpened by the growth of their mentees. In turn, mentees grew further by the investment made in them by their mentors. This research program was designed to encourage the growth of mentees, so the apparent growth of the adults in the program is something unexpected but also something to investigate further. It is reasonable to conclude that a mentor's spiritual formation influences a mentee's spiritual formation; therefore, it is important to also invest in helping mentors to grow in Christ.

The next chapter will review the program design based on relevant literature and summarize the overall findings of this research. The conclusion offers a review of the overall effectiveness of this intervention but also details some of the failings of the intervention. Research implications are a feature of the conclusion that offers analysis into why the mentorship program was successful. Imitation of a mentor and other critical components of the research program are considered. Research applications are also an important feature of the conclusion because research applications explore what the research means practically for modern church congregations and ministry contexts. While some of the data proved to be inconclusive, this mentorship program was successful in what it hoped to accomplish, at least in part. There was a mentee who was saved through the course of the program, and many mentees began to show more evidence of sanctification.

**CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION**

Even in the Bible Belt, many young people leave their churches once they reach adulthood, live prodigal lifestyles, and express ideals inconsistent with a profession of faith once made in their churches. Emergent adult prodigals live a sinful lifestyle, while many believe that they are saved regardless of whether they are or not. Many of these prodigals will never return to church. The data supports the efficacy of mentorship as a promising evangelistic method to implement with the youth in church. This can function as an act of faithfulness to the Lord's Great Commission and a preventative measure for children leaving the church when they reach adulthood. This research could not be more appropriate time-wise as various churches have implemented changes to keep young people engaged. Unfortunately, many churches have adopted methods that are not of Christ to attract young people to the church.

Many churches in the modern culture have compromised with worldly systems. Rather than retaining the youth by offering Jesus, good theology, apologetics, and proper discipleship, the modern church often opts for frivolous additions and practices to attract a younger demographic. These additions can be well-intentioned and may not be inherently wrong, but more spiritual choices are better. The means by which someone is attracted to a church must be Christ and biblical teaching as well as elements and practices found in Scripture. It should not be because of a program in of itself. This mentorship program has been developed to meet the youth where they are spiritually and build upon their spiritual formations through the teaching of Scripture and Jesus in correct and appropriate ways.

It cannot be understood biblically that this mentorship program is the cause for conversion in anyone; it is the Lord alone who saves people. He saves through vehicles that He chooses. Mentorship is one vehicle through which the Lord uses human instruments to communicate the gospel to other human beings both in word and in deed. This action-research can be replicated in any church environment that has a wealth of older adults and a variety of youths between nine and seventeen. Mentorship is effective because its elements are ordained by God and expressed in His Word as in Titus 2 and 1 Peter 5, as well as in a list of other scriptures. This method is effective because good theology delivered in a way that is consistent with best teaching practices helps to overcome barriers between older adults and young children.

The problem is that emergent adults who have attended Dawn Baptist Church since childhood leave and do not return due to false conversion. This fact is evident in that thirty-four percent of emergent adults hold a belief that makes it clear that they are not saved. While this is a minority of respondents, it is also possible that there is a substantial margin of error in this research. Respondents were all former members of the church who might not be willing to be completely honest with their beliefs. As adults who had been through church as children, these participants would know the answer to the questions that is correct. The researcher did not apply this same critique of youth data because the youth of the church would likely not have a reason to lie, and the researcher could see the evidence of both demographics' faith by their lives.[1] The small town and small church environment made this possible for the researcher. The researcher was able to see a disparity in professed beliefs and practices.

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[1] While the context discusses the fruits borne by false prophets, the principle of the Scripture applies to all people: the fruits a person produces are indicative of the health of the person's spiritual life (Cf. Matt 7:5–20).

It is evident that, out of the small sample of mentees, twenty-five percent of the children were unsaved prior to the beginning of the research program. While it cannot be concluded that the emergent adults leave the church because of lacking salvation; however, lacking salvation is still a significant cause for their departure of the church. As such, the research project was successful in proving that lack of conversion was a possible reason that youth leave the church when they reach adulthood. The purpose of this project is primarily to intervene with those spiritually and physically departing the church. The mentorship program accomplished its purpose, as a mentee was saved during the program, and the mentees who were already saved showed a noticeable growth in fruit of the Spirit.

While the time parameters of this action-research project did not permit for the research to see whether youths mentored would or would not leave the church, at least in a direct way, the researcher analyzed indirect evidence which suggests that mentees departing from the church is less likely to occur. Mentees have formed strong relationships not only with one another but also with adults in the church. They have also grown in sanctification by practicing spiritual disciplines outside of the church. In a personal way, mentees have seen real examples of faith and Christian living outside of their own families. Mentees began to take on more responsibility in the church which will be the start of mentees fulfilling their own ministries.[2] This action-research project fulfilled its purpose by helping mentees to grow in Christ and cultivate their own spiritual growth.

The fruits of this evangelistic mentorship program validate the program's existence as the program has helped youths to grow in Christ. While God has not brought any child to Christ in a

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[2] Paul encouraged believers to do the work of an evangelist and fulfill their own ministries (Cf. 2 Tim 4:5).

salvific sense through this program, God has brought children and adults closer to Christ in a relational sense. Mentors and mentees have grown in their spiritual formations. Mentees have grown from mostly reserved in terms of their spiritualities to being bold proclaimers of the gospel, even in secular environments. It is currently unclear how God will use this program in the future or if the mentees will remain in the church once they reach their emergent adult years, but the data is reassuring because it displays apparent growth in the mentees' spiritual states. This growth shows incredible promise because mentees demonstrate spiritual evidence that are different than other children of a similar age. It is a reasonable conclusion that the children who participated in the mentorship program will remain in the church.

The scope of this research does not have the time parameters necessary to determine whether the participants will remain in the church after they become emergent adults, but future results should be forthcoming as the oldest mentee will graduate high school in a year. The primary goal of this research is to help remove the obstacles between a young person and Christ, and as an inevitable consequence, the young person will more likely be converted or experience sanctification. This mentorship program is meant to reinforce what is good in a child's thinking and practice as well as an attempt to help remove the hindrances and errors in thinking. Given the progression in spiritual growth as well as a variety of other factors, it is likely that mentees of this program have, at the least, a higher likelihood of remaining in the church. God has used this mentorship program to refine the participants' spiritual formations and to foster their spiritual growth in necessary ways. While the efficacy of this program in relation to its ultimate goal is yet unobservable, the benefits of the program are obvious. It is possible to make a reasonable assertion that, because of the program's benefits in a short time, that the mentees that

participated will remain in the church. Mentees in this program develop their spiritual formations to the degree which causes them to remain in the church once they reach emergent adulthood.

Emergent adults often leave the church, primarily, due to a lack of conversion. Mentorship is effective toward the end of leading an unconverted person toward Christ, but it cannot save them. Evangelistic mentorship addresses the obstacles that hinder a person from coming to salvation or from coming closer to Christ. The success of this intervention can best be seen in the apparent removal of these obstacles. Simply, the evidence of the decrease of sin and hindrances to the gospel is the best evidence of the effectiveness of the mentorship program. The best that believers can do in the realm of the salvation of the souls of others is to be faithful and to attempt to decrease influences and footholds that the devil uses to interfere in God's work of saving sinners. This evangelistic mentorship program, therefore, can be useful in addressing more than just the unconverted who leave the church: it can be effective in catching the believer who is leaving and helping him or her to reverse his or her course.

This action-research project produced evidence that reasonably proves its thesis. If a biblical mentorship model is implemented, then more youth will remain in the church at emergent adulthood. While the project did not go long enough to find conclusive results, the growth that the mentees did experience is strong evidence that the mentees will remain in the church. Mentees were instructed according to biblical principles and in imitating faithful, spiritually mature adults. In this pursuit of imitation, mentees would begin to assist in church roles and even assume responsibility in church functions and jobs. Mentees would also privately imitate their mentor's Bible study and prayer life practices.

