LIBERTY UNIVERSITY

**Equipping Equippers: Training Alaska Bible College Students
for Equipping Ministry through Mentorship**

A Thesis Project Report Submitted to

the Faculty of the John W. Rawlings School of Divinity

in Candidacy for the Degree of

Doctor of Ministry

by

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THE DOCTOR OF MINISTRY THESIS PROJECT ABSTRACT
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The research project strived to improve the Christian Ministry Training program at Alaska Bible College, by adding a multi-generational equipping mentorship focus to the already existing program. The addition of the multi-generational mentorship is modeled after the exhortation found in 2 Timothy 2:2. Adding the primary goal of equipping to the mentorship program is found in Ephesians 4:11-16. There were a total of 28 participants in the research project, which included recent graduates, faculty, staff, and currently enrolled students as of January 2023. The research project seeks to equip students of Alaska Bible College to begin equipping mentorship as student mentors with the desire that it will be carried into the ministries in which they serve. The research data was collected through Likert Scale surveys, focus groups, and interviews. Within the field of discipleship, there is an apparent lack of literature addressing the importance of equipping mentorship in institutions of biblical higher education. The stakeholder buy-in of this research project reveals the value of equipping mentorship. The principles of mentorship that were modeled in this research project could positively influence the field of discipleship as the value of mentorship is considered within the discipline.

Keywords: Christlikeness, equipping, mentorship, service, trust, vulnerability, willingness

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Abbreviations

ABC   *Alaska Bible College*

ABHE   *Association of Biblical Higher Education*

APU   *Azusa Pacific University*

ASU   *Arizona State University*

CMT   *Christian Ministry Training*

DMIN   *Doctor of Ministry*

DTS   *Dallas Theological Seminary*

GMC   *Graduate Mentorship Certification*

IRB   *Institutional Review Board*

SCC   *Summit Christian College*

UNLV   *University of Nevada Las Vegas*

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Introduction

In American evangelical churches, Bible colleges and seminaries are the primary modes of instruction used to prepare future church leaders for ministry. In these hallowed halls, students receive instruction in orthodoxy and orthopraxy. Knowledge is passed down from professor to student to equip them for a life in vocational ministry. The knowledge is primarily theoretical in nature in that many students have yet to begin serving in a particular calling. Over time, many colleges and seminaries have recognized that a co-curricular program that places the student in practical ministry benefits the overall learning experience. These programs vary in implementation from school to school; however, the primary impetus is to practically apply the theoretical knowledge gained during the student's time of study.

Addressing the need for these co-curricular programs seeks to improve the overall learning experience and more fully prepare the student for life in vocational ministry. There is no one-size-fits-all approach to the co-curricular practical ministry experience program. Nevertheless, there are foundational principles that, if implemented, improve every student's experience. One of those principles is mentorship. Mentorship improves the overall learning experience and practical application of students who attend Bible colleges and seminaries. However, the mentorship implementation and the mentorship relationship's focus vary from school to school. The benefits of an organized mentorship program whose primary focus is

preparing others to empower believers to discover and use the gifts of grace have not been fully applied.

Ministry Context

Alaska is called the Last Frontier and for a good reason. The forty-ninth state was officially added in 1959, 178 years after the first states adopted the U.S. Constitution. The long, rich heritage of faith that the original colonies celebrate in Alaska is still in its infancy by comparison. Alaska is the largest of the fifty states, full of mountainous landscapes and vast wilderness. It is where pioneers, missionaries, and miners set out to make a new name and new life for themselves, where the rugged individualists could thrive.

Alaska Bible College

It was from this pioneering spirit that Alaska's only four-year accredited Bible college was born. Founded in 1966 in Glennallen, Alaska, by Vincent Joy, Alaska Bible College (ABC) and its faculty sought to prepare students for a life in vocational ministry. The heart was to see Alaska natives and non-native Alaskans reached with the gospel of Jesus Christ. Unfortunately, Vincent Joy tragically passed before the first students entered the school. Under the leadership of Dr. Robert Lee, Alaska Bible College began its 50-year journey of equipping servants who lead with Christlike character.

Presently, Alaska Bible College maintains an average student body of fifty and, until recently, has only offered one bachelor's degree, a B.A. in Biblical Studies and Christian Ministry. Along with the bachelor's degree, the college offers a Bible certificate, a two-year Bible and ministry certificate, and an A.A. in Biblical Studies. The school has just added a B.A. in Elementary Education. Students in the Elementary Education degree program are required to

complete thirty credits in Bible and Ministry along with their requisite education courses. The primary focus was and continues to be to prepare students for a life of vocational ministry. The school's focus is to prepare students for ministry, which may mean that students are vocational ministers or, by financial necessity, bi-vocational ministers. From the start of the school, students must participate in service to the local church and parachurch ministries through a course titled Christian Ministry Training (CMT).

Glennallen is a small rural community almost four hours away from Anchorage, Alaska. The current population is 537 people.[1] As a result of the remote location and the required ministry experience at Alaska Bible College, students became vital to the surrounding small rural churches. Many churches relied on Bible college students to offer children, youth, and Sunday school ministries. As a result, churches would eagerly await the arrival of new students, knowing the required ministry experience would provide laborers for the ministries of each church.

Due to the remote nature of the original campus, along with the high cost of living, high utility costs, and low student enrollment, Alaska Bible College had to make the hard decision to relocate to a more populous area of the state. Therefore, in 2012 and 2013, ABC began the move from Glennallen to Palmer, Alaska.

Palmer is a small town within the Matanuska Susitna Borough, which has the largest population in Alaska, second only to Anchorage. "The Matanuska-Susitna Borough, known as the 'Mat-Su' covers over 25,000 square miles with a diverse collection of communities and is the fastest growing area in Alaska."[2] The Matanuska Susitna Borough has a current population of

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[1] "Census Profile: Glennallen, AK," Census Reporter, accessed October 28, 2022, http://censusreporter.org/profiles/16000US0228740-glennallen-ak/.

[2] "Matanuska-Susitna Borough - Property & Maps," accessed October 28, 2022, https://matsugov.us/property.

110,686 people.[3] The choice to move the school did not come lightly; however, it has ultimately prevented the college from shutting its doors permanently.

The new campus location provides students with abundant opportunities to serve the local church and parachurch ministries. In addition, the cost of living is markedly lower in Palmer and the surrounding Mat-Su borough than in the rural community of Glennallen. The larger population also provides the students with ample employment opportunities for students and has increased employment placement of bachelor's graduates to 60 percent.[4] It has also increased the college's overall enrollment, allowing for a larger population of commuter students and mid-career adults.

During the 2012-2013 academic school year, the year of moving the campus, the student enrollment was twenty-eight. Of these twenty-eight students, only 48 percent were from Alaska. Most of the students came from out of state, and nearly all of the students lived in on-campus housing.[5] The remote location and sparse population of Glennallen, along with the limited employment opportunities, caused a decrease in student enrollment. These factors caused Glennallen to be a destination campus where students lived, learned, and communed on the 80-acre campus. The only time that students left campus was for weekly church service.

The current enrollment at Alaska Bible College is forty-six students.[6] Sixty-two percent of the students are defined as traditional and live in on-campus housing. The remaining 38 percent of students are commuter and non-traditional students. Most of the student body are local

[3] "Census Profile: Matanuska-Susitna Borough, AK," Census Reporter, accessed October 28, 2022, http://censusreporter.org/profiles/05000US02170-matanuska-susitna-borough-ak/.

[4] "Consumer Information," Alaska Bible College (blog), accessed October 28, 2022, https://www.akBible.edu/about/consumer-information/.

[5] "ALASKA BIBLE COLLEGE ENROLLMENT STATISTICS SEMESTER II, 2012-2013" (Alaska Bible College, August 2, 2013).

[6] "Consumer Information."

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evaluators were required to check in weekly with the assigned students to ensure regular participation in a local ministry.

Historically, faculty and staff were assigned students in several ways. During the transition from Glennallen to Palmer, students were assigned to faculty by alphabetical order, as the primary purpose of the assignment was to evaluate ministry participation. The current mentor assignment uses a more thoughtful process to match mentor and mentee in a relationship that will challenge and equip them to grow more like Christ while preparing them for service in ministry. All faculty and student assignments have corresponded with the shared sex; men evaluate men, and women evaluate women.

Over time, the role of the faculty or staff evaluator has evolved. The role transitioned from ministry evaluation toward a mentorship focus. Faculty and staff hold the title of faculty mentor. Many faculty and staff members began using the weekly check-in as an opportunity to disciple and mentor students. The mentorship relationship was not traditionally the primary focus of the weekly meeting. Some faculty and staff used the opportunity to build a mentor relationship with the assigned students.

Without an institution-wide focus on mentorship, only some students benefited from the mentorship and came to recognize its value. Some students would spend thirty minutes with the faculty mentor, while others would send an email to report successful ministry involvement for the week. The fragmented focus on mentorship resulted in only some students having a positive experience with the assigned faculty or staff mentor. For some, the relationship remained purely an evaluation of ministry involvement.

The college is committed to faithfully equipping servants who lead with Christlike character. Alaska Bible College is responsible for continually evaluating its efforts to prepare the

future leaders of the church for the unique ministry of equipping. The expectation is that students will grow in Christlikeness through the curricular and co-curricular learning experience. ABC must recognize that its primary stakeholder is the student. Evaluation and implementation seek to improve every student's learning experience at ABC. The institution must continue to grow through learning, and the evaluation process is vital to identifying areas where the college can grow to serve the student body better.

Problem Presented

Many students failed to see the program's value without a directed and intentional focus on mentoring in the Christian Ministry Training program. The faculty and staff of ABC identified the problem within two significant areas of evaluation for Alaska Bible College. The first is through the biannual student satisfaction survey, where students questioned the value and benefit of the CMT program.[8] Students anonymously evaluate the college, its programs, and overall student life within this survey. The following comments were submitted anonymously in the 2022 Spring Student Satisfaction Survey. "CMT is kind of a dead program right now. I am aware of this being changed next year." "We had two meetings last semester. I understand that the class is not mandatory, but half the time, I forget this program exists…." "There really is not a CMT program." These comments are a sample of a portion of the student body. However, the comments aid the faculty and staff in evaluating the CMT program and process.

The second area that identified a need to address the CMT program was within the institutional evaluation. Again, the administration, faculty, and staff recognized the program's value, but a need for directed mentor training became apparent.[9] Having reviewed the student's

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[8] "2022 Spring Assessment of Institutional Effectiveness" (Alaska Bible College, May 2022).

[9] Ibid.

evaluation of the program during the institutional effectiveness meeting at the end of the spring semester, staff and faculty took the opportunity to give feedback regarding each one's experience over the academic year.

During the meeting, the faculty and staff identified the need to change and improve the CMT program. Faculty and staff recognized a need for more directed and focused mentorship within the CMT program as a core issue. In addition, the faculty identified the need for intentional mentorship of students primarily focused on preparing individuals to fulfill equipping ministries within the local church.

Mentorship exists on varying levels within the college; however, the focus of mentoring has become to equip the students to fulfill the numerous ministries within a local church. As a result, graduates and students are entering vocational ministry where the focus is to fulfill the ministries within a local church rather than equip and empower the congregants to serve the body of Christ using the gifts given by grace. While the institution has moved toward the equipping values of mentorship, there remains an undirected focus within the mentor meetings. Each mentor currently applies their own personal goals to the mentor meetings. Without a unified focus within the mentor meetings, the results and experiences of the mentees vary drastically.

Alaska Bible College's primary mission is to equip and prepare the future leaders of the church. A cognitive and theoretical understanding of Ephesians 4:11-16 and 2 Timothy 2:2 is present within the college. The school has recognized that it is not the church but a parachurch ministry that exists to serve the greater body of Christ in local church contexts. From a deep-rooted desire to serve the body of Christ, the focus on student equipping has followed the cultural shift and expectations of churches that pastors, leaders, ministry directors, and church staff exist to do the work and ministry for the church. The college will fall short of its intended

goal if this direction and emphasis do not become central to its mission. The problem is that

ABC has identified the need to update CMT to implement focused mentorship that promotes the

application of 2 Timothy 2:2.

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Purpose Statement

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The purpose of this DMIN action research project is to update CMT and implement

equipping mentorship in the Christian Ministry Training program at Alaska Bible College.

Within the CMT program, there are two requirements. The first is a requirement that all students

enrolled in a degree program serve weekly in a church or parachurch ministry. The second part is

the cocurricular arm involving mentorship. The primary purpose of CMT is first to have students

actively and practically apply the theoretical knowledge gained at the college within local

ministries. The second is to equip and empower students to fulfill ministry callings through

mentorship.

> All degree-seeking students must enroll in Christian Ministry Training (CMT) each
> semester at ABC. CMT consists of two equally important components–student mentoring
> and practical ministry. In the student mentoring program, the student meets with their
> mentor weekly for discipleship, academic advising, accountability, and prayer.
> Throughout the semester, mentors walk students through 15 virtues intended to instill
> Christlike character in the student. In the practical ministry experience, students
> participate in ministry through a local church or parachurch organization, practicing
> servant-leadership skills learned in Christian ministry courses.[10]

The faculty and staff collectively identified the need for changes to the CMT program because of

the student survey and the institutional evaluations. As the Student Dean, Chaplain, and Director

of Christian Ministry Training, the author (with full support from the college's president, the

administration team, and the faculty) has the authority to implement proposed changes to the

CMT program.

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[10] "Alaska Bible College Academic Catalog" (Alaska Bible College, 2022),
https://www.akBible.edu/academics/academic-catalog/., 62

The purpose of this project is to change the CMT program and implement a 2 Timothy 2:2 model within the program to focus on faculty mentoring, underclassman mentorship, and ministry mentoring that prepares students to fulfill equipping roles within the local church. These changes will better equip and prepare students for a life in vocational ministry, where the students can be catalysts that promote equipping and service within the local church.

The changes to the CMT program address the focus and purpose of the mentoring portion of the program. The changes to the CMT program seek to implement a multi-tiered mentorship program that emphasizes 2 Timothy 2:2, where students are not only being mentored but are actively mentoring within the college and their local ministries. The impetus of the mentorship centers on Ephesians 4:12. The goal is to equip students for ministry and prepare them through mentorship to serve as equippers in the local church. There is a synonymous relationship within Christianity between mentorship and discipleship. The definition section addresses the similarities and differences between these two terms. Rightly applied mentorship is biblical discipleship. Students of Alaska Bible College will be better prepared to serve the church in equipping ministries by embracing equipping-focused mentorship.

Basic Assumptions

Mentors' and mentees' participation in the CMT program is the primary assumption. All degree-seeking students maintain enrollment in CMT throughout their time at ABC. Given the required nature of the program, the research is essential. Along with participation in the mentorship, students will participate by giving honest responses to both the Student Satisfaction Survey and the interview. Faculty and staff are required to serve as mentors as employees of Alaska Bible College.[11] Active and earnest participation in the mentorship program by all faculty

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[11] "Personnel Manual" (Alaska Bible College, 2022-2023).

and staff members is presumed. The assumed participation of faculty and staff presupposes honest feedback and evaluation of the CMT program in surveys, focus groups, and personal interviews. The overall positive experience of the alums assumes willing participation in the interview.

A blatant assumption is that all mentor meetings collegewide are focused on preparing students for a life in ministry. The nature of the mentorship program is still inextricably tied to the service requirement in the CMT program. This relationship assumes that the mentor meetings are focused on preparing the mentee to better serve within the local church or parachurch ministry. The ability of the faculty and staff member to serve as a mentor in an equipping manner is assumed.

Definitions

This project focuses on equipping mentorship in the Christian Ministry Training program at Alaska Bible College. Several terms are used synonymously throughout this thesis project to convey the importance of mentorship at ABC. Some of the terms are used very specifically to detail the goal of the mentorship program as it relates to the overall mission of Alaska Bible College. Key terms used in this project include mentorship, ministry, equipping, service, and other terms essential to the research and implementation of this project.

Christlikeness. Simply, this is the transformative process where a disciple of Christ becomes more like Him. This process happens through humble submission to the Word of God by the Spirit of God. "The ultimate goal of this glorious transformation is that the believer would reflect the image of Jesus. Paul wrote that we are changed 'into the same image' (2 Cor 3:18,

ESV). Later, he clarified that the glorious image is the image of Christ."[12] The focus of Alaska

Bible College is to empower students to become more like Christ. Out of this comes a Spirit-

empowered desire to imitate the servanthood of Christ.

Discipleship. A relational process where believers "Immerse their lives in the words of

Jesus."[13] To become more like Christ as they submit to the Spirit and the Word of God.

Discipleship can occur in various groups, from the small mentor-mentee relationship to the small

group or even broadly within the local church. It is "An intentional relationship in which we

walk alongside other disciples in order to encourage, equip, and challenge one another in love to

grow toward maturity in Christ."[14]

Equipping or equipping ministry prepares other believers to use the gifts of grace to

build up the body of Christ (Eph 4:11-16). The mission of ABC is to equip servants who lead

with Christlike character. Equipping is the process of preparing others to use the gifts given by

grace for service or ministry. It is the intentional effort "To 'equip' or 'train' the members to

grow spiritually and use their gift in the proper way in the body."[15] The use of gifts to equip

others for service. Equipping is a ministry that prepares and empowers "the body of Christ so

that the body of Christ would be built up and mobilized for service."[16] The school does not

deserve the right to exist if its primary mission is not to equip servants to love and serve the bride

of Christ.

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[12] Rod Dempsey and Dave Earley, *Spiritual Formation Is...: How to Grow in Jesus with Passion and Confidence* (Nashville, TN: B&H Academic, 2018), 7.

[13] Dave Earley and Rod Dempsey, *Disciple Making Is . . .: How to Live the Great Commission with Passion and Confidence* (Nashville, TN: B&H Academic, 2013), Ch 7.

[14] Greg Ogden, *Unfinished Business: Returning the Ministry to the People of God*, Revised edition (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2003), 179.

[15] Earley and Dempsey, *Disciple Making Is…*, Ch 19.

[16] Joel Comiskey, *Biblical Foundations for the Cell-Based Church: New Testament Insights for the 21st Century Church* (Moreno Valley, CA: CCS Publishing, 2013), 127.

Equipping Mentorship. Takes the principles of mentorship and the goal of equipping to prepare an individual to become a mentor who equips others. This method of mentorship strives to equip individuals "who share the gospel and serve as role models that students can follow in orthodoxy, orthopathy, and orthopraxy."[17] The goal in this model of mentorship is duplication through imitation. This mentorship embraces the Commission and call to make disciples, equip the saints, and pass on to other faithful people the desire to do the same (Matt 28:18-20; Eph 4:11-16; 2 Tim 2:2).

Leader or Leadership. The understanding of leadership at ABC is always in the context of Christian leadership. A Christian leader, in Christlike imitation, serves people to influence individuals to pursue a deeper relationship with Christ and to seek God's will for their lives.[18] A Christian leader influences individuals to follow God's plan for their lives. Alexander Strauch states that leadership and service are analogous, "Christian leadership, which is service to others."[19]

Mentor or mentorship. A relationship that involves the sharing of essential and life-transforming truth, encouragement, equipping, and empowerment toward Christlikeness. The mentor relationship focuses on one-on-one mentor and mentee interaction. "Though a skill, even an art, mentoring as it is practiced in the work of theology and pastoral ministry has a particular focus and a definite end: life in Christ."[20] Mentorship foundationally builds on trust; within these relationships, students, faculty, and staff move toward a growing Christlikeness.

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[17] Tim McKnight, *Engaging Generation Z: Raising the Bar for Youth Ministry* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Ministry, 2021), 166.

[18] Earley and Dempsey, *Disciple Making Is*, Ch 20.

[19] Strauch, *Biblical Eldership: An Urgent Call to Restore Biblical Church Leadership*, 77.

[20] Martin E. Marty and Jill Duffield, *Mentoring: Biblical, Theological, and Practical Perspectives*, ed. Dean K. Thompson and D. Cameron Murchison (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2018), 39.

Ministry. Ministry is service. It is the use of the gifts given by grace ultimately for the glory of God.[21] "A ministry is the sphere in which a gift is performed, among a certain group of people, or in a certain geographic area."[22] The desire is to see students, faculty, and staff recognize the ministry of equipping as a primary ministry.

Servant or Service. "The Greek word translated 'services' is derived from *diakonia* from which we get the word deacon. *Diakonia* in its various forms translates in English to service or 'ministries.'"[23] Servants give of themselves for the betterment of others, particularly the body of Christ. Service is the active participation and contribution of a servant. ABC emphasizes service, the goal of seeking to put the needs of others above one's own as a fruitful imitation of Christ.

Vocational Ministry. It is recognized that many view vocation as a profession or compensated employment. To see individuals embrace the historical understanding is desirable. Ogden states, "*Vocatio* historically refers to the all-encompassing obligation or duty to serve Christ in the various contexts of life."[24]Ogden's definition of vocation is the preferred definition. It encompasses the call of Scripture to do all things to the glory of God (1 Cor 10:31). However, the contemporary definition of vocation is one's profession or occupation. Vocational ministry is then considered professional ministry, the work of the clergy.[25]

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[21] Dave Earley and Ben Gutiérrez, *Ministry Is . . .: How to Serve Jesus with Passion and Confidence* (Nashville, TN: B&H Books, 2010), 14, Kindle.

[22] Ray C. Stedman, *Body Life: The Book That Inspired a Return to the Church's Real Meaning and Mission*, Revised edition (Grand Rapids, MI: Discovery House Publishers, 1995), 62.

[23] Ogden, *Unfinished Business*, 50-51.

[24] Ibid., 248.

[25] Ibid.

Limitations

Alaska imposes a considerable limitation on the implementation of this project. Alaska, while the largest state in total acreage, is one of the least populated states in America. According to the 2020 U.S. census, Alaska is the third least populated state in the nation.[26] As stated above, the majority of the student population at ABC currently comes from within the state. Therefore, the small student body is inevitably a limitation of this project.

The size of the student body imposes limitations in multiple ways. The first is that the state's small population carries over to the school's small population. Alaska Bible College is one of the smallest schools within the Association of Biblical Higher Education (ABHE) accrediting body. The second is that the small population limits participation and may not reflect a nationwide trend. Finally, culturally, Alaska is vastly different from the forty-eight states to the south. The unique micro-culture of rugged individualism promotes a general distrust of surveys. This individualism may influence the accuracy of the Student Satisfaction Survey, a primary tool used to measure the success of the CMT program changes.

Alaska Bible College experiences continual and scheduled change within the student body, the primary participant pool. The general maximum time a student attends ABC is five years. The amount of time spent at ABC affects the experience and interaction of the students within the CMT program. The experiences of the upperclassman will be different from the experience of a first-year student.

The first-year student's experience with the program will be unique as they have yet to gain prior experience within the CMT program before the applied changes from this thesis project. All remaining students will have prior knowledge and experience with the unchanged

[26] U.S. Census Bureau, "U.S. Census Bureau Today Delivers State Population Totals for Congressional Apportionment," Census.gov, accessed November 4, 2022, https://www.census.gov/library/stories/2021/04/2020-census-data-release.html.

CMT Program. Within the small student body, there will naturally be two sub-groups of students participating in the study. These uncontrollable variables impose limitations on the thesis project.

The commitment and implementation of CMT program changes by the mentors is a limitation. There can be no guarantee that each mentor applies the changes within the assigned mentor relationships or that the changes are applied universally in each mentorship relationship. The ability of each mentor and their familiarity with mentorship creates a limitation. Each mentor is limited by their own understanding, experience, and training in mentorship.

Personalities like methodology impose uncontrolled and unavoidable limitations. The level of participation in mentorship will undoubtedly vary from mentor relationship to mentor relationship. The mentor and mentee's willingness to be vulnerable and open themselves up to the mentorship process creates a constraint. Personal willingness and vulnerability will impact the experience of each mentee, an uncontrolled reality of the thesis project. Given that the mentors are assigned and not chosen by the student, it creates a limitation on the mentor-mentee relationship. Some individuals who feel forced into a mentor relationship are more reticent to open up and be vulnerable with their mentor.

Not all students enrolled in the CMT program will participate in the study surveys, a primary data source for the research. Looking at the participation of students in the Student Satisfaction Survey gives an estimate of participation within the study surveys. In the fall of 2021, thirteen students out of fifty completed the survey. In the Spring of 2022, twenty-two students out of fifty completed the survey. The historical data shows that participation is not guaranteed. Incomplete surveys can be submitted, which could affect the data as well. The free will nature of every student as an image bearer of God will affect the quantitative data within the survey.

The possibility that a student withdraws from ABC is an uncontrolled reality. Withdrawal will reduce the participant pool and affect the overall data. Many of the students who were withdrawing struggled to find their purpose and calling while at ABC. Some will take a semester off in order to recuperate finances to continue their pursuit of a degree later. There is also the possibility that a faculty or staff mentor may change careers or ministry locations, which would impact the thesis project if the event occurs during the implementation period. The possibility of one or both events happening is a common and unavoidable occurrence at ABC.

Finally, student withdrawal and staff changes create the possibility that a student may have a different mentor throughout the student's enrollment at ABC. Mentor changes will undoubtedly affect the student experience, an uncontrollable variable within the study. The number of available faculty and staff mentors creates a challenge. Some mentors have more than the desired three mentees. The increased number of mentees limits the time and ability of the faculty or staff mentor to connect in a meaningful way with each of their mentees.

Delimitations

The focus of this thesis project is to implement equipping mentorship within Alaska Bible College's CMT program. Equipping mentorship is a narrow area of discipleship that serves as a self-imposed constraint. The authorization to make approved changes to the CMT program allows for the implementation of this thesis project. Limiting the participation to current students, mentors, and recent graduates creates a specific data pool that serves as a delimitation on the thesis project.

The direct control over the mentor assignments is a benefit to this project. The researcher serves as the director of the CMT program and is responsible for the mentor assignments. The previous director of CMT assigned mentors alphabetically. Students have historically matched

with a mentor of the same sex whose last name started with the same letter or was in alphabetic proximity. This process has changed under the current director. The school's small size has allowed the director of CMT to build relationships with all faculty and staff.

The CMT director has a good knowledge of the faculty and staff, which aids in the mentor assignments. New students are evaluated during the initial three weeks of the semester and then matched with mentors based on similarities in personality, interests, hobbies, and ministry callings. The goal in matching mentors and mentees is to challenge both mentor and mentee to a greater Christlikeness and desire to serve. The process is much more organic; however, not every match is perfect. Students are encouraged to give the mentor one semester before requesting a mentor change. Students who request a mentor change are permitted to request a specific mentor, but it is not guaranteed. Each mentor is generally limited to three mentees to maximize relationship opportunities.

Using the study surveys: baseline survey, alumni survey, and exit survey will give multiple data points that, once synthesized, help evaluate the effectiveness of the applied changes. The study surveys are anonymous, allowing for a more genuine response from the participants. The participants will rate multiple areas of the mentorship program on a scale of one to seven. If a participant gives a three or lower, they must give a comment detailing their rating.

Throughout the research implementation, focus groups will meet biweekly to discuss the mentorship program and areas of mentorship. Each group has a selection of questions to guide the discussion and maintain focus on mentorship. Mentors will not participate in mentee focus groups to facilitate open dialog within the focus groups. However, the mentor focus group will include upperclassman mentors. The goal of these focus groups is to gather active qualitative data from mentors and mentees. The focus groups intend to prevent presuppositions and

intentional bias of the researcher and give an opportunity for honest, open dialog from the participants that will aid in improving the mentorship program.

During the implementation of the proposed changes, the researcher will conduct interviews with a pool of participants to qualitatively measure the effectiveness of the new CMT mentorship changes. This interview will specifically address the mentorship component of the CMT program. The interview will individually evaluate the experience of both the mentor and mentee. Additionally, the research will conduct interviews with a portion of alums from the previous graduating years of 2017 to 2022 who consent to participate in the research. These interviews will qualitatively evaluate the CMT program prior to the proposed changes.

Thesis Statement

The natural tendency of students and graduates of Alaska Bible College is to enter vocational ministry ready to do the work and to serve in every area of the church. Through the intense curriculum at ABC, students are prepared theoretically for a life of vocational ministry. The result of this thorough preparation and excitement to serve is that many take on every possible ministry opportunity to serve within the local church.

When coupled with the passive nature of congregations, this enthusiasm to serve often results in church leaders, directors, pastors, and staff doing all the ministry for the church. The passive nature of fallen humanity coupled with the consumer-driven culture that is so common today results in church leaders being the primary driving force for ministry within a local church. The church leaders taking on all ministries hinders the equipping of the saints to use their gifts given by grace to serve the body of Christ.

Enthusiastic students entering ministry willing to do all the serving and ministry within a church often result in the congregation happily abnegating those ministries to the students. When

this happens, church members miss out on using the gifts of grace and growth in Christ. A local church cannot flourish where the leaders do all the work, service, and ministry. A local church will not thrive as biblically designed where this philosophy of ministry remains normative. The local church is only actualizing a portion of its potential by allowing pastors, leaders, directors, and staff to fulfill the work and ministry of the local body.

The Bible college does not deserve the right to exist if it is not serving the local church. Preparing and equipping students for ministry is ultimately and primarily the intended role of the church. However, Bible colleges and seminaries now serve as the primary place where vocational church leaders receive education, equipping, and empowerment to serve Christ and His bride.

The school must then recognize that it exists to prepare not just leaders of the church but servants who lead with Christlike character. The school should invest intentionally in the students so that the paradigm of service and equipping returns to a more biblical model. Alaska Bible College has an opportunity to shift the current paradigm by equipping students through a 2 Timothy 2:2 modeled mentorship to embrace the role of equipping leadership within the local church. If ABC implements a three-tiered mentor program that promotes equipping, then the student will be prepared to equip others within the local church.

CHAPTER 2: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The literature review is necessary to develop the proper depth of understanding within an applied discipline. In order to thoughtfully and dynamically contribute to the field of discipleship, there must be a rational analysis of the current works in the discipline. This process will more closely review current academic literature in the area of mentorship to identify themes and potential gaps within the field of biblical discipleship. Through the study of contemporary scholarly works on mentorship, the following literature has proven influential during the research process.

Literature Review

Mentorship is not unique to biblical discipleship. It is a practice found across a myriad of professional disciplines throughout recorded human history. The benefit of mentoring is shared between mentor and mentee as it develops both individuals and builds mutual trust.[1] Mentorship provides an opportunity for a bonded relationship where participating individuals, through the learning process, increasingly actualize their potential within a specified discipline. "The distinctive element of Christian institution mentoring is the spiritual dimension afforded to the community in addition to specific educational goals."[2] Mentorship seeks to develop individuals in the areas of emotion, intellect, and potency. Mentorship is not unique to biblical higher

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[1] Thomas A. Lucey and Elizabeth S. White, "Mentorship in Higher Education: Compassionate Approaches Supporting Culturally Responsive Pedagogy," *Multicultural Education* 24, no. 2 (Winter 2017), 12.

[2] Joel R. Howard, "Creating a Leadership Development Strategy to Align and Equip Leaders at Grace Lutheran Ministries" (DMin project, Trinity International University, 2021), 18, ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global.

education or, more broadly, the church. Christian mentorship is unique in that it seeks to develop and prepare individuals in all areas of life rather than simply excellence in a specific discipline. In other words, Christian mentorship or biblical mentorship seeks to holistically develop, prepare, and launch the mentee into a deeper relationship with God and the church, where individuals mimic or imitate the process with others.

<div align="center">Christian Mentorship</div>

Christian mentorship is distinctive in its approach to growing individuals from a biblical foundation that promotes growth in the aforementioned areas while focusing more directly on theological understanding, spiritual growth, and service. Christian mentorship prioritizes an individual's relationship with God; as the individual's relationship with God grows and matures, the mentor relationship develops through the influence of each individual's relationship with God.[3]

The foundations of Christian mentorship come directly from Scripture. Individuals grow in their relationship with God through a greater understanding of who God is. The study of God's Word develops understanding. In *Implementing Biblical Principles for Mentoring Emerging Leaders,* Randal Lanthripe argues, "Mentors should be careful to connect what is happening in the trainee's life and ministry to Scripture."[4] Augmentation of deep interpersonal relationships occurs through trust and transparency within the mentor relationship. God, by His very nature, is omniscient; He knows all things. Deductively, then, He knows everything about everyone. Therefore, it is a pleasure for those in a relationship with Him to pursue knowing everything

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[3] Geoffrey Samuel Brailey and Stephen Douglas Parker, "The Identity Imperative: Mentoring as a Tool for Christian Young Adult Identity Formation," *International Journal of Children's Spirituality* 25, no. 2 (April 2, 2020): 109–23, https://doi.org/10.1080/1364436X.2020.1819775, 109-123.

[4] Randal Lanthripe, "Implementing Biblical Principles For Mentoring Emerging Leaders," *Journal for Baptist Theology & Ministry* 18, no. 2 (2021), 228.

about Him that a finite image bearer can know. Mentorship develops this relationship through an intentional focus on Scripture.

Christian or biblical mentorship seeks to develop the whole person. Through purposeful mentoring, identities, callings, and vocations become more apparent.[5] A growing relationship with God through intentional mentorship guides mentees to discern God's leading and serve others.[6] This relationship is where loving the Lord and loving neighbors are practically applied in daily living (Matt 22:37, 39). Bailey shares, "Mentoring promotes a safe yet challenging spiritual friendship to identify experiences and environments that will grow, guide, encourage, support and challenge the mentoree [sic] to become more Christlike in all areas of their life and character."[7] Christian mentorship promotes the holistic growth of the mentored and mentors to become more like Christ.

Christian mentorship supports equipping. Mentorship relationships serve as a primary locus for equipping. Mentorship serves not only to encourage mentees in the process of doing but also to prepare them to lead others in that direction. "The task of higher education is not simply to equip persons to be productive. It must also engage in the process of helping students become people who can not only do what needs doing, but also lead others in doing it."[8] Mentorship prepares the mentee to live a life dedicated to faithfully fulfilling God's call on the life of the

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[5] David J. Lose et al., "Equipping the Equippers: The Pedagogical and Programmatic Implications of The Christians' Callings in the World Project," *Teaching Theology & Religion* 18, no. 4 (2015): 387–408, https://doi.org/10.1111/teth.12309, 387-408.

[6] Bruce Ashford et al., *Christian Higher Education: Faith, Teaching, and Learning in the Evangelical Tradition,* ed. David S. Dockery and Christopher W. Morgan, Illustrated edition (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2018), 157.

[7] Brailey and Parker, "The Identity Imperative," 109-123.

[8] Carey Williamson Cook, "Leadership Development in a Higher Education Institution: A Case Study of Students in a Leadership Development Program and the Effect of Their Learning Styles on Their Leadership Learning" (PhD diss., University of Idaho), 1, ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global.

mentee.[9] Equipping occurs in two primary areas of the life of the mentee. Mentees are equipped through Scripture in orthodoxy,[10] and practically through orthopraxy.[11]

Christian mentorship is a call to imitation as mentees observe the lives of the mentors in the shared relationship. As mentees develop, there is a call to begin imitating the mentor's life, just as the mentor is imitating Christ or becoming more Christlike. Duplication of the mentoring process occurs as the mentee takes the mentor position.[12] Marty states, "Mentees imitate the mentor, both in their integrity and in their zeal for the gospel and for the churches."[13] The imitation of the mentor should also naturally develop the mentee into a mentor; in this, the imitation of Christlikeness in the mentor's life results in imitation by the mentee. The mentor is preparing the mentee to take up the task of mentorship.[14]

Christian mentorship promotes service. Mentorship provokes the transition of knowledge to practical wisdom. Mentors guide mentees to apply theoretical knowledge through practical service in a way that promotes others before self.[15] The mentorship relationship allows mentees to witness what Christlike, selfless service is. Mentorship then encourages the mentee to embrace a lifestyle of service witnessed in the mentor's life. Lanthripe states, "Experience cements learning. It adds to learning beyond reading about ministry or seeing someone else do

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[9] Ashford et al., *Christian Higher Education*., 30.

[10] Lanthripe, "Implementing Biblical Principles For Mentoring Emerging Leaders," 226.

[11] Matthew Ulrich, "Defining, Assessing, and Progressing Discipleship: Helping Church Leaders and Laity Become Confident and Equipped Disciple-Makers" (DMin project, Southeastern University, 2021), 262, ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global.

[12] Barry Robert Sproles, "Equipping Churches to Disciple College Students at the Baptist Collegiate Ministry in Tallahassee, Florida" (DMin project, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2022), 24, 49, ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global.