The evangelistic mentorship program at the focus of this research showed results in helping to build up the spiritual formation of its participants, which is the cause for the secondary

reasons that emergent adults leave the church, namely immature spiritual formation in some capacity. These mentees were saved prior to the mentorship program's beginning.[3] Still, the mentorship program has proven to be effective a helping to accelerate the spiritual growth of young believers. Participants have demonstrated growth in holiness, joy, studying Scripture, prayer, and service. Though this research has proven effective for discipling believers, a variety of research implications exist that must be explored.

It is also important to investigate the spiritual growth that results in the mentors and what aspect of mentoring helps to produce this spiritual growth. It could be that the mentor's spiritual growth correlates to the spiritual growth in the mentees. It could be that it is a similar process in the church body as a whole, that one person's growth in spirituality influences and enhances another believer's growth. This understanding would be likely as it seems to be logical; a mentor grows in Christ, and the mentee imitates the mentee's growth. The mentee's growth is only a reflection of the mentor's developing spirituality. In this case, the mentor's spiritual health and growth is paramount to the success of the program.

### Research Implications

There are several implications of this research that could impact churches today. The available data repeatedly shows the benefits of a robust mentorship program driven by willing, spiritually mature adults. This implication is in accordance with the underlying message behind Paul's encouragement of the Corinthians.[4] The theoretical implication of this research lends itself to the conclusion that Paul encouraged imitation of a mentor because he knew that it yielded

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[3] A person's salvation is between him or her and God. All the evidence suggests that these mentees were saved prior to the program beginning: mentees had a profession of faith and some evidence of visible fruit.

[4] Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ" (1 Cor 11:1, ESV).

spiritual results. The mentor himself or herself is not truly the one that is to be imitated, at least not for the sake of the mentor himself or herself. Rather, it seems that the mentor is dimly reflecting Christ in a way that the mentee can attempt to imitate. Paul's encouragement of the Corinthians to imitate him was to help the Corinthians to produce fruit both in terms of spiritual life and belief as well as in practice of Christian virtues.

The implications of this research are also practical in nature. Christian mentorship can help a congregation, especially of younger Christians, become a body of workers in service for God. Not only does Christian mentorship help younger and older Christian's progress toward Christ spiritually and intellectually, but Christian mentorship also helps mentors and mentees practice their faith in more pronounced ways. The mentors' responses were indicative of this trend, for example, one mentor announced his call to preach during the program. The mentees' responses were also important as several began to serve Christ more in the church and outside of the church. A biblical mentorship program can help a church to revitalize its youth as well as encourage its older members.

The implications of this research also include the implications of the imitation component. Biblical imitation of a more spiritually mature adult was critical to this project's success, which means that there must be adults in a congregation that are spiritually mature enough for a child to imitate. Children naturally imitate their parents; if mentors become like spiritual parents to their mentees, their mentees will naturally imitate them. The implications of this are important because a child may imitate a mentor's good qualities as well as their negative qualities; therefore, it is vitally important that a mentor is spiritually developed enough to lead a child to Christ. Whereas an adult Christian would ideally have progressed to the point that he or she could reasonably lead a child in sanctification, it is not necessarily the case that a Christian

adult would be spiritually mature. It is imperative for the program and for mentees that Christian adults be mature in Christ to bring mentees closer to Christ.

## Research Applications

There are a variety of research applications from this mentorship program research project. This research could be applied in a congregation devoted to leading youths in sanctification. Churches who are seeking to retain emergent adults would also benefit from this program in part because it helps to ease the transition that a teenager naturally experiences between a child and an adult. The mentorship program affords many benefits for children and teenagers in the church, but it is not limited to helping them succeed and grow in Christ. Mentors themselves can benefit and grow much more quickly as the Holy Spirit enables them to teach and guide another person closer to Christ. A church wanting to minister to their teenage demographic effectively would benefit greatly from implementing this program due to its nature of discipling and leading younger Christians. The research data demonstrates that this mentorship program is an effective means by which God leads a teenager in sanctification.

This mentorship program is effective in another way: God uses it to bring youth to salvation, though this seems to be the least evident application. Any church concerned about the salvation of its youth could benefit from this program. God uses this program to reveal the likelihood of a child's salvific state. God also uses this program to draw a child to salvation. God also uses the program to train mentees in godliness to the degree that they will likely not leave the church when they become adults. A church that is concerned about the departure of emergent adults who have been raised in the church would benefit from using this mentorship program. Since mentorship is used to train a replacement in each field, it is a rational conclusion that

mentoring a young Christian would enable and encourage that younger Christian to remain in the church to assume the roles of older Christians.

A church could implement this mentorship program leading up to a Vacation Bible School program. Mentees who begin the mentorship program with planned events, such as Vacation Bible School, would give mentees a chance to use what they have learned, and it would also give mentors the chance to assess their own effectiveness in their mentoring. A church could use this mentorship program with children of the church whether the children have already been saved or have not yet expressed any faith. Although the project seems to work better with older children, it has proven effective with all participating children. This program's flexibility is important for a church to consider when attempting to use it for its needs. The mentorship program can be adjusted as needed to accomplish desired goals.

A ministry can use this mentorship program in both broad and specific ways, depending on its ministry needs. There are a variety of alternative possible goals that a church could use this intervention to accomplish. A ministry could use this with adults to train possible future pastors, preachers, evangelists, or teachers. A minister could also use this program with newcomers to the church in order to introduce them to the church environment, the individual church's beliefs and bylaws, the individual church's culture, and, most importantly, discipling new members. A Christian school or other parachurch organization could also use this mentorship program to train participants to fulfill ministries as evangelists.

Furthermore, a church or ministry could use this action-research project to train evangelists and ministers by taking advantage of a noticeable byproduct of the mentorship program, the sanctification of mentors. Mentors also showed great gains in spiritual formation during this program. Understanding this, it is likely that a ministry could use this mentorship

program with the intention of helping the mentors grow stronger in their faith. Although this is a

bit of a reversal of the intended target demographic of the intervention, the program has proven

the capability to help mentors grow as they attempt to help mentees grow. In this scenario,

mentors must already have a level of spiritual formation consistent with maturity in their faiths.

These applications are not, however, without some limitations.

There are several limitations to this action-research project. Even though there are a lot of

implications to this action-research, the researcher is limited by the data that the researcher could

collect, the scheduling of the participants, and other factors. These limitations could impact

future implications as the limitations hinder understanding of youth development. The most

impactful of these research limitations is the parental training and navigation of all participants'

schedules to ensure the intervention could occur. Time was important to consider as well.

Although time is important for considering the overall success of the intervention, time itself did

not limit a mentees progress. Mentee's growth rates were not consistent with each other. They all

displayed different signs of growth at different rates of time.

## Research Limitations

The research was limited by the apparent limitations of the mentees in their schedules.

Mentees were often limited by their other responsibilities as well as their parents' obligations. As

such, mentees were sometimes unable to meet. While the program's activities were designed

with flexibility in mind, time was a difficult limitation to overcome. Scheduling was also

important for the mentors. It is unknown to what degree the change in mentors impacted Arnold,

whose mentor was unable to meet. Arnold's potential growth is unknown because he only met

with a mentor for half the program. It is also unknown whether these events were detrimental to

Arnold. Further research is needed to determine whether Arnold was negatively impacted by his experience in the program.

Parental training was also a limitation. Mentees sometimes struggled to practice what they were taught at home. Parents must assist mentees to practice what they are being taught in the program. Some of the parents' findings are, as a result, incomplete. Parents must be just as diligent as the mentors in order to have a stronger effect. It is also possible that parents' incomplete findings are a result of incomplete training of the parents. It was assumed that the parents would not need training or instruction to analyze a child's growth; however, the mentors' in-depth analysis of a mentee's development often contrasted with the parents' often more limited findings. As a result of limited training, it was more difficult for the researcher to assess observations related to the mentee in the home. Because of the parents' lack of training, the researcher was unable to get an in-depth understanding of the mentee's true growth: growth that a child would show privately.