[13] Martin E. Marty and Jill Duffield, *Mentoring: Biblical, Theological, and Practical Perspectives*, ed. Dean K. Thompson and D. Cameron Murchison (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2018), 25.

[14] Ibid., 61.

[15] Ashford et al., *Christian Higher Education*, 136-137.

ministry."[16] God calls every believer to use grace-given gifts to serve Christ and his body.[17] Biblical mentorship encourages both participants to embrace serving others as a necessary aspect of Christlikeness.

Mentorship in Biblical Higher Education

Throughout biblical higher education, there is recognition of the value of mentorship. Mentorship as a cocurricular provides guidance, counsel, and wisdom to the student. "Christian higher education includes grounding the faith-life of believers, bearing meaningful witness in the world of ideas, and equipping students to serve God with heart, soul, mind, and strength in their God-given callings."[18] Christian or biblical higher education is not solely limited to equipping for full-time ministry. As a result of the diverse degree programs, mentoring in Christian colleges focuses on guiding students into discovering their calling and vocation and preparing them for a career.[19] The mentor guides the mentee in achieving their stated goals. Priest states, "Despite the wide range of mentoring literature related to college student success and career success, it appears there is little empirical research describing or evaluating the influence of professional mentorship relationships on students' transition from college to career."[20] Mentorship and the learning experience are uniquely joined together within biblical higher education. The shared goals of mentorship and the learning experience provide a place to help students understand that

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[16] Lanthripe, "Implementing Biblical Principles For Mentoring Emerging Leaders," 224.

[17] Howard, "Creating a Leadership Development Strategy," 10.

[18] Ashford et al., *Christian Higher Education*, 136-137.

[19] Kerry L. Priest and Sarah Donley, "Developing Leadership for Life: Outcomes from a Collegiate Student-Alumni Mentoring Program," *Journal of Leadership Education* V13, no. I3 (Summer 2014), https://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.662.4905&rep=rep1&type=pdf, 108.

[20] Ibid., 109.

learning is not limited to or relegated by the institution but is progressive and ought to encompass the whole life of the mentee.[21]

Mentorship within biblical higher education focuses on equipping. The primary mode of equipping or preparing students occurs within the classroom. Ashford states, "So teachers today should be as concerned in their teaching to equip learners to continue learning in the future as they are about teaching them the status of everything today."[22] Historically, the primary focus of equipping within biblical higher education is handing down knowledge derived from a biblical worldview within the structured classroom setting.[23] While this has been the normative practice of biblical higher education, the need to develop a more holistic approach to equipping became apparent. Bowman states,

> Rather than reducing one's vocation or calling to a single aspect of life, namely work, Christian educators and leaders have the opportunity to encourage students to embrace vocational living, which will equip students with a more permanent foundation for their calling, a broader application of that calling, and a more supportive framework for continually discerning the application of their calling.[24]

The opportunities within this holistic approach are apparent; however, pragmatic implementation remains largely unaddressed. Some within biblical higher education have recognized the potential of mentorship programs that offer pragmatic ways to apply the vast knowledge gained within the classroom.[25]

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[21] Bowman, "Christian Higher Education for Vocational Living," 1-15.

[22] Ashford et al., *Christian Higher Education*, 115.

[23] David E. White, "The Student Lived Experience of Mentoring as It Relates to Spiritual Formation in an Ethnically Diverse Christian College Environment: A Phenomenological Study" (PhD. Diss., Johnson University, 2021), 70, ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global.

[24] Bowman, "Christian Higher Education for Vocational Living," 1-15.

[25] Benjamin D. Espinoza, "Between Text and Context: Practical Theology and the Ministry of Equipping," *Christian Education Journal* 14, no. 2 (Fall 2017), 391–404.

Similar in nature to equipping mentorship in biblical higher education involves training. Training involves biblical teaching and general knowledge about the world.[26] From the onset of the church, training was a necessary aspect of discipleship, where apostles used mentoring to train and guide new believers.[27] The synonymous relationship between discipleship and mentorship seen in Scripture helps modern-day mentors embrace the importance of mentorship. Bible colleges and seminaries became the primary places where future vocational leaders received training and were equipped to serve where called.[28] With few exceptions, American colleges during the colonial period began exclusively through Christian efforts: "Designed to train Christians to be leaders in the church enabled to engage their culture."[29] Bock observes, "Many students have not been trained to engage the cultures around them and live out their faith in mainstream society."[30] Here, the context is not specifically Bible college or seminary students but student-age individuals. Bock's statement supports the dire need for biblical training. Mentorship relationships serve and support classroom training and challenge the world's culture. The quality training received through biblical higher education creates a place for dialogue, personal challenge, and practical application within the mentorship relationship.[31] Mentorship becomes an extended arm of the classroom where training continues. Following the model of Jesus, mentoring relies on the teacher; it is where mentees are trained and then sent out.[32] This

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[26] Ashford et al., *Christian Higher Education*, 289.

[27] White, "The Student Lived Experience of Mentoring as It Relates to Spiritual Formation in an Ethnically Diverse Christian College Environment," 33.

[28] Brian Croft, *Prepare Them to Shepherd: Test, Train, Affirm, and Send the Next Generation of Pastors* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2014), Ch 1.

[29] Ashford et al., *Christian Higher Education*, 499.

[30] Darrell L. Bock, "The Table Briefing: Ministering To Generation Z," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 177, no. 708 (2020), 484.

[31] Lanthripe, "Implementing Biblical Principles For Mentoring Emerging Leaders," 224.

[32] Marty and Duffield, *Mentoring*, 39.

implies that the mentee moves from a place of learning from the mentor to practical application and imitation by becoming mentors themselves.

Developing Leaders through Mentorship

Leadership paradigms greatly influence the equipping of students within Bible colleges and seminaries. Therefore, the primary focus of leadership within biblical higher education is identifying potential future leaders who, once trained and equipped, become leaders.[33] Mentorship is active leadership by the mentor, wherein the mentee can witness, learn, and grow. In addition, the mentee is encouraged to implement leadership principles throughout life.[34] White states, "The only way to engage and lead others was to do it from a position of morality and ethics which could only be drawn from one's faith in God."[35] For students to observe the faith of the teacher and mentor, there must be an opportunity. There must be shared time within the mentor relationship. The shared time proves to be mutually beneficial to mentor and mentee as both, through faith, are directed to Christlikeness.

Mentorship relationships provide a unique place where the mentee encounters and observes active, practical leadership.[36] Lanthripe states, "Paul says leaders must be faithful to pass along the experience they have gained, and the principles learned through the years to faithful and capable men and women through a mentoring relationship."[37] Mentorship and

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[33] Lanthripe, "Implementing Biblical Principles For Mentoring Emerging Leaders," 221.

[34] Priest and Donley, "Developing Leadership for Life: Outcomes from a Collegiate Student-Alumni Mentoring Program," 108.

[35] White, "The Student Lived Experience of Mentoring as It Relates to Spiritual Formation in an Ethnically Diverse Christian College Environment," 108.

[36] Priest and Donley, "Developing Leadership for Life: Outcomes from a Collegiate Student-Alumni Mentoring Program," 109.

[37] Lanthripe, "Implementing Biblical Principles For Mentoring Emerging Leaders," 230.

leadership share a unique relationship where mentees receive experience and wisdom from the mentor that practically empowers them to imitate leadership principles.

Mentor-driven leadership is service-oriented. Therefore, Christian higher education seeks to prepare leaders who can engage the contemporary culture and effectively serve the church and society.[38] Ulrich states, "Leaders need to radically devote themselves and make their primary ministry that of apprenticing and reproducing other disciples to not only lead when you are gone, but to lead in other areas that they are called to while you are still leading."[39] The mentor is privileged to prepare and equip the mentee through intentional service. It is a relationship where the mentor imitates the self-sacrifice of Jesus in a tangible way that serves the mentee.[40] Mentees observe what humble service to others is through the faithful service of the mentor.

Developing leaders through mentorship relies on the imitation of the love of Christ. Therefore, the effectiveness of the equipping, training, and service the mentor provides increases when the mentee experiences the mentor's Christlike love.[41] The mentor can only communicate that love effectively if there has been a personal experience and continual apprehension of the love of God. Leaders who develop within a mentorship relationship saturated in the love of Christ become equipped to lead from a place of loving God and others.[42] Love, then, is essential to a vibrant and healthy mentoring relationship.

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[38] Ashford et al., *Christian Higher Education*, 18.

[39] Ulrich, "Defining, Assessing, and Progressing Discipleship," 262.

[40] Marty and Duffield, *Mentoring*, 35.

[41] Lanthripe, "Implementing Biblical Principles For Mentoring Emerging Leaders," 227.

[42] Lose et al., "Equipping the Equippers," 387-408.

The Relationship between Mentorship and Ministry

Mentorship is itself a form of ministry. There is a synonymous relationship between ministry and service. Therefore, service is a necessary component of mentorship. The mentorship relationship challenges both mentor and mentee to actively use the gifts of grace in service. God uses ministry to prepare both mentor and mentee for greater responsibility.[43] God calls every believer to use the gifts given by grace for the maturation of the body of Christ. God has uniquely gifted specific individuals to be the ones who serve in equipping the church.[44] Institutions of biblical higher education that focus on preparing individuals for vocational ministry recognize the importance of equipping ministry.[45]

Biblical higher education that primarily focuses on preparing the next generation of church leaders for vocational ministry must recognize the value of mentorship in equipping students for service. Lanthripe states, "Experience cements learning. It adds to learning beyond reading about ministry or seeing someone else do ministry."[46] Mentorship challenges students to actively use the gifts of grace and apply the knowledge and wisdom attained within the higher learning environment.[47] The challenge is that many of these institutions of biblical higher education focus on equipping the student for ministry within the church and do not necessarily prepare and equip students to embrace the call of Ephesians 4:11-16 to make equipping ministry the locus of the student's call as a next-generation church leader.[48] Espinoza states, "We must

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[43] Lanthripe, "Implementing Biblical Principles For Mentoring Emerging Leaders," 220.

[44] Richard C. Barcellos, "The Christian Ministry In The Church: Its Reasons, Duration And Goal, And Practical Effects (Ephesians 4:11–16), With Special Emphasis On Verse 12," *Journal of the Institute of Reformed Baptist Studies* 3, no. 1 (2016), 35.

[45] Lose et al., "Equipping the Equippers," 387-408.

[46] Lanthripe, "Implementing Biblical Principles For Mentoring Emerging Leaders," 224.

[47] Ashford et al., *Christian Higher Education*, 136-137.

[48] Cook, "Leadership Development in a Higher Education Institution," 1.

teach our students to exercise practical theological methods in order to develop an effective ministry of equipping."[49] Emphasizing the value of mentorship, as seen in 2 Timothy 2:2, to prepare students for equipping ministry remains a resource within biblical higher education that has largely remained unexplored.

In *Equipping the Equippers: The Pedagogical and Programmatic Implications of The Christians' Callings in the World Project,* the authors identify the congregation as the primary location for this preparation and emphasis. "congregations are more like training grounds or way stations where people come for rest and renewal, certainly, but also for formative training in ways to connect the faith they profess on Sunday with their daily lives throughout the week."[50] The church, by design, undoubtedly is that place; however, many of these students are entering churches as subject matter experts where there is an expectation to fulfill all of the ministries of the church. As a result, the institution of biblical higher education serves as an intermediary if the possibility of mentorship-equipping ministries is actualized.[51] The institutions of biblical higher education must recognize their role in equipping students to serve in churches where they are seen as leaders.

Theological Foundations

Followers of Christ have a unique relationship with the Word of God. "His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence" (2 Pet 1:3, English Standard Version). Scripture contains the necessary foundational truths that promote Christlikeness. This unique relationship

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[49] Benjamin D. Espinoza, "Between Text and Context: Practical Theology and the Ministry of Equipping," *Christian Education Journal* 14, no. 2 (Fall 2017): 391–404., abstract.

[50] Lose et al., "Equipping the Equippers.", 387-408.

[51] Ibid.

with Scripture should inform the theological and practical areas of a follower of Christ's life in every way. Mentorship and discipleship are facets of the Christian life, and to be appropriately applied, they must be understood from a biblical footing.

Mentorship in the Old Testament

Many relationships within the Old Testament are case studies in mentorship. A large number of these examples are what not to do in mentorship or failures to mentor. For example, the books of 1 and 2 Kings and 1 and 2 Chronicles contain mentorship failures. "Of the eighteen Israelite kings who follow Jeroboam I, fifteen of them are said to have walked in the way/sins of Jeroboam or refused to depart from the way/sins of Jeroboam (the three exceptions are Elah, Shallum [both have very brief reigns], and Hoshea, the last king of Israel.)."[52] The kings of the northern kingdom of Israel followed the example of those before them. Whether the mentorship was intentional or each successive king imitated the life of the one before them.

Similarly, Scripture records the failures of mentorship within the southern kingdom. Within the southern kingdom of Judah, the monarchy is handed down through generational lineage. Fathers are exhorted in the Pentateuch to raise diligently and teach their children the commandments of God (Deut 6:4-9). There is then a direct implication that the kings should instruct and prepare or mentor those who will one day lead the kingdom. The biblical record shows that sons followed in the ways of their fathers, often to the detriment of themselves and Judah. However, in a few instances, a king who was determined to be different would come along. For example, Hezekiah is known for positive reforms to the kingdom. "Hezekiah begins with some sweeping, religious reforms in his nation (18:4–6, ESV). One of these reforms

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[52] Victor P. Hamilton, *Handbook on the Historical Books: Joshua, Judges, Ruth, Samuel, Kings, Chronicles, Ezra-Nehemiah, Esther*, Illustrated edition (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2008), 420.

involves Hezekiah having the 'high places' removed, that is, torn down. But his son and successor, Manasseh, rebuilds them (21:3)."[53] In a way, Hezekiah failed to mentor Manasseh. While there are more examples of poor or lacking mentorship in the Old Testament, a few mentor relationships were successful.

One of the successful mentor relationships within the Old Testament is that of Moses and Joshua. Joshua is first mentioned in Exodus 17.[54] "So Moses said to Joshua, "Choose for us men, and go out and fight with Amalek. Tomorrow I will stand on the top of the hill with the staff of God in my hand.' So Joshua did as Moses told him, and fought with Amalek, while Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill" (Exod 17:9-10, ESV).

This event begins the relationship where Moses mentors Joshua to lead Israel. Moses brought Joshua along with him up the mountain to receive the Ten Commandments (Exod 24:13). "Joshua is four times (here; 33:11; Num 11:28; Josh 1:1) mentioned in the OT as the 'assistant' or 'minister' to Moses, and the narrative of 32:17-18 makes it plain that we are to assume that he alone accompanied Moses during at least some of the additional climb up Sinai."[55]

Though silent through the Pentateuch, Joshua consistently walked alongside Moses, witnessing both Moses and the unique relationship that Moses had with God. Joshua guarded the tent while the Lord spoke with Moses (Exod 33:11). "It appears that Joshua is the one who will one day complete the work that his predecessor started but was not permitted by God to finish.

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[53] Hamilton, *Handbook on the Historical Books*, 457.

[54] John F. Walvoord and Roy B. Zuck, eds., *The Bible Knowledge Commentary*, 1st Edition (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 135.

[55] John I. Durham, *Word Biblical Commentary Vol. 3, Exodus*, vol. 3, 61 vols. (Waco, TX: Thomas Nelson Inc, 1987), 346.

Accordingly, for many years Joshua will serve as an underling to Moses, being prepared for that moment when he will inherit his predecessor's mantle."[56]

It may be significant, in partially explaining some of the early turbulence of the post-Joshua Judges period, that Joshua, for one reason or another, never developed a mentoring relationship with a subordinate, as Moses had done with him. God commands Moses to mentor Joshua, "But charge Joshua, and encourage and strengthen him, for he shall go over at the head of this people, and he shall put them in possession of the land that you shall see" (Deut 3:28, ESV).

The task of mentorship was placed in the hands of Moses,

> Joshua had already been appointed to succeed Moses as covenant mediator and theocratic administrator (cf. 1:38), so the command here to 'commission' (lit., 'to command') Joshua was merely a reaffirmation of his new role. Moses would see the land, but his younger colleague and protégé would enjoy the inestimable privilege of entering it and bringing it under the sovereign sway of the Lord and his people.[57]

Joshua, under Moses, was being equipped to lead the people of Israel.

Similar to the interaction between Paul and Timothy at the end of Paul's life, Moses mentored and prepared Joshua and handed down the task of leading. "And Joshua the son of Nun was full of the spirit of wisdom, for Moses had laid his hands on him. So the people of Israel obeyed him and did as the LORD had commanded Moses" (Deut 34:9, ESV). Moses handed off the leadership of the people, and with it, Joshua received the strength to lead through the grace of God. This mentorship relationship broke down because "For one reason or another, [Joshua] never developed a mentoring relationship with a subordinate, as Moses had done with him."[58]

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[56] Hamilton, *Handbook on the Historical Books*, 15.

[57] Eugene Merrill, *Deuteronomy: New American Commentary*, vol. 4, 45 vols. (Brentwood, TN: Broadman & Holman, 1994), 112.

[58] Hamilton, *Handbook on the Historical Books*, 15.

Throughout the Old Testament, there are glimpses into relationships that prepare and empower the next generation of leaders. Moses and Joshua are certainly one of the clearest examples of the biblical precedence for mentorship in the Old Testament. The value of passing down the essential tenets of faith and the practical application of these beliefs benefits both mentor and mentee. The benefits go beyond the mentor relationship and affect a nation. The Old Testament examples of mentorship reveal a direct influence on the leadership of a people.

<div align="center">Mentorship in the Gospels</div>

During the earthly ministry of Jesus, there are glimpses into unique mentorship relationships. For example, Jesus and the twelve disciples spent three years in a mentor relationship. While Jesus was fulfilling the will of the Father, there was time spent training, equipping, and preparing the Twelve for a life of ministry. Scripture reveals the unique relationship between mentorship and discipleship within the life of Christ and His disciples.

In the Gospel of Mark, there is a clear calling and purpose for the disciples. Jesus chose His disciples, "And he appointed twelve (whom he also named apostles) so that they might be with him and he might send them out to preach and have authority to cast out demons" (Mark 3:13, ESV). "Indeed, they are to fulfil these functions only because they are 'sent out' by Jesus for this purpose. But they will not actually undertake these tasks until 6:7. Until then, they need to be prepared for them…in that, their personal involvement with and training by the master is the essential prerequisite for the active ministry which follows."[59] Jesus prepared the disciples through the calling. For the disciples, this was a period of mentorship, preparing the mentees to become mentors.

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[59] R. T. France, *The Gospel of Mark: The New International Greek Testament Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Carlisle: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2002), 159.

Jesus encouraged His disciples to serve alongside Him. In the Gospel of John, Jesus provided for the people's needs but included the disciples in serving to meet the needs (John 6:1-13, ESV). Jesus met the physical needs of the people, but "Jesus was primarily instructing the Twelve concerning the nature of the ministry for which they were being prepared. They would face multitudes who were shepherdless sheep and starved spiritually. It would be their responsibility to give them something to eat."[60] The Master Teacher was preparing His disciples for the ministry through equipping mentorship.

The equipping of the disciples includes lessons in service. In John 13, Jesus showed His disciples what it was to be a true disciple. Just before His arrest, crucifixion, and resurrection, Jesus shared a tender moment with His disciples that revealed the importance of service. "Unless Peter would accept this ministry from the Servant, He would have no fellowship with Him. Christ was not saying that Peter would have no relationship to Him, but He was saying that Peter could not experience fellowship with Him until he was willing to accept this ministry."[61] Jesus mentored and prepared His disciples to understand the necessity of and receive the ministry of service.

Jesus mentored His disciples for a purpose. He knew that His direct mentorship would not be able to continue. Therefore, Jesus prepared the disciples to follow in His footsteps. The Great Commission reveals the goals of Christ's mentorship (Matt 28:18-20; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:46-49; John 20:21; Acts 1:8). Jesus has all authority in heaven and earth, and with that authority, He commissions the disciples, "Teaching obedience to all of Jesus' commands forms the heart of disciple making…If new converts are not faithfully lovingly nurtured in the whole

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[60] J. Dwight Pentecost, *The Words and Works of Jesus Christ: A Study of the Life of Christ* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2000), 233.

[61] Ibid., 429.

counsel of God's revelation, then the church has disobeyed the other part."[62] In His last moments with the disciples, Jesus revealed His deepest desires. He commanded that the disciples imitate Him. Jesus had equipped and prepared the disciples for this moment to move from observer to imitator. Christ gave them the model for effective mentorship and, in His last moments with them in physical presence, called the disciples to imitate or mimic Christ's example.

Mentorship in the Epistles

Repeatedly throughout the Epistles, there is a call to imitate. For example, in 1 Corinthians 4:14-17 Paul writes to the Corinthian believers about guides in the faith, but even more than a guide, Paul served the believers in Corinth as a spiritual father. "Paul was the spiritual father of the Corinthians who led them to Christ through the gospel. Hence he can urge them to imitate—to copy or mimic—him. They would imitate him to the extent that he imitates Christ (11:1; 1 Thess 1:6). To assure that this kind of discipleship occurs, he sent Timothy to them."[63]

Paul sending Timothy to encourage the believers in this text reveals the mentor relationship. Relationships, particularly mentor relationships, are an essential nature of growth in Christ. Paul exhorts the Corinthians, Philippians, and Thessalonians to imitate him as he imitates Christ (1 Cor 11:1; Phil 3:17, 4:9; 1 Thess 1:6; 2 Thess 3:7-9). "One way a believer can live expectantly and purposefully is to emulate other mature Christians. Paul urges the Philippians to follow his example and the example of other mature believers."[64] Paul encouraged Titus to encourage the church to mentor one another and to be an example to imitate. Specifically, Paul

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[62] Craig L. Blomberg, *Matthew: An Exegetical and Theological Exposition of Holy Scripture*, vol. 22, 45 vols. (Nashville, TN: Holman Reference, 1992), 433.

[63] J. B. Bond et al., *The Grace New Testament Commentary*, 1st edition, vol. 1 & 2, 2 vols. (Denton, TX: Grace Evangelical Society, 2010), 724.

[64] Ibid., 905

encouraged older women to mentor younger women (Titus 2:4-5). "Propriety will keep a young minister from becoming too specific and personal in his dealings with young women. Christian women who are older are admirably suited for this task."[65]

This concept is not limited to the Pauline Epistles. For example, Christ exhorts Peter to feed His sheep (John 21:17). Peter's first letter exhorts the elders to shepherd the flock (1 Pet 5:1-2). "Shepherding is to be done by the overseers, elsewhere translated as 'bishops.' They are responsible for oversight or supervision and are to be involved in guiding the lives of those under them."[66] Peter is exhorting the audience to imitate this process as a fellow elder. The relationship shared with Christ is an encouragement to imitate Christ as the Good Shepherd. The writer of Hebrews exhorted believers to encourage one another and not to forsake the importance of gathering for this purpose (Heb 10:24-25). "The purpose of this mutual concern is not negative, looking out for failings to criticize, but rather to 'spur one another on toward love and good deeds.' And to 'encourage one another in the recognition that all are fallible and that therefore each needs the support of the rest."[67] There is a deep need for relationship within the body of Christ. While broadly, this happens in the greater gathering on Sunday morning. Scripture exhorts Christians to be the church all week. Mentor and mentee relationships are augmentative to Christlikeness.

Biblical Foundations for Equipping Mentorship

The Pauline Epistles contain the principles and foundations of equipping mentorship. Most specifically, The Letters to Timothy and Titus reveal the impetus of mentorship. These

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[65] Kent, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 222.

[66] Bond et al., *The Grace New Testament Commentary*, 1167.

[67] Tremper Longman III, and David E.Garland, eds., *The Expositor's Bible Commentary Revised Edition: Hebrews-Revelation*, vol. 12, 13 vols. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2006), 137.

letters were devoted to equipping and empowering Timothy and Titus to oversee and encourage the churches of Ephesus and Crete.[68] Because of the simple reality that there are two letters written to Timothy, the theme of mentorship is more prevalent in these letters. First, Paul describes Timothy as a child of the faith, "To Timothy, my true child in the faith" (1 Tim 1:2, ESV). It is from this unique and intentional relationship that Paul sought to prepare and equip Timothy as a leader of the church.

The first and second Letters to Timothy underscore the importance of mentorship. However, chapter two of 2 Timothy contains the most explicit principles for equipping mentorship. "You then, my child, be strengthened by the grace that is in Christ Jesus, and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also" (2 Tim 2:1-2, ESV).

Paul begins chapter two of 2 Timothy with another recognition of Paul's filial relationship with Timothy. Paul addresses Timothy as a child, "Denotes a relationship of nature… 'My child' shows that Timothy's nature was the result of his relationship to Paul…One of the necessities of childhood is parental guidance."[69] The instructions of Paul are grounded in a loving relationship of a spiritual father to a spiritual son. Paul commands Timothy to "Be Strong," a character trait that is impossible apart from God. "Timothy should continually rely on God's gracious enablement in performing his ministry (cf. 2 Cor 9:8; Titus 2:11–14)."[70] The first verse of 2 Timothy 2 emphasizes the importance of relationships. The reader can see the importance of the mentorship relationship through the care with which Paul addresses Timothy. It is also apparent

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[68] Andreas Köstenberger, *1-2 Timothy and Titus: Evangelical Biblical Theology Commentary* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2021), 1.

[69] Kent A. Homer, Jr., *The Pastoral Epistles: Studies in 1, 2 Timothy and Titus*, Revised ed. edition (Winona Lake, IN: BMH Books, 1995), 259.

[70] Köstenberger, *1-2 Timothy and Titus*, 228.

that faithfulness, the ability to be strong in ministry, is only made possible through the relationship Timothy has with God through Jesus Christ.

Up to this point, Paul has instructed and encouraged Timothy, his young disciple. Paul has equipped and empowered Timothy to serve Christ and the church. In this second letter to Timothy, Paul's last letter, there is a preparation to go and continue what has been heard and seen. Paul is passing down the ministry to Timothy, and in 2 Timothy 2:1, Paul clearly instructs Timothy where the strength to do ministry is derived. "The quarry from which Timothy was to mine such strength was God's grace made available in Christ Jesus."[71] For Timothy, grace is the means of strength and the realm in which he experiences strength.[72] In affirming these realities in Timothy's life, Paul moves to instruction in verse two.

Paul begins with "What you have heard from me," highlighting the importance of the gospel of grace proclaimed by Paul. "The aorist form 'hear' (ēkousas) may be understood as contrastive, gathering into one all that Timothy had heard from Paul during many years of association."[73] Timothy is to take all the instructions and pass them to entrusted faithful followers. In many ways, Paul's instruction to Timothy is an invitation to continue the Great Commission given by Christ before the ascension. Paul is making it clear to Timothy that what he has heard from Paul is not to remain in possession of Timothy.

The "Plural ταύτα emphasizes that Paul wants all that he has taught to be passed on. Παράθου is the second aorist middle imperative of παρατίθημι, which is used in the NT in the middle, meaning 'entrust'… Timothy is to 'entrust' these things for 'safe keeping' and for

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[71] Thomas Lea and Hayne P. Griffin, *1, 2 Timothy, Titus: An Exegetical and Theological Exposition of Holy Scripture*, First Edition (Nashville, TN: Holman Reference, 1992), 200.

[72] Lea and Griffin, *1, 2 Timothy, Titus*, 201.

[73] Homer, Jr. *The Pastoral Epistles*, 259.

'transmission to others.'[74] The purpose of the mentorship that Paul shared with Timothy was instructive. Paul is now commissioning Timothy to go and imitate the process (1 Cor 11:1). Timothy is called to entrust the truths of the gospel and essential doctrines to others who are faithful and to equip and encourage the faithful to teach the things Paul handed down. "The aging apostle seeks to impart to his foremost disciple the same mentoring mind-set (cf. 1 Tim 4:12) that drove him during his ministry (e.g., 1 Cor 11:1) …Four generations are mentioned: Paul, Timothy, faithful individuals, and others."[75] In this Bible verse, there are four generations of disciples mentioned, and each generation is encouraged to continue in equipping mentorship.

Second Timothy 2:2 serves as a foundation for equipping mentorship. The principles of teaching, preparing, and equipping faithful people to go and imitate the process are essential to the Alaska Bible College's mentorship program. The desire to see multi-generational mentorship, as described in Second Timothy, is at the heart of this project.

<center>Biblical Foundations for Equipping</center>

In the letter to the Ephesians, Paul describes specific gifted individuals whom God has called to equip the church (Eph 4:11-16). This passage is "One long sentence in Greek, in which two subjects are treated: the ministry that takes place in the body and the maturity this ministry is to achieve."[76] Central to the equipping of the body is unity within the body. Unity implies a relationship with Christ and His bride, "Unity thus becomes an essential objective for Christians to implement in their relationships with one another in the church."[77] The implication is that

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[74] George W. III Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles,* The New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1992), 391.

[75] Tremper Longman III, and David E. Garland, eds., *The Expositor's Bible Commentary Revised Edition: Ephesians-Philemon*, vol. 12, 13 vols. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2006), 574.

[76] Snodgrass, *The NIV Application Commentary: Ephesians*, 202.

[77] Longman and Garland, *The Expositor's Bible Commentary Revised Edition: Ephesians-Philemon*, 41.

relationships intentioned toward unity are essential to a local body's equipping and proper function. The equipping passage within Ephesians is often understood to apply to the local church. These individuals gifted by grace are given to equip the church for service. While Bible colleges and seminaries are not local churches, they are comprised of members of the universal church. The intended goal of these institutions of higher learning is to prepare, equip, and empower students for service to the bride of Christ. Understanding the shared goal, then biblical equipping, as described in Ephesians chapter four, should be a primary purpose of biblical higher education.

Theoretical Foundations

This research project seeks to modify the existing CMT program to better mentor and prepare the students at Alaska Bible College for equipping ministry within the local church and parachurch context. The primary theory is that in participating in equipping mentorship during the four to five years that students attend college, the students will embrace and implement equipping mentorship. First, students will understand the value of mentorship because they experienced it as a mentee. Second, Students will appreciate the mentor relationship because they participated in mentoring underclassmen. Moreover, students will continue the emphasis on mentorship as they carry it into their respective ministries and begin the multi-generation model of mentorship seen in 2 Timothy 2:2.

Mentorship in Secular Organizations

Within higher education, mentorship programs have gained popularity. The goal and outcome of these programs vary based on the size and degree program focus of the college or

university. "Mentoring is an increasingly popular strategy in undergraduate education with research supporting the positive influence of peer and/or faculty mentoring on students' college transition, persistence, and academic performance."[78] Biblical higher education differs from secular college counterparts in that spiritual growth is foundational to the mentorship program.[79] Historically, Bible colleges and seminaries grew out of a need to prepare and equip the next generation of church leaders.

Bible colleges and seminaries primarily focus on preparing students theologically to foment a biblical worldview and to prepare them to apply the knowledge attained practically. The expectation is that the church would equip the individual for the ministry in a practical way.[80] Todd C. Ream, Professor of Higher Education at Taylor University, "explores traditionally theological approaches to the practice of mentoring to consider how far they might be applied effectively to support young people in Christian, as well as other secular institutions in higher education."[81] There is a recognition of the importance of mentorship in higher education, but the evaluation and implementation of mentorship programs are primarily theoretical.

Many schools recognize the value of mentorship programs as a co-curricular arm of the institution in preparing students. Some of these programs focus on the individuals as students and explore how to promote success academically. For example, locally in Alaska, the University of Fairbanks has implemented a mentorship program for first-generation students,

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[78] Priest and Donley, "Developing Leadership for Life: Outcomes from a Collegiate Student-Alumni Mentoring Program," 108.

[79] White, "The Student Lived Experience of Mentoring as It Relates to Spiritual Formation in an Ethnically Diverse Christian College Environment," 114.

[80] Sproles, "Equipping Churches to Disciple College Students at the Baptist Collegiate Ministry in Tallahassee, Florida," 27.

[81] Todd C. Ream, *Cultivating Mentors: Sharing Wisdom in Christian Higher Education*, ed. Todd C. Ream, Jerry Pattengale, and Christopher J. Devers (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2022), 3.

"The First-Gen Mentorship Program offers first-generation students an opportunity to connect with faculty, staff, and alumni across the university who can support them in their endeavors. First-gen college students are those whose parents or guardians have not completed a four-year degree."[82] In addition, some schools have implemented mentorship degrees or programs that seek to train individuals to become mentors. The University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV) offers a graduate certificate in mentorship,

> The Graduate Mentorship Certification (GMC) is a year-long professional development program that provides students with the skills necessary to effectively be mentored and serve as a mentor in higher education settings. Students will strengthen their mentorship skills by attending workshops, completing a portfolio, serving as a mentor throughout the program, and more.[83]

UNLV's mentorship certificate serves to prepare mentors for undergraduate mentees in a secular setting. These programs primarily focus on the mentee's success in the given environment. The goal is academic success and preparation for entrance into the workforce for the mentored students.

These programs are common and vary drastically in the desired goal. For example, in 2020, Google started Google for Startups Founders Academy. Google designed the program to help "Black, Latinx, and veteran-led tech startups based in the US."[84] This program implements the use of mentors to help tech startup companies succeed.

> The Google for Startups Founders Academy is a four-month, equity-free virtual program for pre-seed / seed stage startups across the US that is designed to help founders grow their revenues and obtain access to capital. Selected founders will participate in a series

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[82] "Mentorship Program for First-Generation Students," accessed March 3, 2023, https://uaf.edu/news/mentorship-program-for-first-generation-students.php

[83] "Graduate Mentorship Certification," University of Nevada, Las Vegas, April 8, 2016, https://www.unlv.edu/graduatecollege/gcmc.

[84] "Founders Academy: United States - Google for Startups" n.d.

of cohort-based workshops and receive customized hands-on support across a wide range of topics, including sales, product, strategy, and fundraising.[85]

This program and similar programs recognize the value of mentorship in the business world as it seeks to propel individuals toward success and the realization of stated goals.

Mentorship programs like these exist in the academic world as well. Increasingly, institutions of higher learning have begun to implement faculty mentorship programs. Arizona State University (ASU) is one such institution.

> Mentoring is associated with a wide range of positive outcomes designed to improve the academic adjustment of new faculty and support the retention and career development of all university faculty. Arizona State University clearly recognizes the importance of mentoring our faculty and holds all faculty accountable across every level of service.[86]

ASU designed the faculty mentoring program to help junior faculty succeed in the academic environment. The junior faculty mentee "Provides a roadmap of the areas they are interested in developing. Mentor provides input on best practices to approach these goals providing expected timelines and regular feedback to adjust goals as needed."[87] These secular institutions and corporations recognize the value of directed mentorship in helping individuals succeed within the organization. Likewise, these secular organizations recognize the value of mentorship. However, the full benefits of mentorship are unrealized apart from a relationship with Christ.

Mentorship Programs in Biblical Higher Education

Mentorship programs in biblical higher education are quite different from their secular counterparts. Biblical mentorship focus goes beyond the individual's success in career or financial terms; instead, the goal is spiritual maturation. While the programs vary from

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[85] "Founders Academy: United States - Google for Startups," accessed March 10, 2023, https://startup.google.com/programs/founders-academy/.

[86] Donna Cataldo, "Faculty Mentoring: Best Practices and Recommendations for Structured Mentor Mentee Program," 12.

[87] Ibid., 5.

institution to institution, the intended goal is for the mentee to become more like Christ. The following examples of mentorship programs reveal these methodological variations and the emphasis within each program.

Azusa Pacific University (APU) has developed a discipleship mentorship program for its undergraduate students. APU matches students with a mentor from a pool comprising "Faculty, staff, spouses of APU employees, seminary students, peers, and members of local churches who have been through an extensive application and equipping process."[88] The discipleship mentorship program at APU was born out of two separate discipleship programs. The first program was started in 1980 by Gladys Wilson. The program focused on discipleship mentorship for women. In 2007, a discipleship mentorship program was started for the male students of APU. APU combined the programs to make up the current discipleship mentorship program currently in use at APU.[89]

The process for becoming a discipleship mentor involves application and training. The requirements for APU faculty and Staff are not available to external parties. However, the requirements for non-employee mentors are available to the public in PDF. Non-employee mentors must be twenty-one years of age or older, have no criminal record, regularly attend a local church, display Christian character in all areas of life, and be familiar with and supportive of APU.[90] After application, the Spiritual Mentorship Program Director interviews the potential mentors and mentor applicants are required to sign an APU statement of faith and a spiritual mentoring covenant.[91] In addition, APU spouse mentors cannot mentor students of their spouses.