Time was an important limitation to consider for this action-research project. An eight-week program could not reasonably offer a definitive conclusion that mentees would certainly remain in the church. The time parameters did not permit a conclusion because such an outcome would require multiple years of implementation. For a definitive answer to the problem to be concluded, the mentorship program requires several years of application. A child must have been in the mentorship program for a substantial amount of time, years as opposed to weeks. Although the time parameters for this action-research project were more limited than what would be necessary to prove the efficacy of the project to the end of salvation, the mentorship program can reasonably produce the result of emergent adults remaining in the church because the mentorship

program is successful in helping mentees, and mentors, grow in sanctification, which is helpful in a person remaining in and growing in the church.

The number of adult volunteers was also a limitation. In this action-research project, most mentors had two mentees. It is unclear how this affected the mentees, whether positive or negative. Ideally, each mentor would have one mentee and one team with his or her spouse, who would also have his or her own mentee. Unfortunately, it was necessary to assign two mentees to some mentors. One pair of mentors initially had signed up for the program but left the program during the first week of training. Another mentor, who had signed up and was enthusiastic about the program, was unable to fulfill the obligations of the program. His mentee was assigned to another mentor about midway through the program. It is unknown the effect that this had on the mentee.

The researcher was limited in assessing the possible ramifications of applying this action-research outside of the small church environment in which it was first implemented. It is possible that the program was greatly impacted by the close-knit culture of Dawn Baptist Church. It is impossible at the point of the initial research to know definitively what impact Dawn Baptist's Church's close-knit community had on the intervention. It is likely that any ministry context could cultivate such a relationally rich environment.

**Further Research**

This mentorship program has proven to be an effective means of discipling young Christians. Although it endeavored to also be a means of evangelizing the lost in the congregations, this aspect of the program is yet unproven. It is unproven to be effective in the regard that it is especially effective evangelically; however, this opens the door for further research. It is possible that a researcher could alter this mentorship program and specifically look

for mentees who have not yet been saved. This would likely be done in a local church context where parents are believers, and the child has not professed belief. Research is also necessary to find the element of mentorship that is the most effective in helping mentees to grow, both saved and unsaved, as it is possible that it is different between the two groups.

There are a variety of questions that need addressing through further investigation. One concept to consider is the reason why some elder adults who are able-bodied do not wish to participate in mentorship. It is perhaps due to excessive commitments on the part of the adult, but many who declined to participate doubted their abilities to lead a child toward Christ. This reasoning suggests the need for training and ministry for those who do not feel capable. It is also possible that the feelings of incapability are a way of apparent humble refusal, an attempt to appear humble while having other reasons for a decision. It is evident that, despite the apparent spiritual maturity of a Christian in the church, even spiritually mature and older members of the church can benefit from training.

Another question to consider is the reason why anyone, older adults in the church especially, would choose not to attempt to reach the lost children in their own church environment. Older adults may suffer from feeling incapable to serve in this way, or these adults may not feel that the investment of time is worth the potential benefit. While it is possible that some of these members are unsaved themselves, it is also possible that they do not understand how to bridge gaps between themselves and youth without some social or cultural strain. This question raises questions that should be answered to prepare mentors for awaiting mentees.

The final consideration that deserves investigation is the element of mentorship that God uses mostly to effect salvation in a young person. The question remains whether it is a specific element of mentorship that overcomes generational barriers from child to elder adult or if it is the

holistic nature of mentorship that is effective for not only leading people to Christ but also in leading them in holiness. It could be that an effective mentorship program requires a combination of factors. It is also possible that there is no element of a mentorship program except for one, the Lord's grace. This, however, is impossible to include in a mentorship program outside of fervent prayer and emphasis on Scripture and the application of biblical principles.

Further research might require a larger congregation than the ministry context in the focus of this research. The limitations of numbers significantly impacted the number of questions that this research was able to answer. The research was unable to prove whether biblical mentorship could be an effective approach to leading a young person to salvation. Although the results produced were promising, due to the time parameters, the research was unable to prove that biblical mentorship will cause children to remain in the church when they reach adulthood. A study with longer time constraints might be necessary in addition to a ministry context that is larger in scope.

This action research project succeeded in answering its secondary questions, but it also failed in some respects. This action research project showed that biblical mentorship, as expected, helped mentees grow in Christ by leading them in biblical thought and practice. As a result, it is logical to conclude that there is some level of sanctification that will make it more likely that a young Christian will remain in the church; however, whatever this level of sanctification is remains undefined. Further research is needed here to determine whether the level of sanctification is an accurate understanding of reality as well as what the level is for a young person to remain in a biblical church. The shortcomings of this action research project revolve around its primary focus, the salvation of a person.

Biblical mentorship's efficacy in leading a young person to salvation is mostly unobserved. This research fell short in this regard because, by all reasonable accounts, most of the mentees involved in this project were saved some time prior to this project's beginning. Further research is required with mentees who have not yet professed faith in Christ, however difficult it may be to attract the interest of unsaved youth to a Christian mentorship. The research accounts for this reality by drawing a connection between the level of sanctification and the likelihood of youth remaining in the church. The mentees who have participated demonstrated growth as well as the new acquisition of skills and zeal, which in turn likely will result in their continued participation in the local assembly, but time is crucial in determining whether this understanding is reality. All mentors and mentees involved in this project demonstrated the efficacy of the curriculum and practices of the program both in the data collected and in the qualitative elements produced.

The possibility of negative impacts must be considered. Thankfully, there is no reason to conclude that any mentee would have been negatively impacted by the mentorship program normally. However, in Arnold's case, it is important to consider the impact that the abrupt change could have caused. Further research is required to assess the impact of half of the mentorship program on a mentee. Mentees who experience a reduced time in the mentorship program are likely to develop less than their peers who received the full experience. Mentees with differing backgrounds and histories might be more adversely affected.

In all, the mentorship program accomplished its goals and more. There was a child who was saved after being mentored; however, it is unknown whether this child will remain in the church after she reaches adulthood. Most of the participants were saved prior to the research, but their sanctification was evident throughout the program. The mentorship program was effective

in helping youths to grow in sanctification, which is an early indicator of a likelihood to remain in the church. Growth in godliness is critical for remaining in the church after a person has reached emergent adulthood. The mentorship program has proven to be an effective means to increase the probability of someone who was raised in the church remaining in the church. The mentorship program is effective because it is founded on biblical principles regarding training young people. Other fields, such as education, have shown great success using mentorship, whether the fields were explicitly Christian in their belief structures. Biblical mentorship builds a young person's spiritual formation to the degree that he or she will remain in the church, perhaps to fill roles in which an older believer serves. Mentorship prepares a young person to take his or her place among the community of believers and equips them with wisdom for sanctification; mentees are led to Christ and then in Christ.

Further research needs to take place, starting before a child is a teenager and continuing with a child until he or she becomes an adult. The emergent adult who has benefitted from mentoring could become a mentor. The efficacy of a legacy mentor's relationship to a mentee could be different from the mentors' impact in this research; while certain factors such as relatability to kids and experience of the program would work in the favor of legacy mentors, lack of experience would likely prove to be a detriment to the growth of a mentee in such a relationship. Regardless, it would be worth investigating the impact a legacy mentor has on his or her mentees in the future.

This action-research project was focused on the most important problem facing the church, which was salvation of souls. Since only God saves, it was important to find a physical manifestation of this within the church's ministry context. One of the manifestations of this spiritual reality was the emergent adult's tendency to fall out of the church, often despite having

been raised in the church. As a result, this action-research project was a mentorship program designed to lead young people to Christ primarily and then in Christ secondarily. The difference in prepositions here is important as "to Christ" means that someone is brought to salvation. "In Christ" means that someone grows in sanctification. Both are necessary for a young person to remain in the church when he or she reaches the agency of choice afforded by emergent adulthood.

The most important reason that emergent adults do not remain in the church is that many of them are not saved or were not saved during childhood. This group consisted of about one-third of the emergent adults. The mentorship program first attempts to correct the possibility of false converts among the youth in the congregation. At a certain point in the project, mentors would have the ability to surmise the spiritual state of their mentees. The mentor's secondary task was to help their mentees grow in sanctification. Since the mentors were older Christians, the mentors were tasked with teaching their mentees to grow toward Christ as the mentors themselves have learned to grow in Christ: this echoes Paul's relationships with his students, especially in 1 Corinthians 11.