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[88] "Spiritual Life: Discipleship Mentoring," accessed March 10, 2023, https://www.apu.edu/spiritual-life/service-discipleship/mentoring/.

[89] Ibid.

[90] Ibid.

[91] Ibid.

In addition to non-employee mentors, APU allows for peer mentors. Peer mentors are required to be upperclassmen with at least sixty credits completed. Upperclassman mentors are paired with an underclassman mentor and regularly participate in Bible study, meaningful conversation, and prayer.[92]

APU's discipleship mentorship program focuses on the spiritual development of the mentee. "The goal of these mentorship relationships is spiritual growth, discipleship, and nurturing of undergraduate students. We ask that your time with your student be centered on their spiritual formation."[93] APU expects mentors and mentees to meet weekly for a minimum of an hour on campus. The mentors are discouraged from meeting with their mentees off campus unless it is a small group gathering.[94] The mentoring time should focus on Bible study, prayer, and conversations about faith. The mentors are strongly encouraged to keep the goal of discipleship mentoring at the forefront of the mentor meetings.

The discipleship mentorship program is optional for resident students. Of the reported 10,000 students enrolled, an average of 350 students participated in the discipleship mentorship program at APU.[95] Even with the 0.35% enrollment rate in the discipleship mentoring program, APU cites the lack of available mentors as a challenge to the discipleship mentoring program, "about 50 students who signed up for mentoring but were not matched, due to a shortage of mentors."[96]

APU recognizes the value of mentorship, "Mentoring relationships with persons of mature faith were among the experiences in college that led to the greatest spiritual growth for

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[92] "Spiritual Life: Discipleship Mentoring" n.d.

[93] Ibid.

[94] Ibid.

[95] Ibid.

[96] Ibid.

students, while a lack of mentors was associated with less spiritual growth."[97] APU realizes the challenges of a more prominent university implementing a comprehensive mentoring program. However, the lack of available mentors and the optional nature of the discipleship program limit the ability to mentor the undergraduate students of APU.

Azusa Pacific University realizes the benefits of mentorship within biblical higher education. However, as with many institutions of higher learning, recognizing the immense value of mentorship and practically applying the mentorship in a comprehensive way proves to be challenging. For example, APU's discipleship mentoring program focuses on spiritual growth or Christlikeness. Nevertheless, within the program, no clear emphasis is placed on equipping students to imitate discipleship mentorship and equipping others to do the same.

Dallas Theological Seminary (DTS) maintains a ministry mentorship program. DTS students are to identify an onsite ministry mentor during their internship. "Mentoring is a partnership, where the mentor takes on the responsibility of cooperating with the student in the pursuit of ministerial skills, in the development of a ministerial identity, and in bringing book knowledge into dialogue with the life of the community."[98] This mentorship seeks to place a DTS student in a ministry where mentoring occurs between individuals who serve within or run the ministry and DTS students.

Summit Christian College (SCC) has a program called Mentored Ministry, where students team up with a mentor from a local congregation.[99] SCC students enrolled in a degree or program are required to participate in mentored ministry throughout their enrolment.[100]

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[97] "Spiritual Life: Discipleship Mentoring" n.d.

[98] "Ministry Mentor Qualifications - Dallas Theological Seminary," accessed March 3, 2023, https://www.dts.edu/academics/academic-departments/ministry-formation/ministry-mentor-qualifications/.

[99] "Summit Christian College | Mentored Ministry," summitcc, accessed March 3, 2023, https://www.summitcc.edu/mentored-ministry.

> Mentored Ministry is a practical ministry program for students that complements the academic program in the classroom. It provides students with a hands-on, active learning experience that integrates academic exercise with practical ministry in an observable and evaluative environment.[101]

The Mentored Ministry program at SCC has two components. The Christian involvement is a pass-or-fail course, and the Mentored Ministry courses receive a grade. SCC designed the Mentored Ministry program to develop students and encourage service in a local church, "The student should be prepared to increase their teaching responsibilities."[102] SCC's stated goals for the Mentored Ministry program are:

> 1. Comprehend the mission of Christ's church and understand how various ministries in the church work together to fulfill the mission.

> 2. Grasp how various ministries meet the emotional, physical, and spiritual needs of those who are being served.

> 3. Identify a personal passion for an area of ministry which the student would further pursue either vocationally or non-vocationally.

> 4. Gain practical skills for faithfully executing specific ministries.

> 5. Mature emotionally and spiritually through ministering in Christ's church.[103]

SCC's mentored ministry program places the role of mentorship on the ministry leaders within local churches. Students are encouraged to try different ministries and mentors during their time in the program.[104] SCC's mentored ministry program and programs like it highlight mentorship and service.

Many of the mentorship programs within biblical higher education utilize external mentors. These mentors serve alongside the student within a designated church or ministry.

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[100] Summit Christian College, "General College Information," 5.

[101] Ibid., 4.

[102] Ibid., 6.

[103] Ibid., 4.

[104] Ibid., 6.

These programs' development came from the recognition that biblical higher education should encompass both orthodoxy and orthopraxy. The institution of biblical higher education has long served students by preparing them in orthodoxy. As a result, many Bible college and seminary students were not exposed to and, therefore, were underprepared for ministry. These external mentorship programs that promote service in the church or ministry seek to prepare students practically. The presence of these mentor programs within institutions of higher education reveals the value of mentorship and development in Christlikeness.

There is, however, a lack of current academic writing evaluating current mentor programs. The value and implementation of mentorship are apparent throughout higher education. The purpose and goal of these mentor programs vary drastically from institution to institution. The level of participation varies from required to voluntary, and the involvement of faculty, staff, and students serving as mentors varies. For example, the discipleship mentoring of Azusa Pacific University is markedly different from Summit Christians College's mentored ministry. The theoretical foundations of this project elaborate on the uniqueness of equipping mentorship within an institution of biblical higher education, as proposed in this project.

Conclusion

Within this chapter, the value of mentorship across disciplines is apparent. Secular schools and businesses implement mentorship programs to increase productivity and promote success. Mentoring in biblical higher education takes secular mentoring to the next level as it seeks to develop the person through spiritual growth and service. The value of mentoring has resulted in the implementation of mentor programs in some institutions of biblical higher education. However, there needs to be more clarity between the seen value and the organized implementation of mentorship programs to prepare students for a life of equipping ministry.

Most mentorship programs in biblical higher education focus on the immediate context, where the desired outcome is a student's success or personal growth while in an academic program. The external mentorship within churches and ministries primarily focuses on equipping Bible college and seminary students to serve within the church. While these programs are beneficial, they continue an established pattern within many American churches.

Many of these churches view the Bible college and Seminary students as ministers trained and equipped to serve the congregations. As a result, churches are more than willing to receive Bible college or seminary-trained ministers who will do the work of ministry for the saints. Mentorship focused on multi-generational equipping is a paradigm shift. Mentoring students to mentor and equip others as the primary focus of their ministry is founded in the biblical text and will only increase the effectiveness of the body of Christ to fulfill the commands and commission of Christ.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

Upon IRB and ABC institutional leadership approval of this research project, the

researcher began the implementation of the proposed changes to the CMT mentorship program.

The changes include implementing a multi-generational mentorship program modeled after 2

Timothy 2:2, "and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to

faithful men, who will be able to teach others also" (ESV). Over their time at ABC, students are

equipped to begin mentoring alongside their faculty and staff mentors.

Upon receipt of consent from all participants, individuals were paired for mentorship.

The faculty and staff mentored upperclassmen. Identified upperclassmen mentored

underclassmen. During the study period, mentors will participate in four mentor development

classes, the first of which will occur before upperclassmen are assigned mentees. The following

groups, upon consent, will participate in the research: faculty and staff of ABC, students of ABC,

and recent graduates of ABC (2017-2022). The research will be conducted through surveys,

interviews, and focus groups. All participants will participate in surveys and interviews. The

faculty, staff, and students will participate in focus groups that will give ongoing feedback during

the study.

Intervention Design

Once the researcher has received IRB approval and institutional permission to conduct

the research project, the formal presentation of the project will occur in a special meeting in the

chapel at ABC. The purpose of the special chapel will be to inform the faculty, staff, and

students of the research project and how the proposed changes will affect the CMT mentorship program. The presentation will consist of an informative slide presentation along with a packet containing details of the proposed changes and a consent form. After the presentation, all in attendance will be asked to consider participating in the research and confirm this decision by signing the consent form. Individuals unable to attend the presentation will be able to watch a presentation recording and be allowed to sign the consent form. The research project will be conducted over an eight-week period from IRB approval to completion.

The research project participants will consist of faculty, staff, current students, and alumni from the graduating years of 2017-2022. This participant pool will allow data to be collected from long-time faculty and staff mentors, newly assigned student mentors, student mentees, and graduates whose experience is limited to the CMT program before implementing proposed changes. Faculty, staff, and current students will actively participate in the research, while alumni will give insight into the CMT program before implementing change.

All surveys, interviews, and focus group notes will be recorded anonymously. All data will be maintained on a password-protected computer only accessible to the researcher. Anonymity cannot be guaranteed within the focus group meetings, but all notes and data derived from the focus groups will be recorded in the study anonymously. These measures will be taken to ensure that the study is both ethically administered and that the highest levels of integrity are maintained.

Table 1. Intervention Design Steps.

Intervention Design Steps	
Step 1	Permissions, Introduction, and Consents
Step 2	Alumni Survey
Step 3	Baseline Survey Active Participants
Step 4	Identifying Student Mentors

Step 5	Initial Mentor Training Class
Step 6	Pairing Mentor and Mentee
Step 7	Weekly Mentor Meetings
Step 8	Mentorship Training and Equipping Classes
Step 9	Focus Groups
Step 10	Interviews
Step 11	Exit Survey

Step 1 will present the research project and ask for volunteers to participate in the research. Upon consent, the research project participants will consist of faculty, staff, current students, and alumni from the graduating years of 2017-2022. This participant pool will allow data to be collected from long-time faculty and staff mentors, newly assigned student mentors, student mentees, and graduates whose experience is limited to the CMT program before the implementation of proposed changes. Faculty, staff, and current students will actively participate in the research, while alumni will give insight into the CMT program before implementing change.

Step 2 will include the collection of quantitative data through the alumni participant survey. Alumni will complete a one to seven-scale Likert survey (Appendix B). The purpose of this survey is to gather quantitative data regarding the CMT program before the implemented change. The survey will inform the understanding, focus, and purpose of mentorship within the CMT program from the alumni participants' perspective. Upon completion of the alumni survey, the research project will move to the baseline survey of active participants.

Step 3 will consist of a baseline survey for all active participants within the research project. The active participants consist of active faculty and staff and currently enrolled students who have consented to participation in the study. The baseline survey (Appendix C) is a one-to-seven-scale Likert survey evaluating the participants' understanding and conceptual framework of the pre-change CMT mentorship program. This survey will help the researcher quantitatively

evaluate the participant experience by comparing the baseline survey with the exit survey (Appendix F) described in Step 11.

Step 4 will identify upperclassmen mentors from within the active student participants. Student mentors must have been in a formal mentorship relationship with a faculty and staff member for at least two years. Potential student mentors must exhibit an understanding of the importance of mentorship as it relates to Christlikeness and will have exhibited growth under the previous two years of mentorship. Upperclassmen must understand that participation as a mentor is not compulsory and willingly consent to the task of mentorship.

Evaluation of potential student mentors will be accomplished by the researcher in collaboration with the upperclassman's faculty or staff mentor. The upperclassmen will be evaluated qualitatively through the examination of the student's growth and conduct during their time at ABC. The researcher, along with the upperclassman's faculty mentor, using 1 Timothy 3:8-13 as guidelines, will consider the readiness of the student to begin mentoring underclassmen.

The evaluation will consider the student's involvement in mentorship and commitment to the value of mentorship in promoting Christlikeness. The faculty and staff mentor also serves as the student's academic advisor, and the student's academic performance will be considered prior to the mentor assignment. The heart of the faculty and staff is to see students succeed and grow in Christlikeness. As such, the faculty and staff would not want to inhibit this process by overwhelming the student with an additional task. Readiness and willingness are both essential parts of upperclassmen mentor selection.

Step 5 is the initial mentor training class. This class will be a one-hour session for all faculty, staff, and student mentors. The class will give an overview of mentorship, answering the

questions: What is mentorship? What is the Goal of mentorship? The purpose of this is to define

mentorship and its goal according to the research project. The class will also consist of

recommended ways to connect and build relationships with mentees. The class will encourage

mentors to focus their mentor meetings on three areas of love to help students understand and

challenge them toward growth in how they relate to God, the church, and the lost.[1] The goal of

the mentorship is to challenge the mentee toward Christlikeness.

By emphasizing the three areas of love, mentors will challenge mentees to grow more

like Christ. Mentor meetings can vary in focus, whether they are encouraging the student in their

relationship with God (upward love), challenging the student in the practice of *koinonia* (inward

love), or how the student is engaging their culture with the gospel (outward love). The general

tone of the meetings should encourage the student to grow in all areas of love over the period of

study. The class will close with additional mentoring resources beyond the training class that are

available to faculty, staff, and student mentors.

Step 6 will pair mentors with their mentees. This process evaluates both mentor and

mentee to prayerfully encourage a deep connection that will push both mentor and mentee

toward Christlikeness. Generally, mentors and mentees will be paired based on three factors:

similar interests, personality type, and felt calling. The goal of these pairings is to encourage

holistic growth of mentee and mentor. The researcher must be sensitive to the Spirit of God and

use discernment in pairing mentor and mentee.

It is possible that what will challenge a student to holistic growth is not someone who is

similar but one who is quite different. The pairing process is not foolproof, but the mentor and

mentee are asked to trust the researcher in the pairings. The stated goal of the mentorship pairing

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[1] Dempsey and Earley, *Spiritual Formation Is...,* 99.

is to build a relationship that is centered on Christ and that pushes both mentee and mentor to become more like Christ. This step is a vital part of the success of the mentorship program and is a responsibility that the researcher does not take lightly.

Step 7 will require the mentor and mentee to meet weekly during the study. Weekly meetings will consist of a minimum of thirty minutes of contact time. Mentors are encouraged to prioritize in-person mentorship meetings.[2] Meetings can be held on campus in the provided consultation room or in faculty and staff offices. Mentors may meet with their students off campus at a café or coffee shop or take advantage of the outdoor opportunities in Alaska. Exceptions are illness, travel, and emergencies. Within the meetings, mentors are encouraged to implement skills and mentorship concepts learned in the initial mentor training class and other required mentor training classes described in Step 8.

As described in Step 5, mentor meetings will view mentorship and growth through the three areas of love: loving God, loving the church, and loving the lost. The mentor meetings encourage mentees to imitate the mentor, and the mentor imitates Christ (1 Cor 11:1). Mentors will be encouraged to challenge students to imitate the mentorship at ABC in the student's chosen ministry. Additionally, potential mentor meeting topics are included within the students' CMT class and are available online. This fifteen-week personal study covers characteristics of Christ that can be imitated by His followers.

Table 2. CMT Manual Potential Mentor Meeting Topics.

CMT Handbook Topics	
Week 1	Faithfulness (Faith-filledness) – Trusting the Lord in all things
Week 2	Self-Control (Temperance) – Denying self

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[2] Alaska Bible College does not currently offer any fully online degrees. Students are required to attend in person unless an approved exception is given. Synchronous Zoom meetings are offered for students who are unable to attend due to illness, missions, inclement weather, emergencies, or any pre-excused physical absence by the professor of record.

Week 3	Wisdom (Prudence) – Submitting to the Lord in all things
Week 4	Prayerfulness (Dependence) – Depending on the Lord for all things
Week 5	Truthfulness (Fortitude) – Standing up for what is right
Week 6	Hopefulness (Expectation) – Looking forward to the Lord's soon return
Week 7	Joy (Celebration) – Rejoicing in all things
Week 8	Peace (Contentedness) – Being content in whatever circumstance
Week 9	Patience (Longsuffering) – Persevering through difficulty
Week 10	Victory (Confidence) – Living in victory over sin and doubt
Week 11	Love (Charity) – Genuine affection and fondness of others
Week 12	Kindness (Mercy) – Tenderhearted kindness toward others
Week 13	Goodness (Graciousness) – Seeking the good of others
Week 14	Gentleness (Humility) – Thinking of yourself less (and others more)
Week 15	Justice (Righteousness) – Doing that which is right by all people

Step 8 provides the mentors with two additional mentor training courses that will be evenly spaced over the study duration. Topics for the mentor training classes will include discipleship, emotional intelligence, active listening, and personality types. The purpose of these additional training classes is to help mentors relate with and understand their mentees in a deeper, intimate way. While some of the faculty and staff have been mentoring for thirty years or more, the new student mentors largely have been experiencing mentorship as a mentee.

These classes aim not to create a program that must be followed within the mentor meetings but to help mentors connect with, challenge, exhort, encourage, admonish, love, and serve their mentees. The classes will also help mentors to identify their own strengths and areas of weakness. These classes are intended to create synergism between mentor and mentees and propel both individuals toward a deeper relationship with Christ and fuller obedience to His Commission and commands.

Step 9 will consist of two separate focus groups. The first focus group will be comprised of faculty, staff, and student mentors. The second focus group will be comprised of student mentees. These focus groups will help the researcher identify imposed personal biases and

evaluate the implementation of the proposed changes week by week. This step allows participants to give qualitative feedback on the program changes in real time.

Each focus group will have an identified leader from within the demographic. The group leader will facilitate discussion and ensure equal time for each participant to respond to the questions (Appendix D). Groups will meet every other week and will be provided with questions to guide discussion and feedback.[3] Each group will have an identified recorder. The recorder will be asked to keep a running document annotating the participant observations and responses to the questions provided.

Step 10 is composed of the interview portion of the study. There will be three variations of the interview (Appendix E). The first interview will focus on the experience of the faculty, staff, and student mentors. The second interview will focus on the experience of the student mentees. The third and final interview will focus on the experience of the alumni in the CMT mentorship program before the implemented changes. This qualitative portion of the study will give insight into the experience of the mentors and mentees as well as inform the study on the value of the changes in affecting the stated purpose and thesis.

Interviews will be scheduled with each participant and seek to accommodate the demands of a busy schedule for faculty, staff, and students. Interviews will be recorded on a password-protected device only accessible to the researcher. The interview transcripts will identify participants with an alphanumeric title to protect the anonymity of each participant. The goal is for participants to feel secure and open to honest qualitative analysis of their experience within the implemented change of the CMT program.

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

Mentee Interview Questions

Question 1: Imagine I have no concept of mentorship. In your own words, explain mentorship to me.

Question 2: What benefits, if any, do you personally see from mentorship?

Question 3: What has the main focus of your mentor meetings been?

Question 4: How, if at all, has mentoring affected your understanding of service?

Question 5: In what ways have you implemented these principles in other relationships?

Question 6: How has mentorship affected your understanding of equipping others for ministry?

Mentor Interview Questions

Question 1: Imagine I have no concept of mentorship. In your own words, explain mentorship to me.

Question 2: What benefits, if any, do you personally see from mentorship?

Question 3: What has the main focus of your mentor meetings been?

Question 4: How, if at all, have your mentor meetings encouraged mentees to serve in the local church or ministry?

Question 5: In what ways have you challenged mentees to mentor and equip others?

Question 6: To what extent, if at all, have your mentor meetings focused on the importance of mentorship as it relates to equipping?

Alumni Interview Questions

Question 1: Are you currently being regularly mentored by anyone?

Question 2: What was the greatest takeaway from mentorship at ABC?

Question 3: What was your greatest frustration about mentoring at ABC?

Question 4: What was the primary focus of your mentor meetings at ABC?

Question 5: Was equipping others ever emphasized in your mentor meetings at ABC?

Question 6: Are you currently mentoring anyone in your ministry for the purpose of equipping?

Question 7: Is mentorship valued and practiced in your ministry?

Step 11 will contain the closeout survey (Appendix F) for the study. The closeout survey will be a one to seven-scale Likert survey. This survey will provide quantitative data that will be compared to the baseline survey to analyze the value of the changes implemented during the study. Only active participants will be asked to complete the closeout survey. Active participants are those who were engaged in CMT mentorship during the study. The closeout survey will help identify areas of weakness in the implemented changes and guide adaptions to the mentorship portion of CMT into the future.

Implementation of the Intervention Design

The researcher submitted a request for permission to conduct the research at ABC. The request for permission was approved on 20 January 2023. The researcher received IRB approval on 8 February 2023. With the consent of ABC and the approval of the IRB, the research implementation began on 9 February 2023.

The process for data collection was methodological triangulation. The researcher used Likert-scale surveys, focus groups, and interviews to gather qualitative data.[4] Similar to the trilateration used in global positioning, where three satellites are used to measure distances

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[4] Tim Sensing, *Qualitative Research: A Multi-Methods Approach to Projects for Doctor of Ministry Theses* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2011), 74.

between a receiver and one of three satellites, triangulation of the data is used to pinpoint a location accurately.[5] Triangulated research seeks to analyze data from three different angles and compare and contrast the data collected from each angle to produce a well-rounded and complete research project.[6] The following description details the implementation of the intervention design.

The original time frame for the research to be conducted was eight weeks. The researcher faced numerous challenges with data collection and interview scheduling over the proposed eight-week period. To collect sufficient data and schedule interviews with faculty, staff, students, and alumni, the interviews and closeout surveys were extended by six weeks. While the researcher recognized the time constraint and the challenges of scheduling interviews with busy faculty, staff, and students who were focused on completing the semester, it was believed that all could be accomplished in the originally proposed eight weeks. This was an expectation of the researcher that was met with considerable challenge.

Many of the faculty teach multiple classes. The amount of regular semester work, along with preparation for commencement and end-of-year institutional assessment, left little margins for availability to conduct interviews. The students were equally busy with school, work, and ministry, and the researcher found it difficult to conduct all the interviews in the originally proposed research period. Alumni were the most difficult group to engage with. Many are in full-time ministry, and finding time to submit the consent form, complete the survey, and schedule the interview necessitated an extension of the research period.

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[5] GISGeography, "How GPS Receivers Work - Trilateration vs Triangulation," GIS Geography, April 12, 2018, https://gisgeography.com/trilateration-triangulation-gps/.

[6] Sensing, *Qualitative Research*, 72.

Week 1

Upon receiving IRB approval, the research began recruiting participants for the study. The initial recruitment session occurred the day after receiving IRB approval. Faculty, staff, and current students were gathered in ABC's chapel for the presentation of the proposed research project and the consent of the participants (Appendix A). Faculty, staff, and students who were unable to attend the presentation were contacted in person for recruitment. The recruitment presentation was made available to those who were unable to attend the initial chapel. Alumni received a personal email, the consent form, and the Alumni Survey (Appendix A). Faculty, staff, and students were encouraged to consider prayerfully participating in the research project.

All faculty, staff, and students who signed the consent form were then emailed the baseline survey (Appendix B). The baseline survey is a Likert-scaled survey with opportunities to comment after each question. There were twenty-eight total participants in the study: twenty-two were a combination of faculty, staff, and current students, and six were alumni. The twenty-two individuals comprised of the faculty, staff, and students currently participating in the mentorship program. All participants signed the consent form, and only eleven completed the baseline survey. Data collected in the baseline survey was anonymously collected and securely stored on a password-protected drive on the researcher's computer. With the anonymity of the survey, there is no way for the researcher to identify which participants did not complete the survey. Participants were encouraged over the first two weeks to complete the survey, and one participant requested the survey be resent to complete the form.

Alumni from the graduating years of 2017-2022 were contacted during week one, with no response till week fourteen. The data on the surveys are collected anonymously and stored on a password-protected drive. The researcher overlooked continuing to reach out to the Alumni after

initial contact was attempted until the end of the study. The primary focus of the researcher was on collecting data from current faculty, staff, and students. Six alumni participated in the alumni survey and interviews. The alumni's contribution to the research project is based on past experience while at ABC. Therefore, receiving Alumni data at the end of the study did not affect the implementation of the research.

Once the consent of the participants was received and the baseline survey was sent out, the researcher began identifying potential student mentors for the purposes of the study. Four candidates were identified. Student mentor candidates were selected based on mentor recommendation, upperclassman status, and observed leadership on campus. Each of the four candidates served or was currently serving on the student government. Not only did this indicate a willingness to lead, but a personal buy-in and investment in what God is accomplishing at ABC. Of the four identified, two volunteered to serve as student mentors.

The two candidates who did not volunteer cited busyness of schedule, feeling unprepared, unequipped to be a mentor and an overall sense that they could not effectively mentor a peer. Each student mentor was assigned an underclassman as their mentee. Only one of the upperclassman mentees consented to the study. This results in data from only one person being collected and may affect the outcome of the study.

The researcher met with each student mentor individually and presented the research problem and purpose, along with laying out the faculty mentor, student mentor, and student mentee structure for the study. The student mentors received individual mentor training from the researcher and were encouraged to regularly consult with their own personal mentor throughout the study regarding mentoring their underclassman peers.

The researcher coordinated with a local expert in the field of counseling to develop the planned mentor training classes. Dr. Larry Severson holds a Doctor of Philosophy in Religion and Society, specializing in behavioral science studies and counseling. Dr. Severson is an alumnus of Alaska Bible College and has spent his adult life counseling Alaskans in every area of life. His commitment to ABC and Alaska is seen in his desire for every Alaskan to know God and to experience the longings of their hearts, which were given to all humanity before the fall, to be in the right relationship with God.

While the President of Alaska Bible College approved the research project, there was a need to work with the administration team in the implementation of the training classes. During the preparation and consultation period, Dr. Severson challenged the researcher and the administration team of ABC to go beyond just four scheduled mentor training classes and to consider implementing a mentorship class that would be placed within the discipleship emphasis already on the current course catalog. The desire of the administration team was to add Dr. Severson to the adjunct faculty and viewed the mentor training class as an opportunity to secure Dr. Severson as a professor.

As a result of the consultation, the four training classes did not occur during the research period. This may appear as a failure of the researcher to implement the design. However, within an institution of biblical higher education, there is a need to be flexible and recognize that the students are ultimately the focus and purpose of the ministry. This recognition may have hindered the research project but will have a greater positive impact on the organization in the long run. The unfortunate consequence of the collaboration between the local expert in the field, the researcher, and the administration team is that the planned mentor training classes did not occur. Individual mentor training, specifically with the underclassmen mentors, did occur.

The researcher provided personal training along with the student's personal mentor. Despite the reality that the training classes did not occur during the implementation, the findings will reveal that intentional and organic equipping occurred within the mentor relationships for the student mentors. Furthermore, the commitment of the administration to equipping mentorship is apparent in their willingness to deliberate what would be most valuable to the students of ABC. The mentorship class that was proposed will be addressed in the findings and conclusion of this project.

Weeks 2-8

Mentors and mentees began meeting weekly for a minimum of thirty minutes. Mentors were given the freedom to select the location of the meetings and the topics of discussion each week. Minimally, mentors were encouraged to discuss the weekly Christlike character trait provided to the mentee in their CMT lesson on the college's Populi portal (table 2). The researcher provided additional resources included in the bibliography to mentors for use and application within individual mentor meetings. However, there is no formal program that each mentor must follow throughout the study.

The goal is that through an intentional pairing of mentor and mentee, an organic relationship will develop, and mentors and mentees will be pushed to grow more like Christ through this unique equipping experience. Mentors were challenged to consider how to encourage their mentees to begin the process of equipping through mentorship within their personal ministries. The research project was regularly addressed during the weekly staff and faculty meetings. Within these meetings, mentors were given tools to increase mentorship effectiveness. The researcher gave updates and mentorship directives during these weekly meetings.

During the originally designed eight-week study, focus groups served as a primary data collection device. There were two focus groups, one for mentors and one for mentees. Each group met four times during the implementation period. The mentor focus groups met weekly during weeks four through eight of the study. The mentee focus group met every other week beginning on week two of the study. Mentor focus groups met on Mondays for thirty minutes prior to the staff and faculty prayer meeting. The mentee focus group met on Thursdays for thirty minutes after the lunch period.

The researcher selected a participant from each focus group to facilitate and record the meetings. Each focus group facilitator was given a list of questions on the topic of mentorship to direct the focus group (Appendix E). Facilitators were encouraged to promote conversation on the topic of mentorship and use the questions to keep the conversation focused on mentorship. Each group averaged six participants each week. The recordings were given to the researcher and transcribed. The recordings and transcriptions are stored on a password-protected drive on the researcher's computer, and the data is only accessible to the researcher.

As mentioned in the introduction, the research design sought to utilize four special session mentor training classes. The purpose of the classes was to cover topics such as discipleship, emotional intelligence, personality types, and active listening. The researcher collaborated with Dr. Larry Severson and the academic department to develop and implement these mentor training classes. During the planning sessions, the need for more formalized and comprehensive mentor training became apparent.

Working with the administration team of Alaska Bible College, Dr. Severson has been brought on to the adjunct faculty to teach CMT Mentor Training (CM-T1301) in the fall of 2023. This course has been added to the course catalog and is now part of the discipleship emphasis

within the Bachelor of Arts in Biblical Studies and Christian Ministry degree. Student mentors are now required to take CM-T1301, either for credit or as an audit student, as a prerequisite to becoming an upperclassman student mentor.

This change will positively influence the continuation of the mentorship program at Alaska Bible College. The benefits and results will be further discussed in the following chapters of this research project. The change in design resulted in a shift in mentor training. The researcher implemented mentor training in two ways. Personal mentor training meetings with the mentor participating in the project and group training and discussion during the weekly staff and faculty meeting.

Beginning in week four of the implementation, the researcher began scheduling interviews with participants. The interviews are the third data collection point for this research project. The researcher did not originally account for the week of spring break, and the mission's conference week at the start date of the research project was dependent on IRB approval. This extended the research numerically in weeks but not in contact weeks or implementation time. As a result, the four weeks dedicated to interviews for the study conflicted with the end of the semester for both students and faculty.

Due to unforeseen challenges in scheduling and to collect substantive data, the interview portion of the study was extended by six weeks. Many of the faculty and staff interviews were conducted after the end of the semester. Alumni proved to be the most difficult group to collect data from. This is partly due to the lack of presence on campus. The researcher was focused on the implementation of the study and collecting data from the active participants in the mentorship program. Alumni were contacted at the beginning of the study with a request for consent.

After the close of the eight-week study period, the researcher re-engaged the potential alumni participants and was able to collect interview data. All the alumni chose to complete the interview questions in written format instead of a telephonic or in-person interview. The researcher, as an alumnus of ABC, was hoping to connect for encouragement and updates with other graduates during this interview period. This was a personal discouragement but did not affect the results of the alumni survey or the interview responses.

Participants were asked a series of questions that were appropriate to their position in the mentor relationship, which are detailed in Step 10 of the intervention design. Interviews were recorded on the researcher's password-protected phone. The interview recordings were transferred to a password-protected drive on the researcher's computer. Interviews were transcribed and placed in the password-protected drive along with the interview recordings.

This research project began with a Likert-scale survey to assess the baseline impressions of the participants regarding mentorship. After implementation, the final step of the study was sending participants a closing Likert-scale survey to analyze the participant's impressions of the mentorship program after the eight-week study. Alumni received only the alumni survey and interview questions. The alumni survey is a Likert-scale survey to assess prior student impressions of the mentor program during their time at Alaska Bible College.

During the study, the researcher compiled observation notes. The discussions on mentorship and equipping were not limited to the focus groups and interviews. Many times, mentees and mentors would continue a conversation outside of the recorded sessions. The researcher took these opportunities to listen to the discussion rather than inject himself into the conversation. Many times, the mentor focus group discussion would carry over into prayer time

or staff meetings. These insights have been recorded in bullet point format in the researcher's observation notes.

The implementation process varied considerably from the intervention design. The variations will be more fully discussed in Chapter 4. However, it is important to note that the researcher had to be flexible during the implementation period as the participants are each unique image bearers of God. The research participants are not simple cold sets of data but are participants whose own experiences are invaluable to the study. The most obvious area that was affected was the time frame.

The intervention design called for eight weeks. The focus groups stayed true to this time frame. However, interviews and surveys went outside of the originally planned eight weeks. While attempting to foresee any challenges when creating the intervention design, inevitably, events occurred outside the researcher's control that affected the study. The seasons of life, the busyness of life, and the demands of collegiate ministry all influenced the implementation of the study. Closing the research implementation between the mid-terms and the end of the semester proved to be the greatest challenge in terms of staying faithful to the original design.

Research participants were given clear definitions of terms like mentorship, discipleship, and equipping and were instructed that the definitions of these terms found in Chapter 2 were the working definitions for the implementation period. Each mentor applied these definitions to their mentorship in vastly different ways. While the working definitions were present within the study, an implemented consensus of the definitions was not present. This slippage influenced the weekly meetings and the vision and goal of the mentorship program. The varied personal definitions of terms affected the surveys, focus groups, and interviews. Each data angle will be

analyzed individually for themes and juxtaposed to find similarities and differences within each angle of data collection.

<div align="center">Analyzing the Data</div>

After compiling the data from the three data collection points, the researcher began looking for themes within each of the three areas of data collection. The researcher implemented a triangulated data collection method using Likert-scale surveys, focus groups, and interviews. Along with triangulated data collection, there is a triangulated participant pool. Participants included alumni, faculty, staff and student mentors, and mentees.

The alumni were all recent graduates of ABC whose only experience with the mentor program was prior to any implemented change. Their input through both the survey and interviews assessed their personal experiences within the mentor program prior to implementing change. These experiences reveal a varied experience in the purpose of mentorship at ABC as well as the intended long-term goal of the program. Through the analysis of the alumni surveys and interviews, the research identified three themes. One of the primary themes was a focus on equipping or the absence of an emphasis on equipping.

The consensus of the alumni surveys and interviews was that there was a lack of emphasis on mentoring to equip the mentee for ministry. Along with the lack of equipping emphasis was the absence of a challenge to go and equip within the alumni's ministry. Additionally, the purpose of the mentor meetings lacked focus. As a result, the alumni data revealed a diverse experience and emphasis within the weekly meeting. Finally, each alumnus's own perceived value of mentorship affected the continuance of being mentored beyond ABC.

The mentor pool that included faculty, staff, and upperclassmen provided data and perspectives from the side of the mentor. The faculty and staff mentors have been mentoring in

the existing program for five to ten years. Some of these faculty and staff mentors have mentored in other ministries prior to their time at ABC. Each faculty and staff mentor has a personal philosophy of mentoring that they bring to their mentor meetings. The diversity of philosophy regarding mentorship primarily affected the definition and usage of essential terms in the study, such as mentorship, discipleship, and equipping. The upperclassman student mentors experienced the mentoring side of the program for the first time. These participants' experiences as a mentee and first-time mentors are vital to the study and implementation of a 2 Timothy 2:2 model of mentorship.

The students of ABC provide the final group of participants, and their experiences and impressions provide data to show what the general emphasis of the mentorship program is and how those emphases may have shifted during the study. Unique within this group are the underclassman students who were mentored by an upperclassman. The students are the primary stakeholders in this program. The program exists to prepare and equip these students to continue the multi-generational mentorship model as they go out into ministry. Within the student focus group and interviews, definitions of terms affected the understanding and perceived purpose of the mentor program. Within the theme of terms, each student's understanding and definition of the terms discipleship, mentorship, and equipping influenced their understanding of the goal of the mentor program.

The Likert-scale surveys provide numerical data along with the opportunity to comment on any given question. From these surveys, a broad spectrum of experience is revealed. Each mentee has a different experience, and each mentor has a different personal emphasis. Through these surveys, the researcher was able to identify themes of mentorship and equipping on a scale of experience. The combination of a Likert-scale survey along with the opportunity to comment

on each question allows the participant to explain with some detail the reason for the score given on each question. The one to seven scoring on the survey allows the researcher to see if a particular theme is universally emphasized or, in many cases, a gradient emphasis based on personal experiences. The closing survey identified Christlike growth as an essential and regular theme within the mentor meetings. Within the survey, church service and *koinonia* were also themes found within the focus of mentor meetings. Each angle of data provides insight into the study and the themes that are present, as well as the holes in the research.

The focus groups were analyzed for common themes within each focus group and across the mentor and mentee groups. The discussions that occurred within the groups both confirmed themes that were seen in the surveys and drew out details within those themes but also identified a slippage in the research.[7] Both mentor and mentee focus groups identified a need to define terms. While the researcher has defined the terms in the study, each focus group identified a variance in definitions. This became most apparent as each participant defined discipleship, mentorship, and equipping within the group. The starting point was not the same for each participant, and without a common definition, the purpose and goal of mentor meetings varied. The focus groups brought out a theme of purpose.