The mentee's progression in the short research-project, eight weeks, suggests that if the program continues that the mentees would continue to grow, even to the point that mentees would choose to come back to church after they become adults. This conclusion is reasonable considering the increase in church activity and interest that the mentees displayed during the research project. Mentees were exposed to church fellowship and showed interest in continuing to participate in fellowshipping with other church members. This development is important to the conclusion that the mentees will remain in the church. To support this point, one mentee, Sarah, later in the project, offered to be late to work to meet with her mentor and other mentees for a

church-related activity. Her offer further supports the conclusion that the mentorship program was effective in helping mentees to grow in sanctification, to the point that mentees desire to fellowship with other believers.

Sarah's dedication to the mentorship program comes from loyalty to her commitments as well as the strong relationship she has developed with her mentor. The mentorship program also did well at helping Sarah to form a relationship with her mentor as she might have with her mother. The mentorship program was effective in both cultivating a parent-like relationship between mentee and mentor and in using this relationship to cause growth toward Christ. Spiritual parenthood is highly beneficial for mentees. This kind of relationship is critical to forming a teaching and learning relationship because parents are a child's natural teachers; it is largely due to a child's natural tendency to imitate his or her parents. In addition, a spiritual parent and teacher helps a mentee to live their lives beyond a private faith. Sarah and the other mentees demonstrated this throughout the intervention as mentees desired more opportunities to serve in evangelical ways.

A child's imitation of a spiritually mature mentor is vitally important for a young Christian to learn more of Jesus and grow in the spiritual disciplines. Furthermore, imitating a mature, parent-like Christian helps the young person to understand his or her own identity in Christ. A person's identity, and especially a young person's identity formation, is paramount for understanding a person's actions and where he or she remains. If a child understands his or her identity in Christ and membership in God's family, it is likely that he or she will remain in the church amongst those he or she understands as brothers and sisters. The youth who understands his or her position in Christ's family feels a connection which he or she is unwilling to sever.

As a result of mentors forming relationships with mentees that mentees are not willing to sever, mentees discipled or trained in elements of the faith and in the cultivation of faith. Older Christians shared their experience with mentees in both spiritual and practical matters. Mentees grew closer to their mentors and began to implement their advice and practices. Mentees began to grow in holiness as their characters began to reflect Jesus and scriptural principles more closely. Since God Himself established mentorship by mentoring His people, it is reasonable that God designed people with the capacity to be mentored effectively. This research project demonstrated that assertion to be true. God's teaching, relational, and saving nature as well as the fact that He made people in His image are the two components at the heart of the mentorship program that enables it to promote growth.

James 5:20 states, "Whoever brings back a sinner from his wandering will save his soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins" (ESV). Mentors of this project should have that Scripture in mind. Mentors' first goal is to assess mentees to determine whether they are saved; mentors can use what they know of Scripture regarding fruit of salvation and necessary doctrines. Mentors can also use mentees' visible signs of salvation to assess whether a mentee is saved. Of course, a person's salvation is truly between himself and God; it is not the mentor's job to tell a mentee he or she is unsaved. Rather, it is to assess to the best of his ability and then evangelize accordingly. The mentorship project does not require that mentors be unduly and unbiblically judgmental, but rather, it requires that mentors judge with correct judgment. If it is evident that a mentee is already saved, a mentor would then have the task of helping the mentee to grow in Christ. The motive for mentorship is not being critical; rather, the motivation for this mentorship program is to help youth by turning them toward and pushing them toward God. The evangelical mentorship program has evangelism and salvation at its heart, especially for children.

God loves both children and saving sinners.[5] This program attempts to use both facts of God's

loving nature to better evangelize children and lead them to Christ before they are beyond the

walls of the church.

This intervention uses educational practices that are effective in education, such as

scaffolding and modeling. These tools have proven to be effective in the mentorship program as

well. A mentor models desired behaviors, skills, and character to mentees. Scaffolding is also

important for a mentor as scaffolding is an approach to teaching where the one who teaches starts

by giving the student a lot of support to accomplish the task, while slowly taking away support.

This aspect of mentorship was particularly effective for helping mentees to grow. Mentors

practiced this specifically by including their mentees in their church roles. Mentors also used this

practice to help mentees with evangelism as well as Bible study. While this mentorship program

emphasized receiving the gospel and true conversion, it did not ignore spiritual growth and

attempted to promote spiritual growth as a secondary focus.

The mentorship program's methodology involved teaching mentors to use tactics such as

modeling, scaffolding, and engaging active learners. Mentors were effective at each of these

practices, especially engaging active learners. Mentees were given instructions by which they

could engage active learning, which primarily required mentors cultivate a strong relationship

with mentees. Mentors were taught that their actions were what spoke the loudest and most

convincingly to a mentee. As a result, mentors were careful with their interactions with mentees

to model Christlike attitudes and speech. Mentors also displayed a great deal of patience with

mentees as mentees attempted to learn new skills, and mentees genuinely attempted to learn new

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[5] Mark 10:13–14 shows, Jesus shows His love for children. 2 Peter 3:9 explains that God is patient and not willing anyone to perish, but that all should reach repentance.

skills and practices that they had not considered. Interestingly, cultural differences such as music never became apparent. Instead, mentors and mentees never seemed to broach subjects in which they outwardly disagreed.

This action-research project's mentorship program took place over the course of twelve weeks. The first four weeks of the program were solely for the preparation of mentors. Afterwards, mentors continued to meet once per week for training in addition to also meeting with their mentees. Mentors were required to work with mentees in various ways, teaching them and interacting with mentees according to the mentees' needs. While parents were invited to the mentorship program, it is evident that parents should have also been trained in giving assessments as well as in the topics of the week. This element was lacking and could have hindered the growth that mentees experienced: the researcher had to overcome some incomplete analysis and questionnaires from parents because of lack of parental training.

Even though parental training was lacking in this mentorship program, it did not hinder the program so severely that mentees could not grow. It is more likely that the mentorship program would be more effective had parents received proper training like the mentors did. Still, mentees made gains in every observable category. The results speak to the effectiveness of the mentorship program even as it was conducted. The mentors cultivated a relationship of biblical love for their mentees and their mentees' families. The mentees formed a biblical love for their mentors. The mentorship program was largely effective, and obstacles were overcome due to the presence of genuine love between participants.

This mentorship program was created from a variety of influences, primarily the principles of Scripture but also some of the best practices found in the field of education. Mentorship, which is normally meant to train a replacement, accomplished the task of preparing

mentees for taking the place or a similar place as the mentors in the church. Nick, for example, began to serve in the roles of his mentors and work alongside his mentors. The mentorship program proved to prepare and motivate mentees to serve the church by forming relationships and training mentees to take a church role. In conclusion to this research project, once mentees had the relationship with other church members to cultivate a feeling of belonging, the training to take a position to create a feeling of purpose, and a correct understanding of the church and Christ, mentees were motivated to take their own roles and position in Dawn Baptist Church, from which they will likely not leave as they progress through their adolescence and into adulthood.

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Appendix A

REGULAR BAPTIST PRESS' "BUILDUP" SPIRITUAL ASSESSMENT

*Removed to comply with copyright*

https://www.regularbaptistpress.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/youth/Youth_2.pdf

Appendix B

LIFEWAY'S "SPIRITUAL GROWTH ASSESSMENT"


*Removed to comply with copyright*


http://blog.lifeway.com/growingdisciples/files/2013/08/Spiritual_Growth_Assessment.pdf

Appendix C

EMERGENT ADULT SURVEY

# Emergent Adult Survey

The researcher is not receiving identifiable information through this survey. Names of participants who take the survey will not be disclosed, nor will the researcher know the names of the participants. This survey is fully anonymous. Thank you for participating.

* Indicates required question

1. Are you a Christian? *

   Mark only one oval.

   ( ) Yes

   ( ) No

2. Are you between 18 and 29? *

   Mark only one oval.