The purpose and goal of the mentoring program were not universal and resulted in a variation in understanding and application within the mentor meetings. Within the mentor focus group, the theme of willingness on the part of the mentee was a constant theme. The mentor focus group also brought a season of life theme. Each student is in a different place in their life, and their personal walk with Christ and the mentors recognized a need to be aware of and sensitive to these seasons of life.

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[7] Sensing, *Qualitative Research*, 197.

The interviews provide a unique and personal interaction with the study. The interviews were analyzed for themes. Once again, the usage and definition of words central to the study varied from participant to participant. The varied definitions and implications from those variances greatly affected the goals of individual mentor meetings. The interviews identified a slippage without a universally accepted definition for the purposes of equipping and mentorship; the focus of mentor meetings differed.

Conclusion

The researcher recognizes that when research involves human beings, there will inevitably be challenges; this principle equally applies to the researcher. The setting of goals is always beneficial to an individual. "The heart of man plans his way, but the LORD establishes his steps" (Prov 16:9, ESV). The researcher, at a young age, was instructed by a mentor with the wise saying, "God does not move parked cars." This simple saying can motivate the procrastinator but can easily send the go-getter off course. There is a place of abiding where the procrastinator is moved to action, but the motivated restrains the eagerness in patient surrender.

One could look at the failures to properly implement the changes as designed and conclude that the research project was deficient in all areas. At the same time, another could examine the results and see that regardless of the fallen state, faithful followers who are seeking to become more like Christ experienced the life-transforming work of the Holy Spirit through equipping mentorship. The researcher, more than anyone, acknowledges the shortcomings of the implementation; however, he believes in the students of Alaska Bible College and knows that despite fallen struggles, the desire to be obedient to the process was stronger than the desire to be uninvolved.

The implementation of a design rarely, if ever, goes as planned when human beings are involved. A simple look at the end of Deuteronomy through Joshua reveals the dissonance between God's desire and Israel's willingness to obey. God's will is never thwarted; it is perfect and infinite as He is. But His desires restored relationship does not wane despite His omniscience. This difficulty in mirroring the research design during the implementation reminded the researcher that the students are human, just as he is, and that the end goal is not notoriety or success individually. The goal of the researcher is to see students wholly sold out to what God can do through faithful servants who are dedicated to equipping Christ's body.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

Observation is necessary for the proper understanding of a set of data. The inductive Bible study method, which relies on observation, interpretation, and application, encourages an individual to spend ample time in observation. The researcher has spent considerable time observing mentorship. Whether during the literature review, in the theological implications, or during the implementation of the research, the task has been to observe and record those observations. The process does not end with observation. The goal is to find the significance of those observations, interpret the data, and present it in a logical and thought-provoking manner. Having identified themes within the research implementation, the goal is to reveal the significance of those themes and the impact of the implementation on the thesis.

The importance of not only defining terms but also the implementation of those definitions is an area that impacted the research and the stakeholders of the mentorship program at ABC. Themes of equipping, discipleship, mentorship, willingness, trust, and where individuals find themselves on this journey of Christlike transformation have been identified within the research implementation chapter. These themes and their effect on ABC's mentorship program will be explored in detail.

Finding the Goal of Mentorship

Mentorship is the foundational relationship in which this research project sought to improve the equipping efforts of Alaska Bible College and prepare students to become equippers within their personal ministries. Mentorship in and of itself was not a change to the mentorship

program, but the purpose and focus of those mentor meetings on equipping along with the addition of student mentors is new to the program. The positive change to the program becomes apparent when comparing the experience of the alumni to the participants in the research program.

The alumni experience was largely varied within the mentor program before the implemented changes. Many of the alumni, 50 percent, met weekly with their mentors. While the meetings were regular, the emphasis of those meetings varied greatly from one mentor relationship to another. When asked if the alumni were challenged to grow more Christlike during mentor meetings, eighty-three percent of the alumni responded moderately to hardly at all.

Table 3. Alumni Survey Response Question 3.

Mentor meetings prepared me to serve in the Church
6 responses
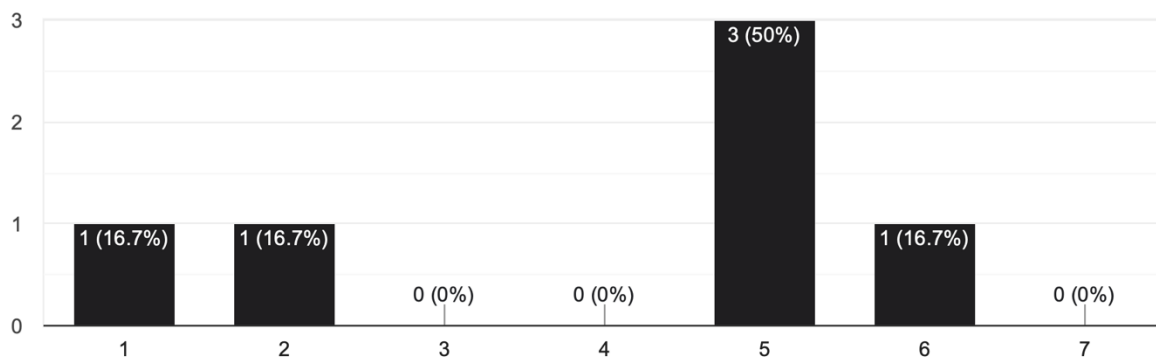
Given an opportunity to comment on the survey, one participant recalled, "While my mentor was always happy to give advice when I asked, I did not necessarily feel 'challenged' by

my mentor."[1] The comment points to a consensus by the alumni that the mentor meetings lacked an express purpose to equip mentees for ministry.

When asked what the focus of their mentor meetings was, each alumni responded differently. Some of the focuses of the meetings included praying for one another, theology, leadership principles, encouraging one another, accountability, and personal and spiritual growth. All of these foci are beneficial to the mentor and mentee, but the alumni were unclear about the goal of the mentorship program and the individual mentor meetings. While the program lacked some clarity and directed purpose, all of the alumni recognized the importance of mentorship. When asked if the alumni were currently mentoring someone in their personal ministries, all responded to the Likert-scale survey with a five or higher.

When asked if they were being mentored, that number dropped to an average of four and a half on the one to seven scale. "After Graduating ABC, I have realized the importance of mentoring or discipleship relationships. This was trial by fire, since I was not sure how to go about it."[2]. The value of mentorship as a form of discipleship was clear to this alumnus, yet they felt ill-equipped during their time at ABC. The alumni surveys and interviews gave the researcher an understanding of the experience of prior students within the mentorship program. These experiences also help the researcher to evaluate the mentorship focus of the current students during the research implementation.

Eighty percent of the closing survey respondents attended mentor meetings weekly. The 20 percent that did not attend weekly sighted busyness of schedule and scheduling conflicts as a reason that they did not meet every week during the eight-week implementation period. Within the closing survey, the participants were asked if Christlike growth was emphasized in the

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[1] Alumni Survey, Palmer, AK, March 2023.

[2] Ibid.

mentor meetings. All of the fifteen respondents rated this question at a five or higher. This was a notable change when compared to the alumni experience. This emphasis really helped drive the mentor meetings toward the importance of equipping and ministry involvement. The closing survey responses show that the mentor meetings, along with Christlike growth, emphasized service in the church. When given an opportunity to comment on the frequency of service in the church as a topic, one participant wrote, "We talk about it almost every, if not every, mentor meeting."[3] Ninety-three percent responded with a five or higher when asked about the importance of serving in the church.

Within the closing survey, the respondents were asked if equipping was frequently emphasized within the meetings; 93 percent responded with a four or higher, and 86 percent with a five or higher. "I believe that mentor meetings encourage others to serve within the church and communicate because while you are growing your relationship in God, you feel more knowledgeable to help in developing other people's relationship in God."[4] One response to the equipping question in the closing survey was "2 Tim 2:2."[5]

While the mentors and mentees defaulted to their own personal definitions of mentorship and discipleship during their meetings and in discussions about these topics, there was a clear emphasis placed on the importance of Christlike growth and out of that Christlike growth a recognition of the importance of service in the church and the equipping of others. This emphasis has increased the perceived value of the mentorship relationship and the goal to equip others within these relationships.

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[3] Closing Survey, Palmer, AK, May 2023.

[4] Ibid.

[5] Ibid.

An example of the varying definitions of mentorship and discipleship came up within a mentee focus group. "This might be semantics, but God commands discipleship and not mentorship…. But in Jesus' example, he discipled his disciples. He didn't mentor them… he wasn't mainly concerned with, like, How's your marriage going? How's fishing going?"[6] While the definitions of these words for the purposes of the study were provided to all participants, it is interesting to see how this individual's concept of mentorship influenced their working definition. Through this lens, mentorship is seen as a relationship that is more focused on the individual and where they are at in their current stage of life.

Earlier in the same focus group, this individual previously responded, "I think mentorship is just one-on-one discipleship. I don't know if there'd be any other difference."[7] The understanding of the term influences the application of the discipline. This participant focused on what is recorded within Scripture. There are no details of Jesus interacting with the disciples on their walks to and from the locations where Jesus taught or performed miracles or during their meals together.

What is unseen between the pages of Scripture is all the life that was shared with Christ and His disciples. Christ's discipleship was not a cold process of training; there was love and a deep caring for His disciples. In Scripture, there is evidence of this care. Twice in John 11, Christ is "deeply moved" by the death of His friend Lazarus (John 11:33, 38). While the students continue to refine their understanding of mentorship, there is a recognition of the immense value it has in their lives.

The students recognize that these mentor relationships, in a small way, are the tangible expression of the love of Christ, "This is something that Speaker 2 and I have talked about a lot

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[6] Speaker 2, Student Focus Group 4, Palmer, AK, April 2023.

[7] Ibid.

just in relationships in general, but specifically in mentor relationships, is that you can only be

loved so much as you are known."[8] These relationships that the students build with their mentors

have a purpose to push them toward Christlike growth. Yet, there is a recognition that

mentorship is a relationship, and within this relationship, there is a need for vulnerability and

trust on both sides. Through that vulnerability, God empowers the growth that leads to a

duplication of the process by the mentee.

Willingness, Vulnerability, and Trust

Understanding the goal of mentorship theoretically and pursuing that goal practically

drew out important aspects of the mentor relationship. Instruction can be a simple transaction

where knowledge is disseminated and absorbed. Within the mentor relationship, the desire goes

beyond transaction to transformation. Transformation cannot occur without a willingness, a

surrender to the process.

> But my question is, what does mentorship really look like when the recipient, the mentee,
> is not willing to be mentored? It's just like forced mentorship. And is that really
> mentorship? Or is it just we're trying to force students into a model of mentorship that is
> incongruous because they're not willing? So, we can call it mentorship, but for those who
> are not willing, it's not mentorship.[9]

The willingness of the mentee to surrender to the process of mentorship was a continual topic

amongst the mentors. ABC can claim that every student is in a mentor relationship because it is a

program requirement. What cannot be claimed is that every student is being mentored. For true

mentorship to happen, there has to be a willing spirit. "When you have a mentee that is unwilling

to give themselves over to the process, and ultimately that's an obedience issue... for those of us

who study discipleship, teach discipleship, and have been around it for a long time, ultimately

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[8] Speaker 4, Student Focus Group 4.

[9] Speaker 4, Mentor Focus Group 1, Palmer, AK, March 2023.

obedience is the name of the game." The challenge for the mentor is to continue to love and lead by example. Continue to invest in the relationship and pray that the willingness will come as the trust is built.

The reality is that those who are unwilling are not necessarily or perpetually obstinate; they are afraid. The mentee knows that if they are willing to enter into this process, they will have to be vulnerable, and vulnerability is scary. During a mentor focus group session, one mentor, in response to a question about things that would prevent vulnerability, stated, "I think another thing that could hinder it is fear. This student could have grown up in a household where they weren't allowed to share their thoughts and feelings, or their parents weren't trustworthy and abused them. So, they could be fearful of getting close in relationships."[10] The necessity of vulnerability also depends on the mentor. The mentor cannot expect the student to be vulnerable without a willingness also to be vulnerable.

A mentor reflected on the fear of being vulnerable, "Vulnerability produces a potential of being hurt."[11] One of the students commented, "You can't be poured into if you're not vulnerable and being open with the spots that you need to be poured into."[12] God draws people out of their comfort and into a place of vulnerability where reliance and dependence on Him transform them more into the image of Christ.

There is also a recognition that vulnerability, for vulnerability's sake, can impede the relationship. Without a genuine, authentic relationship where trust is a cornerstone, vulnerability is dangerous. As two of the mentees explored the trust and vulnerability dynamic, they recognized without the shared common goal of Christlike growth, the mentor relationship can

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[10] Speaker 3, Mentor Focus Group 3, Palmer, AK, April 2023.

[11] Speaker 1, Mentor Focus Group 3.

[12] Speaker 5, Student Focus Group 4.

become a dumping ground for all of the mentees' life problems, "And so, authenticity and trust in common, a common goal, I think are the things that build true relationship."[13] "Versus just it being an emotional dumping ground."[14]

This is where the students recognized the value of time in building the relationship, "maybe for the mentor to focus especially on just building that relationship rather than I need to crack them open. And just allowing that to happen naturally and be patient."[15] The mentees recognized that trust was a necessary part of the mentor relationship. With trust present in the relationship, there is a willingness on the mentee's part. One of the mentees, when asked about the top three important aspects of a mentor relationship, responded, "Trust, because in that there is vulnerability and a safety and a willingness to communicate, and commitment."[16]

The concept of building relationships is not lost on the mentors. As part of the program, mentors and mentees are assigned to each other by the researcher. The mentors do not pick their mentees any more than the mentees choose their mentor. There is certainly intentionality in the matching of mentor to mentees, but the relationship is one that must be built and not one that necessarily happens organically.

 Although CMT is a program, the mentors understand that mentorship is not successful as a program without relationship, "Yeah, because that goes right into a thing we talk about a lot here is that discipleship or mentoring can't be a program. We're making it a program with the full knowledge that this really can't be a program. It has to be a relationship."[17] As a result, the mentors recognize the value of building the relationship, "One of my secrets is I try to find

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[13] Speaker 2, Student Focus Group 4.

[14] Speaker 3, Student Focus Group 4.

[15] Speaker 4, Student Focus Group 4.

[16] Speaker 5, Student Focus Group 3, Palmer, AK, March 2023.

[17] Speaker 2, Mentor Focus Group 2, Palmer, AK, April 2023.

something in the character and personality of the individual, of the mentee, that can be a point of connection with that individual… And it's a point of bringing people together to have commonality that builds trust."[18] For the student mentors, this presented a unique challenge.

For the first time at ABC, upperclassmen were selected to mentor underclassmen. Student Mentor 1 recognized the challenge of building a relationship with their new mentee, "With my mentor, we had a lot of that groundwork set in relationship building. But with my mentee, we had only met each other this year. So, building a lot of that relationship first, and even now starting to see some of that come to fruition of being able to pour into one another spiritually."[19] For the student mentors, the challenge was to build relationships but also show that there was something that the student mentor could offer to their mentee.

Student Mentor 2 reflected on this during a mentor focus group, "Recognizing what they have to offer as the mentor. That's absolutely essential for the mentee. Otherwise, you're either A, not going to show up, or B, you'll be there, but you won't be there. But then on the flip side of that, the mentee definitely has to feel that there is a genuine willingness or wanting [of the mentor] to pour into [the mentee]. So, the relationship has to go both ways, obviously."[20] The student mentors were not left on their own. They continued to meet with their faculty or staff mentor, and periodically, all three would meet together.

The faculty, staff, and students enter these mentor relationships with a desire to build relationships based on willingness, vulnerability, and trust. The research shows that these qualities are the building blocks on which the shared goal of Christlike growth and equipping relies.

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[18] Speaker 3, Mentor Focus Group 1.

[19] Student Mentor 1, Interview by Researcher, Palmer, AK, May 2023.

[20] Speaker 4, Mentor Focus Group 3, Palmer, AK, April 2023.

The Journey Toward Christlikeness

Similar to the importance of building relationships is the recognition of where mentees are at in their Christlike journey. The diversity of age, experience, and time as a follower of Christ impacts the mentorship journey. Each student comes to ABC with a different personal goal and starting place in their walk with Christ. Some of these students are new believers or young in the faith. Some of these students are mid-career adults who sensed a call to ministry and a desire to be equipped for that calling.

For the mentor, part of the challenge in mentorship is discovering where the student is in this journey toward Christlikeness. The mentors understand that to challenge mentees toward Christlike growth, there needs to be an understanding of where the mentee is in their walk. In terms of the focus of the mentor meeting, mentor one responded, "Because each mentee is at a different place spiritually… I'm discovering along with the mentee where they are spiritually, where they are in life in general."[21] This journey of discovery builds on the relationship between mentor and mentee. It also affords the mentee a look into the life of the mentor.

As each person learns more about the other, the mentee recognizes that the mentor has walked through some of the same things the mentee is walking through. One student commented, "You are actually watching their example. You're watching how they're living out their salt and light per say. You're able to discern at that point are these characteristics that I feel my spirit is saying that I need to carry within me to be a better salt and light into the world."[22] Within the mentor relationship, there is an opportunity for the mentor to present Christlikeness and to challenge the mentee to imitate these characteristics.

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[21] Mentor 1, Interview by Researcher, Palmer, AK, May 2023.

[22] Speaker 4, Student Focus Group 3.

The mentees recognize the value of this shared journey of watching someone a little further down the path, encouraging the mentee to follow that example. One student described the value of this journey in mentorship, "It's helped me grow immensely in my walk. I think in that comes the realization that our Christian walk isn't supposed to be done by ourselves either. And that mentor-mentee relationship is almost vital to that. Having a person like that in your life is discipleship. It's what we're called to."[23]

This faith journey is essential to the equipping process to becoming more like Christ. Mentor 1 describes this reality, "The more we engage in the mentoring and discipling process, the more we're engaging with the Christian faith. And so, to me, all the benefits of mentoring are really... identical with the benefits of the Christian faith."[24] The journey toward Christlikeness is designed to rely on relationships. The mentors and mentees recognize the inherent value of being able to walk alongside others as they conform to the image of Christ.