   ( ) Yes

   ( ) No

3. Do you still attend a church? *

   Mark only one oval.

   ( ) Yes

   ( ) No

4. If you answered no to the previous question, why not? *

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

   **The Gospel**

   Please answer 1 - 5.
   1 is "Not at All/Strongly Disagree"
   3 is "Somewhat/Neutral"
   5 is "Regularly/Strongly Agree"

5. You acknowledge personal guilt of sin/need of salvation. *

   Mark only one oval.

   Strongly disagree

   1 ( )

   2 ( )

   3 ( )

   4 ( )

   5 ( )

   Strongly Agree

6. You agree with the reality of heaven and hell. *

   Mark only one oval.

   Strongly disagree

   1 ( )

   2 ( )

   3 ( )

   4 ( )

   5 ( )

   Strongly Agree

7. You believe faith in Christ's sacrifice is the only way * to heaven/to be forgiven of sin.

*Mark only one oval.*

Strongly disagree

1 ⬭

2 ⬭

3 ⬭

4 ⬭

5 ⬭

Strongly Agree

8. You have trusted Christ as Savior. *

*Mark only one oval.*

Strongly disagree

1 ⬭

2 ⬭

3 ⬭

4 ⬭

5 ⬭

Strongly Agree

9. You can share your salvation testimony with others. *

*Mark only one oval.*

Strongly disagree

1 ⬭

2 ⬭

3 ⬭

4 ⬭

5 ⬭

Strongly Agree

10. You give evidence of salvation by your life. *

*Mark only one oval.*

Strongly disagree

1 ⬭

2 ⬭

3 ⬭

4 ⬭

5 ⬭

Strongly Agree

11. You share the Gospel with unbelievers. *

Mark only one oval.

Strongly disagree

1 ◯

2 ◯

3 ◯

4 ◯

5 ◯

Strongly Agree

12. You encourage Christians to share the Gospel. *

Mark only one oval.

Strongly disagree

1 ◯

2 ◯

3 ◯

4 ◯

5 ◯

Strongly Agree

### Biblical Ethic

Please answer 1 - 5.
1 is "Not at All/Strongly Disagree"
3 is "Somewhat/Neutral"
5 is "Regularly/Strongly Agree"

13. You recognize God's Word as the standard for morality. *

Mark only one oval.

Strongly disagree

1 ◯

2 ◯

3 ◯

4 ◯

5 ◯

Strongly Agree

14. You understand that Satan and the world operate against God and God's standard. *

Mark only one oval.

Strongly disagree

1 ◯

2 ◯

3 ◯

4 ◯

5 ◯

Strongly Agree

15. You behave by God's moral standards. *

Mark only one oval.

Strongly disagree

1 ◯

2 ◯

3 ◯

4 ◯

5 ◯

Strongly Agree

16. You do what's right even if others do what's wrong. *

Mark only one oval.

Strongly disagree

1 ◯

2 ◯

3 ◯

4 ◯

5 ◯

Strongly Agree

17. You respect people in positions of authority *

Mark only one oval.

Strongly disagree

1 ◯

2 ◯

3 ◯

4 ◯

5 ◯

Strongly Agree

18. You take preventative measures to avoid temptation. *

Mark only one oval.

Strongly disagree

1 ◯

2 ◯

3 ◯

4 ◯

5 ◯

Strongly Agree

19. You are honest and trustworthy. *

Mark only one oval.

Strongly disagree

1 ◯

2 ◯

3 ◯

4 ◯

5 ◯

Strongly Agree

20. You apply biblical principles to cultural issues. *

Mark only one oval.

Strongly disagree

1 ◯

2 ◯

3 ◯

4 ◯

5 ◯

Strongly Agree

**Internalizing Godliness**

Please answer 1 - 5.
1 is "Not at All/Strongly Disagree"
3 is "Somewhat/Neutral"
5 is "Regularly/Strongly Agree"

21. You place Christ first in your life. *

Mark only one oval.

Strongly disagree

1 ◯

2 ◯

3 ◯

4 ◯

5 ◯

Strongly Agree

22. You have a consistent prayer life. *

Mark only one oval.

Strongly disagree

1 ◯

2 ◯

3 ◯

4 ◯

5 ◯

Strongly Agree

23. You participate in personal and corporate (church) * worship.

Mark only one oval.

Strongly disagree

1 ◯

2 ◯

3 ◯

4 ◯

5 ◯

Strongly Agree

24. You memorize Scripture. *

Mark only one oval.

Strongly disagree

1 ◯

2 ◯

3 ◯

4 ◯

5 ◯

Strongly Agree

25. You forgive others who have wronged you. *

Mark only one oval.

Strongly disagree

1 ○

2 ○

3 ○

4 ○

5 ○

Strongly Agree

26. You display fruits of the Spirit. *

Mark only one oval.

Strongly disagree

1 ○

2 ○

3 ○

4 ○

5 ○

Strongly Agree

27. You demonstrate discipline in thought and conduct. *

Mark only one oval.

Strongly disagree

1 ○

2 ○

3 ○

4 ○

5 ○

Strongly Agree

28. You exhibit consistency in godly character. *

Mark only one oval.

Strongly disagree

1 ○

2 ○

3 ○

4 ○

5 ○

Strongly Agree

29. You believe in God's Word even if you don't know *
    what the outcome will be.

    *Mark only one oval.*

    Strongly disagree

    1 ◯

    2 ◯

    3 ◯

    4 ◯

    5 ◯

    Strongly Agree

**Bible and Doctrine**

Please answer 1 - 5.
1 is "Not at All/Strongly Disagree"
3 is "Somewhat/Neutral"
5 is "Regularly/Strongly Agree"

30. You believe the Bible is God's Word. *

    *Mark only one oval.*

    Strongly disagree

    1 ◯

    2 ◯

    3 ◯

    4 ◯

    5 ◯

    Strongly Agree

31. You listen attentively and participate when the
    Bible is taught.

    *Mark only one oval.*

    Strongly disagree

    1 ◯

    2 ◯

    3 ◯

    4 ◯

    5 ◯

    Strongly Agree

32. You consistently read and study the Bible. *

Mark only one oval.

Strongly disagree

1 ⬭

2 ⬭

3 ⬭

4 ⬭

5 ⬭

Strongly Agree

33. You understand the difference between the Old and New Testaments. *

Mark only one oval.

Strongly disagree

1 ⬭

2 ⬭

3 ⬭

4 ⬭

5 ⬭

Strongly Agree

34. You develop Biblical convictions. *

Mark only one oval.

Strongly disagree

1 ⬭

2 ⬭

3 ⬭

4 ⬭

5 ⬭

Strongly Agree

35. You recognize and distinguish between the three Persons of the Trinity. *

Mark only one oval.

Strongly disagree

1 ⬭

2 ⬭

3 ⬭

4 ⬭

5 ⬭

Strongly Agree

36. You recognize and reject false teaching. *

Mark only one oval.

Strongly disagree

1 ◯

2 ◯

3 ◯

4 ◯

5 ◯

Strongly Agree

37. You are able to explain basic Christian doctrine *
and beliefs.

Mark only one oval.

Strongly disagree

1 ◯

2 ◯

3 ◯

4 ◯

5 ◯

Strongly Agree

**Life Skills**

Please answer 1 - 5.
1 is "Not at All/Strongly Disagree"
3 is "Somewhat/Neutral"
5 is "Regularly/Strongly Agree"

38. You recognize that everything belongs to God and *
is to be used for Him.

Mark only one oval.

Strongly disagree

1 ◯

2 ◯

3 ◯

4 ◯

5 ◯

Strongly Agree

39. You demonstrate wisdom in communication with others. *

Mark only one oval.

Strongly disagree

1 ◯

2 ◯

3 ◯

4 ◯

5 ◯

Strongly Agree

40. You honor members of your family. *

Mark only one oval.

Strongly disagree

1 ◯

2 ◯

3 ◯

4 ◯

5 ◯

Strongly Agree

41. You are seeking God's will for your life. *

Mark only one oval.

Strongly disagree

1 ◯

2 ◯

3 ◯

4 ◯

5 ◯

Strongly Agree

42. You understand and agree with God's plan for marriage and sexuality as expressed in the Bible. *

Mark only one oval.

Strongly disagree

1 ◯

2 ◯

3 ◯

4 ◯

5 ◯

Strongly Agree

43. You are concerned more for others than for self. *

Mark only one oval.

Strongly disagree

1 ◯

2 ◯

3 ◯

4 ◯

5 ◯

Strongly Agree

44. You treat people with respect, regardless of age, * gender, appearance, or race.

Mark only one oval.

Strongly disagree

1 ◯

2 ◯

3 ◯

4 ◯

5 ◯

Strongly Agree

45. You are respectful of others' opinions. *

Mark only one oval.

Strongly disagree

1 ◯

2 ◯

3 ◯

4 ◯

5 ◯

Strongly Agree

46. You regularly pray for others. *

Mark only one oval.

Strongly disagree

1 ◯

2 ◯

3 ◯

4 ◯

5 ◯

Strongly Agree

47. You desire all people to be saved. *

*Mark only one oval.*

Strongly disagree

1 ⬭

2 ⬭

3 ⬭

4 ⬭

5 ⬭

Strongly Agree

Appendix D

# Emergent Adult Consent

**Title of the Project: Evangelistic Mentorship to Address Youth Decline at Dawn Baptist Church**
**Principal Investigator:** Wesley Dover, Liberty University, D.Min Student

| Invitation to be Part of a Research Study |
|---|

You are invited to participate in a research study. To participate, you must be over eighteen. You must be 18 years of age and someone who became a member of the church during your youth (prior to 18). Taking part in this research project is voluntary.

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

| What is the study about and why is it being done? |
|---|

The purpose of the study is to explore the reason for young adults' leaving the church to create an intervention that can benefit the youth. The study is being done to help the youth. This study addresses church leaving as well as salvation of the youth in the local church.

| What will happen if you take part in this study? |
|---|

If you agree to be in this study, I will ask you to complete the Google Form Questionnaire. You must have access to the online format.

| How could you or others benefit from this study? |
|---|

**No Direct Benefits**–Participants should not expect to receive a direct benefit from taking part in this study.

Benefits to society include a better understanding of the causes for church leaving and the effective practices that motivate emergent adults to attend church.

| What risks might you experience from being in this study? |
|---|

There are no risks involved 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. If data collected from you is shared, any information that could identify you, if applicable, will be removed before the data is shared.

Participant responses, if included in the publication, will be completely anonymous. Either the participant's name and relevant identifiers will be excluded, or the participant will be given a pseudonym to keep responses confidential. The data will be gathered through a Google form that is only accessible once, and only to the participant invited to participate. Data will be deleted after the project is concluded. Recordings will not be used.

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

Participants will not be compensated for participating in this study.

### What are the costs to you to be part of the study?

To participate in the research, there will be no expenses; the only cost is a few minutes of your time.

### Is study participation voluntary?

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether to participate will not affect your current or future relations with Liberty University or any other cooperating/engaged institution(s). If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time prior to submitting the survey.

### What should you do if you decide to withdraw from the study?

If you choose to withdraw from the study, please exit the survey and close your internet browser. Your responses will not be recorded or included in the study.

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

The researcher conducting this study is Wesley Dover. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact him. You may also contact the researcher's faculty sponsor.

### 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.

*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

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

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

_____

Printed Subject Name

_____

Signature & Date

Appendix E

PARENT QUESTIONAIRE

# Parent Questionnaire

Please describe any changes in your child or observations about your child's behavior/beliefs since the mentorship program began.

* Required

1. Week 1 *

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

2. Week 2 *

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

3. Week 3 *

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Appendix F

CHILD ASSENT

***What is the name of the study and who is doing the study?***
The name of the study is Evangelistic Mentorship to Address Youth Decline at Dawn Baptist Church and the person doing the study is Wesley Dover.

***Why is Wes Dover doing this study?***
Wesley Dover wants to know if biblical mentorship can cause youth to remain in church when they become emergent adults by bringing them closer to Christ.

***Why am I being asked to be in this study?***
You are being asked to be in this study because you are in the youth demographic.

***If I decide to be in the study, what will happen and how long will it take?***
If you decide to be in this study, you will become the mentee of an adult in the church. You will participate in and benefit from the mentorship of your mentor in spiritual life. You will at times be asked to perform tasks related to the mentor's tasks in the church as well as including mentors in your life outside of church. This will take roughly eight weeks to complete.

***Do I have to be in this study?***
No, you do not have to be in this study. If you want to be in this study, then tell the researcher. If you don't want to participate, it's okay to say no. The researcher will not be angry. You can say yes now and change your mind later. It's up to you.

***What if I have a question?***
You can ask questions any time. You can ask now. You can ask later. You can talk to the researcher. If you do not understand something, please ask the researcher to explain it to you again.

Signing your name below means that you want to be in the study.

_____
Signature of Child/Witness                                                                                          Date


Mr. Wes Dover
rwdover@liberty.edu

Dr. Jack Steven Davis
Jdavis2@liberty.edu


Liberty University Institutional Review Board
1971 University Blvd, Green Hall 2845, Lynchburg, VA 24515
irb@liberty.edu
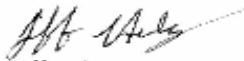
## Appendix G

## CHURCH PERMISSION

October 2, 2022

Liberty University Online

Endorsement – Ricky Wesley Dover

Ricky Wesley Dover has informed me of his plans and provided me with a summary of his planned action-research project for his dissertation. We have discussed at length of his actions to include the two major components of his research that will include some members of our church. I understand the problem that his research will entail and fully endorse and have given the church's permission to begin his work. I have also discussed the necessity to make sure that no member or individual's privacy is violated. It is with great expectation that this project for his dissertation will be of help not only to our church but for the many others that may be or will be experiencing with emergent adult group leaving the church.

It is our prayer that Mr. Dover's research be blessed by our Holy Father and will enhance the successful award of his goal of obtaining a Doctor of Ministry (D.Min) diploma

Rev. Jeff Hulsey
Pastor

Appendix H

COMBINED PARENTAL CONSENT AND STUDENT ASSENT/PARENTAL OPT-OUT

# Combined Parental Consent and Student Assent/Parental Opt-Out

**Title of the Project: Evangelistic Mentorship to Address Youth Decline at Dawn Baptist Church**
**Principal Investigator:** Wesley Dover, Liberty University, D.Min Student

| Invitation to be part of a research study |
| --- |

Your child is invited to participate in a research study. Participants must be between the ages of nine and seventeen Taking part in this research project is voluntary.

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

| What is the study about, and why are we doing it? |
| --- |

The purpose of the study is to explore the reason for young adults leaving the church to create an intervention that can benefit the youth. The study is being done to help the youth. This study addresses church leaving and the salvation of the youth in the local church.

| What will participants be asked to do in this study? |
| --- |

If you agree to allow your child to be in this study, I will ask him/her to do the following things:
1. Be paired with an adult mentor at the church. This will last for eight weeks, in which the mentor and mentee will have a variety of interactions and do a variety of activities.
2. Participate in and lead Bible lessons. These Bible lessons will occur occasionally to regularly and will either be mentee or mentor led.
3. Perform church tasks. Mentors will lead mentees in the performance of daily service tasks, for example, leading a song during the song service portion of church services.
4. Have outside interactions with older adult church members. Mentees and their families will routinely meet with mentors and the mentor's spouse outside of church for recreational or other activities designed to promote the mentor/mentee relationship.

| How could participants or others benefit from this study? |
| --- |

**Direct Benefits of** this study are a profound growth in spiritual maturity and insight. Mentees should grow in relationship to Jesus and to others in the church. Mentees will experience personal growth.

Benefits to society include a productive and encouraging trend of growth and positive activity in the youth population as the youth involved progress to being saved.

**What risks might participants experience from being in this study?**

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

The researcher is and the mentors of the church function as mandatory reporters for child abuse, child neglect, elder abuse, or intent to harm self or others.

**How will personal information be protected?**

The records of this study will be kept private.

- Participant responses will be anonymous. Participant responses will be kept confidential through the use of pseudonyms.

**How will participants be compensated for being part of the study?**

Participants will not be compensated for participating in this study.

**What are the costs to be a part of the study?**

For your child to participate in the research, you/your child/student will need to pay for personal costs of parking or activities in which the child may need to pay for admission, such as a movie.

**Is study participation voluntary?**

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether to allow your child to participate will not affect your or his/her current or future relations with Liberty University. If you decide to allow your child to participate, he/she is free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.

**What should be done if a participant wishes to withdraw from the study?**

If you choose to withdraw your child from the study or your child chooses to withdraw, please contact the researcher at the email address/phone number included in the next paragraph. Should you choose to withdraw her/him, or should your child choose to withdraw, data collected from your child 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 Wesley Dover. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact her/him at rwdover@liberty.edu You may also contact the researcher's faculty sponsor.

**Whom do you contact if you have questions about 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.

*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.*

| Consent/Opt-Out |
|---|

**Option 1: Parental Consent** By signing this document, you are agreeing to allow your child 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 allow my child to participate in the study.*

_____
Printed Child's/Student's Name

_____
Parent's Signature                                     Date

_____
Minor's Signature                                      Date

**Option 2: Parental Opt-Out:** If you would prefer that your child NOT PARTICIPATE in this study, please sign this document, and return it to the researcher by [date].

_____
Printed Child's/Student's Name

_____
Parent's Signature                                     Date

Appendix I

CURRICULUM AND SCHEDULE

| WEEK | Mentor Expectations | Mentee Expectations | Parent Expectations | Bible Topic | Relevant Scripture | Researcher Tasks |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Week 1 | First meeting: review summary of project. Training | N/A | N/A | Biblical Mentorship | Titus 2, 1 Peter 5, 1 and 2 Timothy, Galatians, Proverbs | Implement Qualified Leaders' Assessment |
| Week 2 | Second meeting Training | Briefed on the project. Take BUILDUP Spiritual Maturity Assessment | Briefed on the project, Informed Consent | | | Brief mentees and parents. Gain informed consent from youth participants. Give BUILDUP Spiritual Maturity Assessment to youth participants |
| Week 3 | Third Meeting training | N/A | N/A | | | Analyze data from mentors and mentees & begin pairing mentors to mentees. Emergent Adult Questionnaire given |
| Week 4 | Fourth Meeting Training | N/A | N/A | | | Analyze data from Emergent Adult Questionnaire |
| Week 5 | Fifth meeting. Mentee and mentor combined meeting. Mentees meet their mentors. Mentors lead a Bible lesson with mentees on Biblical Inspiration | Mentee and mentor combined meeting. Mentees meet their mentors. | Monitor change in child's behavior and apparent beliefs. Reinforcement of the mentorship program. | Biblical Inspiration The Gospel | 2 Tim 3:16 Romans 6 John 3 | Facilitate the meeting. Record Journal Entries |
| Week 6 | Sixth meeting. Must conduct a Bible lesson and have one significant interaction with mentees outside of church. Options explored in the weekly meeting. | Must be attentive. With family, must interact with mentor outside of church once during the week. | | Law of God Law of Grace | Galatians 3 Acts 2:38 | Researcher works with individual mentors to find the best interaction that works for them. Record Journal Entries |
| Week 7 | Seventh meeting. Mentors trained on giving an assessment. Bible lesson with mentee Outside church interaction Mentors invite mentees (or families) to sit with them during church service. Give Spiritual Growth Assessment | Must be attentive. With family, must interact with mentor outside of church once during the week Will take assessment Will sit with or near mentor during service. | | Wages of Sin The Gospel Relationship with Christ | Romans 6 John 14:23 | Researcher addresses problems as they arise. Facilitate. Record Journal Entries |
| Week 8 | Eighth meeting. Mentors discuss results of assessment with researcher. Mentors share perspectives | Do one church-related task during service normally done by the mentor. | | Jesus Restorative power and the Gospel | Romans 6:23 and Romans 3:23 | Lead meeting. Facilitate. Discuss the analysis with mentors. |

Appendix J

JOURNAL RECORDS

| Weeks: | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Cayla** | Quiet and shy but positive; knows some Scripture. Rarely studies Scripture. Recently saved. | No noticeable change in demeanor or change in studying Scripture. Understands that the Bible is God-breathed. | Still quiet but can explain reasoning based on Scripture; can explain what the gospel is. | More vocal on speaking about spiritual things; understands Jesus' restorative power. | Learned new methods to study Scripture, begins to keep prayer journal | Visited church sound booth with mentor. | No noticeable change | Visited church sound booth and is interested in learning from mentor and mentor's husband in technology department of church. |
| **Nick** | Positive. Quiet. Knows some Scripture. Struggles with Bible study and prayer life. | Minor change in demeanor. Seems more focused. Understands importance of studying Scripture. Beginning to make changes. | More confident in discussing the gospel. No other changes noted. | More confident in discussing spiritual matters and understands Jesus' restorative power. *Began evangelizing through tracts.* | Learned new methods of studying Scripture. Beginning to adopt mentor's preferred method (cross-referencing). | Led a Sunday School lesson in mentor's place. Implemented mentor's cross-referencing method. | Taught a Sunday School Lesson this week on the Resurrection – mentor announced call to preach. | Initiated Bible lesson: regular Bible study and prayer life. |
| **Gail** | Positive. Enthusiastic. Knows some Scripture. Struggles with Bible study and prayer life. | No noticeable change. | Can explain the gospel; can explain inspiration of Scripture. No change in practice. | Began evangelizing through tracts. Appearing to grow in a relationship with Christ – beginning to pray and study Scripture more. | Beginning to study Scripture more. Developing prayer life: prayer journaling. | More uplifting words, prayer journaling. | No noticeable change | No noticeable change. |
| **Sarah** | Positive. Shows some anxiety. Shows some fruit prior to program. Struggles with studying Scripture, but not prayer. Some evangelism. | No noticeable change. | Slightly better confidence. Understands the gospel. Improved Scripture reading. Improved prayer life. Understands inspiration. | Began evangelizing through tracts. Appearing to grow in a relationship with Christ – beginning to pray and study Scripture more. | Beginning to study Scripture more. Developing prayer life: prayer journaling. Shares biblical and theological perspectives with mentors and mentees. | Prayer journaling. | Progressing toward teaching. No other noticeable change. | Prayer journaling, praying, and reading Scripture have increased. Can give testimony and defend her beliefs. |

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Martha** | Generally positive. Vocal. Knowledgeable of Scripture and frequent in prayer life. Some evangelism | No noticeable change. | No noticeable change. | Began evangelizing through tracts. Appearing to grow in a relationship with Christ – beginning to pray and study Scripture more. | Began to investigate different study methods; appearing to grow in knowledge of Christ. | Prayer journaling; somewhat less vocal this week than in others. | Prayer life developing. Study life developing. | Prayer journaling, praying, and reading Scripture have increased. Can give testimony and defend her beliefs. |
| **Emma** | Quiet. Struggles with Bible study and prayer. No evangelism | Change in demeanor: warming up to mentor and other mentees. | No change in practice. Passive participation. | Beginning to pray. Generally uninterested. | Beginning to pray more. Struggles to study. No evangelism *Emma received Christ on Friday of this week!* | More patient. Seemingly more interested in the mentorship program and church. | Growing in prayer. Noticeable demeanor difference: positive. | No noticeable difference from prior week. |
| **Arnold** | Quiet. Struggles with prayer and Bible reading. Some evangelism. | No noticeable change | No noticeable change. *At this point, Arnold's mentor left the program: adjustments were made to accommodate Arnold.* | Beginning to defend his faith. Beginning to read Scripture. | Beginning to read Scripture more and to discuss it. Beginning to adopt mentor's study method. | Developing boldness to teach. Reading Scripture every day. | Becoming more vocal and interactive. Still working toward steady Scripture reading and developing boldness. | Absent. Changes undiscernible. |
| **Dylan** | Energetic and social. Minimal prayer life. Minimal Scripture reading. No evangelism. | No noticeable change. | Positive and energetic without being disruptive. Can explain the gospel. Prayer life improved. Bible reading the same. | Positive and energetic. Talking freely to mentor about struggles with sin. Bible reading and prayer the same. | Positive and energetic. Talking freely to mentor about struggles with sin. Bible reading and prayer the same. | No noticeable change. | No noticeable change. | Absent. Changes undiscernible. |
| Extra Notes | | | | Several mentees began to give out tracts; self-directed decision to evangelize. Program is having a desired end. | It is unclear the degree which the mentorship program contributed to bringing Emma to Christ. | | Dylan seems to be showing little progression in this program. | |

Appendix K

MENTEE GUIDED QUESTIONS

The following are questions designed for mentees to help mentees to grow in a

relationship with their mentors. These are suggestions, not requirements. Have fun with this!

You could play a game to Table out the answers to these questions and others that come to your

mind.

1. What is your relationship like with Christ?
2. What was something that you wish you knew when you were my age?
3. What is the best way to deal with stress and stressful situations?
4. Can you tell me your favorite childhood memory? Something funny? Embarrassing? Valuable?
5. What do you think my strengths are? What do you think my weaknesses are? What do you think your strengths and weaknesses are?
6. What do you do to witness to other people?
7. How do I overcome fear of evangelizing?
8. What do I do if I ever have doubts about my faith?
9. What skills do you want us to work on?
10. What is your testimony?
11. Why are you a Christian?
12. What is your favorite hobby? Why?
13. What is your pet peeve? Why?
14. How do I improve my Bible reading habits?
15. What do you like to do for fun?
16. What are some things you think are different in a kid's life now than they were in your childhood? Positive? Negative?
17. Do you like video games? Sports? Music?
18. What is your favorite Christmas memory? What is your current favorite Christmas tradition?
19. What do you watch on TV? What's your favorite?
20. What is God teaching you right now?

Appendix L

RESEARCHER'S MENTOR TRAINING PROCEDURE

1. Training Meeting 1
    a. The need reiterated: kids are leaving the church when they turn eighteen because many are not genuinely saved when they are here.
    b. Encouragement: they are not too far gone. Elders in the church can do something right now to stop this trend from progressing.
    c. Mentorship with a younger person is necessary.
        i. Children often become like their parents and take on their parents' interests.
        ii. Children often are influenced more by modeling than by direct instruction although both are important.
        iii. Children at Dawn Baptist Church come from a variety of familial backgrounds that differ from the mentor's childhood background.

2. Training Meeting 2
    a. Youth upbringing and family situations are largely different than the adults' upbringing.
    b. Mentees often do not have the traditional family influence in their homes that would be conducive to leading them to Christ or to observe Christian disciplines modeled.
        i. Mentors will be instructed that to lead a biblical family structure, mentors must be kind, compassionate, patient, not boastful, and not rude.
        ii. Mentors will be instructed to address primary issues and correct them, such as known heresies, but to avoid criticizing the mentee's music, political beliefs, entertainment choices, etc, unless it is expressly sinful.
        iii. Mentors will avoid the pitfall of being irritable or resentful with the mentee.

3. Training Meeting 3
    a. Mentors will be encouraged in that they may not understand their mentees' interests.
    b. Mentors will be instructed to get mentees to teach them about their interest, whether it is music, entertainment, or other.

  c. Mentors will be instructed that their compassion for the youths should allow them to have genuine interest in what the youths are interested in. This is crucial in building the relationship between the youths and the mentors.

4. Training Meeting 4
  a. Relationally, youths need to know that others care about their ideas and interests. Having mentees teach mentors about their interests accomplishes the emotional need that youths often have and creates a sincere relationship.
  b. Mentors will be instructed that they will have to allow and encourage mentees to take responsibility progressively throughout the intervention in teaching both the Bible and other subjects. Mentors will also have to become comfortable with allowing mentees to do mentors' normal jobs, even if they do the jobs differently.
  c. Mentors will be instructed to allow mentees to make mistakes to learn from them, not to jump in and take over the operation of a task. Mentors will be instructed that this is frustrating to their mentees but also is counterproductive.

Appendix M

RESEARCHER'S MENTEE GUIDELINES AND SUPPORT

Throughout the course of the program, here are some reminders and guidelines for you.

Remember:
- Be kind and respectful, always,
- Your mentor will ask you to perform tasks in the church related to their own jobs in the church. Do your best at completing those assignments.
- Don't be afraid to ask for help.
- Understand that your church and your mentor care for you very deeply.
- Try to include your mentor in your personal interests such as music or games you like. Try to make your mentor a friend.
- You are going to be given responsibilities, but you are up for the challenge.
- Teach your mentor! They will need your help understanding who you are and what you like.
- Help your mentor with this mentoring program. It is possible that they have never done this before. You can help them do what they are being asked to do.

| Activity | You should: | Challenge: |
|---|---|---|
| Bible Lesson | Listen intently. Take notes. Ask questions. | You're going to lead a Bible lesson soon. Pay attention to how your mentor moves through the Bible and learn how he or she prepares. |
| WMU (for girls) | Participate in the activities the WMU does. Be on your best behavior. Be willing to help. | One day, you'll be in the WMU and planning missionary activities. But you don't have to wait! Think about some service ideas and talk them over with your mentor. |
| Brotherhood (for boys) | Participate in the activities the Brotherhood does. Be on your best behavior. Be willing to help serve. | One day, you will join Brotherhood and work with the men of the church missionally. Why don't you talk with your mentor about what you can do right now as a kid? Brainstorm some ideas for serving. |
| Leading a Bible Lesson | Lead the Bible lesson with what your mentor taught you. Your lesson doesn't have to be long. Try your best! | Listen to your mentor try to help you make your Bible lesson. Don't be upset if something doesn't go right. It's all a part of learning. You are doing great so long as you are trying. |
| Serving in the Church | Help your mentor perform a church task that he or she tells you about. If possible, ask for more opportunities when you get comfortable with the job. Your mentor will teach you how to do the job. | Look for more opportunities to serve and do the job without the mentor having to tell you to. Listen to what they say to help. |
| Eating in the Mentor's Home | Be polite and bring your family with you. Observe how your mentor and his/her spouse treat each other and you. Offer to help clean up after. | Try to look for ways that your mentor's actions are similar to and different from your own. Look for ways that your mentor's actions are similar to and different from your own family and own house. Talk with your mentor about why he or she does certain service acts. |

Thanks for your help with this!

Appendix N

MENTOR RELEVANT SCRIPTURES AND LESSONS LIST

| Lesson Topics | Relevant Scriptures |
|---|---|
| Mentor Preparation Scripture (during training) | Titus 2<br>1 Peter 5<br>1 and 2 Timothy<br>Galatians 2-3 |
| Biblical Inspiration<br>The gospel | 2 Tim 3:16<br>Romans 6<br>John 3 |
| The Law of Moses<br>The Law of Grace | Galatians 3<br>Acts 2:38 |
| Wages of Sin<br>The gospel<br>Relationship with Christ | Romans 6<br>John 14:23 |
| Jesus' Restorative power and the gospel | Romans 6:23 and Romans 3:23 |
| The gospel<br>Why/how to study the Bible | Proverbs 22:6<br>2 Timothy 2:15 |
| The Church<br>The gospel | Acts 20<br>Colossians 1<br>Ephesians 1 |

IRB Approval Letter

| | | | ⌖2 | Products ▼ | 👤 Wesley Dover ▼ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Dashboard** | **Studies** | **Submissions** | **Tasks** | | |

Studies / Study Details

\+ **New Submission**

| Study Details | Submissions |
|---|---|

Approved

**IRB-FY22-23-492**  Evangelical Mentorship to Address Youth Decline at Dawn Baptist Church

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| Approval Date: 12-01-2022 | Expiration Date: N/A | Organization: School of Divinity | Active Submissions: N/A Sponsors: N/A |
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