One of the aspects of the mentor relationship that challenged faculty, staff, and students was the perception that in order to mentor someone effectively, there must be a significant age difference. That age and distance on the journey are synonymous. Mentor 1 discussed this perception in an interview, "Usually implied in mentoring, the idea of mentorship is that there is a large disparity. When I think of my mentors, I usually think of someone very old, someone who has really been there, done that, the sage mentor."[25] This view on mentorship was not unique to just one faculty or staff member. During a mentor focus group meeting, the topic of age and spiritual maturity differences between mentor and mentee was discussed.

> We use the words mentoring and discipling interchangeably. But there is, at least sometimes in the vocabulary, maybe a little bit more of a nuance between the two terms

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[23] Speaker 2, Student Focus Group 3.

[24] Mentor 1, Interview.

[25] Mentor 1, Interview.

that mentoring does entail an older person coming alongside a younger person, a more mature person coming alongside a younger person to walk them through those difficult times and show them the road type of thing. Whereas sometimes discipleship, particularly that iron sharpening iron, compatriot discipleship. We hear it all the time… you need a Paul in your own life and Barnabas in your own life and a Timothy in your own life to be mentoring and discipling on all three levels or be discipled.[26]

This example reveals not just a perception that the mentor must be older, but also that peer-to-peer mentoring is not mentoring but discipleship. With the faculty and staff, particularly how they personally define terms, affect their perception of mentoring and discipleship. The research implementation challenged participants to reconsider the mentorship relationship and the shared journey toward Christlikeness.

This perception presented challenges when students became mentors during the research implementation. The students struggled to call the student mentor a mentor relationship. While discussing mentorship, a student presented a perceived challenge to a peer-mentor relationship, "With a peer relationship, like, Okay, well, I'm just going through life with them, and they're having the same struggles that I am. And we're just more of the blind leading the blind. But in a mentor relationship, there was someone that I could turn to who had already been there."[27] During this same focus group, another student recalled having been assigned a faculty mentor who was younger,

I had a younger mentor coming in…who was like, I'm also figuring it out. I'm like, oh, that's helpful. But I think going into it with the expectation of just friendship, like, hey, you're not really getting a mentor. You're just getting a friend who's just. A few years down the line, more than you are… I think just the word itself, especially when you get a younger mentor, can be a little misleading, maybe. It's like, well, really, this is just a relationship to boost your time here, get you involved, have someone bring you along.[28]

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[26] Speaker 2, Mentor Focus Group 2.

[27] Speaker 6, Student Focus Group 1, Palmer, AK, February 2023.

[28] Speaker 1, Student Focus Group 1.

This perception was a primary reason two of the potential student mentors declined to serve as an upperclassman mentor. The fear was that they were not far enough along in the journey to provide experienced mentorship. One of the students assigned an upperclassman mentor did not see the closeness of age as a challenge. The underclassman saw the upperclassman mentor as beneficial, "I appreciated having an upperclassman because he was able to understand the classwork I was working on and give insight that I hadn't thought of."[29] As with many things in life, there is resistance to change, and some of the reticence of the faculty, staff, and students toward upperclassman mentors was simply the change.

The journey toward Christlikeness is the purpose of the mentor meetings; both mentor and mentee are being challenged to grow more like Christ as they walk alongside each other through this journey. Inherent in the journey is the recognition that it is to be shared with others. Mentees should be looking around to extend a hand out to another follower of Christ and share in the journey just as their mentor is doing with them.

Equipping to Equip

Central to the research implementation is equipping. The goal of the mentor program is to duplicate the equipping process through mentorship. The added focus on equipping within the mentorship program is evident within the research. Students recognized that the mentorship relationships they participated in were intended to prepare them to become mentors who equip others during their journey toward Christlikeness. During student focus group three, one of the students commented, "I think that is something that we need to focus on in going through this because whoever our mentors are now, we are in that very essence being built up to take that

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[29] Underclassman Mentee, Interview by Researcher, Palmer, AK, May. 2023.

position one day."[30] Preparing the students to equip others through mentorship became the central focus of the mentor program. The students continually addressed equipping in focus groups, interviews, and conversations around the school. During a student focus group, one student remarked, "But I think that [is] equipping…you're here to pour out everything you're learning to others."[31] The closing survey numbers revealed that equipping was a primary focus of the mentor meetings. Eighty-six percent of the students rated equipping as a focus with a five or higher. The drastic shift toward equipping as an emphasis in the mentor meeting is apparent when the alumni survey chart is compared to the closing survey chart.

Table 4. Closing Survey Response Question 6.

Mentor meetings emphasize the importance of equipping others to serve in the church/ministry
15 responses

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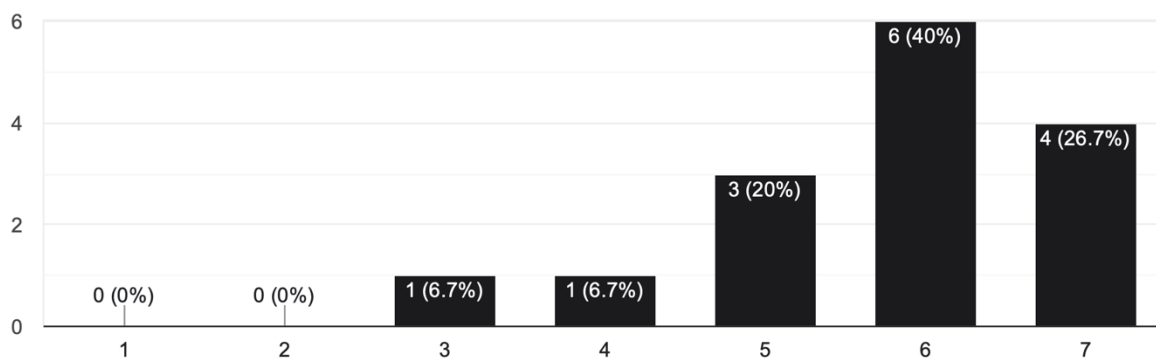
[30] Speaker 4, Student Focus Group 3.

[31] Speaker 1, Student Focus Group 1.

Table 5. Alumni Survey Response Question 4.

Mentor meetings emphasized the importance of preparing or equipping others within my ministry
6 responses
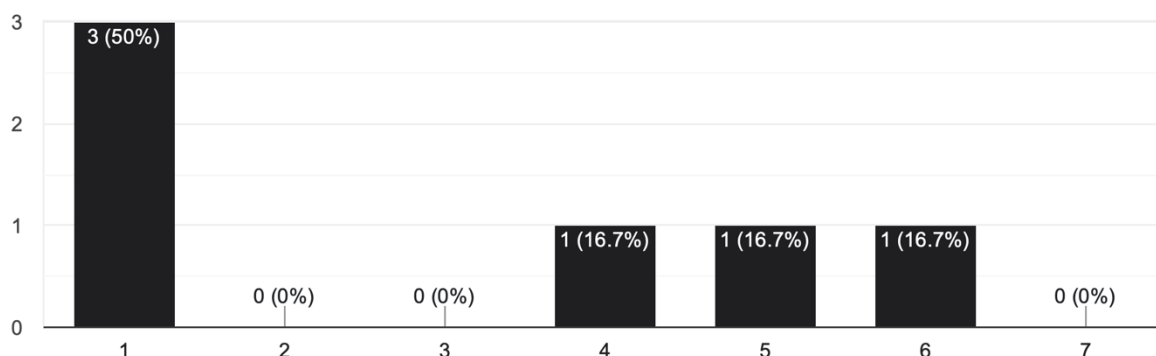
Student three commented in their interview about the emphasis on equipping, "The content of what we talk about has really been focusing on how to equip others and just all the specifics of that."[32] Later in the interview, when asked how mentoring had affected his understanding of service or ministry, Student 3 commented, "It has absolutely transformed my whole view on what my role is ministry is, what my calling is, specifically coming back to equipping. That's second Timothy 2."[33] Equipping through mentorship does not stop at ABC for this student. They have taken the passion to equip through mentorship into their personal ministry.

> I'm a middle school director, and I have built my team of middle school leaders, specifically the guys right now. I have three guys that I brought on, and I wouldn't have brought on two of them without having the focus and goal to equip them, not only for that ministry, but ministry and life and how we function in that, in our relationship to God. And with that, I meet with them all regularly. And I have all of them involved where I'm equipping them on how to teach, not just to youth, but just teaching in general. And so I would not have done probably any of that, let alone bring two of those guys on, meet with them regularly, and start this teaching lab, which is completely extra, without having this focus and goal of equipping them and noticing that is my role and noticing that is how the body would be built up as best.[34]

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[32] Student 3, Interview by Researcher, Palmer, AK, May 2023.

[33] Ibid.

[34] Ibid.

The mentorship and focus on equipping are not just theoretical for this student. Student 3 fully believes in the value of mentorship and equipping. When asked how has mentorship affected your understanding of equipping others for ministry? Student 3 responded, "Not only has it put the idea in my head and got it to the point where I understand it and into where I'm practicing it, but rather it has equipped me to do it well. I give all credit to my mentor for that. And yeah, I'm very, very thankful for it."[35] Student 3 recognizes that the mentors' emphasis on equipping through mentorship has influenced his ministry.

One faculty or staff member commented in the mentor closing survey, "I have always been committed to 2 Timothy 2:2--but during this study, the importance of equipping equippers has intensified."[36] The commitment to mentor and prepare the students to become equippers went beyond the mentor meetings. Students began recognizing that ABC had embraced a culture of mentorship. "That's the mindset of the faculty here that, yes, they have these scheduled times where they're pouring into us assigned mentees, but then it's just what they do here. They're all pouring into all of us. There's the more organic of it as well. I see the value in the structure of it, but more importantly, I see the value in just the organic environment."[37] The mentors embraced the equipping emphasis and regularly challenged their mentees to begin mentoring in their personal ministries.

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[35] Student 3, Interview.

[36] Mentor Closing Survey, Palmer, AK, May 2023

[37] Speaker 3, Student Focus Group 3.

Table 6. Mentor Closing Survey Response Question 4.

I regularly challenge my mentee to begin mentoring in their church or ministry

4 responses
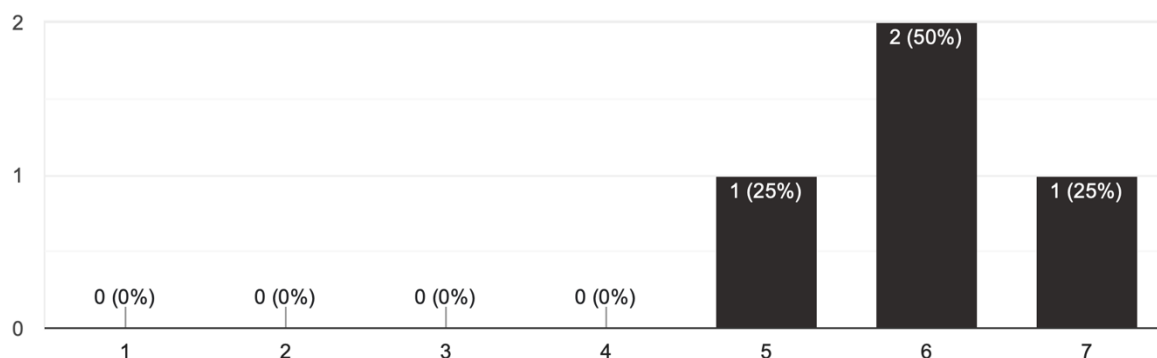
During a focus group, the students were asked, "In what ways are you being challenged to begin mentoring?" In response to that question, one student commented,

> I think there's a challenge there from just certain staff and faculty members who are encouraging that, as well as just being mentored myself. That's an encouragement and a challenge to pass on what I'm being given. There's wisdom and knowledge being passed on to me, as well as love and friendship and all those different things. It's a natural challenge being mentored to then pass that on to someone else.[38]

Students and staff received the implemented changes to the CMT program, and there is a real intentionality to make mentors who equip an essential component of Alaska Bible College.

The focus on equipping the students of ABC to become people who equip has become part of the culture at the college. Mentor 2 commented on equipping in their interview, "I found that it's a concept that's tossed around enough that… It's the air we breathe."[39] The statement by Mentor 2 is reflected in the participant's response to the closing survey question: Mentorship is vital in preparing others to use their gifts in service to Christ and His Church.

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[38] Speaker 2, Student Focus Group 3.

[39] Mentor 2, Interview by Researcher, Palmer, AK, May 2023.

Table 7. Closing Survey Response Question 10.

Mentorship is vital in preparing others to use their gifts in service to Christ and His Church
14 responses
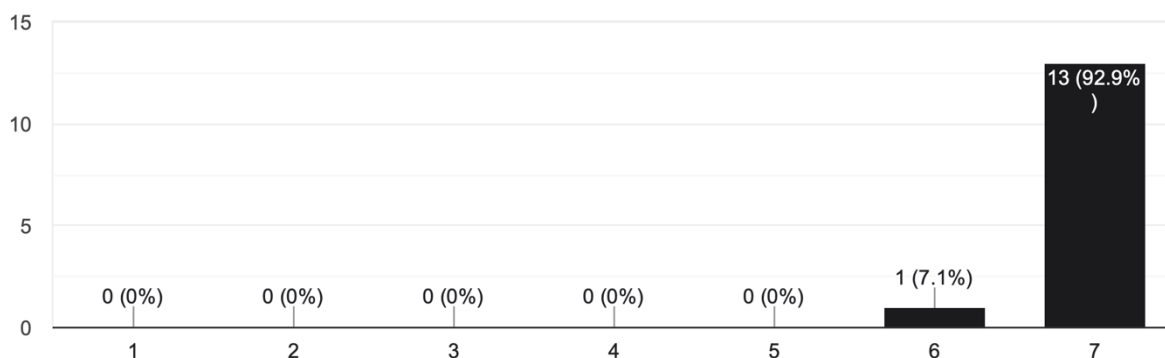
The students have embraced the value of mentorship in their lives and are beginning to mentor others. Many of the students are beginning to apply mentorship principles within their personal ministries. In response to how mentorship has affected understanding of and then application of equipping, Student 2 responded, "There's been an opportunity for me to invite other people into what I'm doing at my church, invite other leaders into that. And that's been a big aspect."[40] One of the student mentors commented, "My mindset was quickly shifted when I started being mentored, and even more so as I started to mentor others that I can start to then equip because I was being equipped…so that I can help others in that as well."[41] The students who have surrendered to the mentorship process have really apprehended the shift toward a 2 Timothy 2:2 model of equipping mentorship.

One of the challenges faced in the implementation was the mentor training sessions that were designed to give mentors tools to mentor more effectively. During the research design, the researcher was encouraged by the administration to incorporate Dr. Larry Severson into the

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[40] Student 2, Interview by Researcher, Palmer, AK, May 2023.

[41] Student Mentor 1, Interview by Researcher, Palmer, AK, May 2023.

mentor training sessions. The administration has fully invested in the mentor program and was excited to implement the changes proposed in the research project. During this consultation and planning period, it was realized by the administration and Dr. Severson that three to four one-hour training sessions were not enough. If mentorship was going to be so heavily emphasized at Alaska Bible College, then the school needed to develop a three-credit hour mentor training course that would fall under the discipleship emphasis already in the catalog.

While this presented a short-term challenge to the research project, it provided a long-term opportunity to train and equip more mentors who will go out and duplicate the process. The decision to add the class occurred during the research implementation. The first iteration of the course became available in the fall semester 2023. The enrollment for the course is twenty-nine students, the largest enrolled class since ABC moved to Palmer, Alaska.

The community has invested in the class as well, with a number of churches and parachurch ministries giving scholarships to employees in order to train mentors for their ministry. While the mentor class occurred outside of the research period, it is and will continue to be a valuable resource not only to staff and students but also to churches and parachurch ministries who desire to invest in equipping through mentorship.

Conclusion

The goal of the research design was to take something that was being done well and improve upon it. The mentorship program at Alaska Bible College has been something that was being done well. It is a unique facet of the undergraduate education that ABC students receive and has been one of the most appreciated parts of the educational journey for the students. Knowing that this program set ABC apart from other schools created an opportunity to improve the program to serve the students better and impart a deep desire to implement mentorship and

equipping within Alaska's local churches and parachurch ministries. The researcher desires to continue to see improvements in the mentorship program and the implementation of similar programs in local area ministries. The proposed changes helped develop a shared vision and direction for the mentorship program. The focus on preparing and empowering students as mentors who equip others increased the efficacy of the program. This focus on equipping the students of ABC to become equippers has become a central part of ABC.

The value of a 2 Timothy 2:2 model of mentoring is improving the experiences of the students, faculty, and staff at Alaska Bible College. Faculty and staff mentors are not only embracing the value of the mentor relationship with the students but have begun mentoring each other. As mentors, the faculty and staff are challenging each other to become better mentors, to share lessons learned within their own mentor-mentee relationships, and to encourage each other to perpetuate the equipping focus within the mentor program.

The value of these mentorship relationships at ABC has already translated into many of the student's personal ministries. Students experience the value of the 2 Timothy 2:2 modeled mentorship and recognize the potential benefits to the ministries that they get to serve in. The long-term impact of these changes at ABC and within the various ministries and churches in Alaska is yet to be seen. Knowing that the students have embraced the value of this equipping-focused mentorship gives hope and great expectation to the researcher to see God's people empowered and equipped to use the gifts given by grace for the building up of the body of Christ here at ABC in Alaska, and around the globe.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

This study aimed to take the already existing CMT program at Alaska Bible College and emphasize equipping mentorship within the program. This change was implemented in two primary ways. First, upperclassman mentors were added to expand the program to a multi-generational commitment to mentorship by following a 2 Timothy 2:2 model. Second, the emphasis of mentorship was to be focused on equipping individuals to become equipping mentors within their sphere of influence or ministry.

This emphasis is rooted in the call to equip, which is found in Ephesians 4:11-16. Both the CMT program and mentorship within the program existed before the implemented changes. Yet, there should never be a mere acquiescence to the status quo. Christ has called His followers to a lifelong, continual process of becoming more holy. As disciples of Christ who have been charged with equipping the next generation of leaders in the church, the need for continual improvement and evaluation of the CMT program was deemed necessary by the administration and faculty of ABC.

As the director of the CMT program, the researcher saw the value in the proposed changes beyond a thesis project. The paradigm of ministry could shift from a select few doing the work for the church to the local body embracing its call to serve and equip the church. Prayerfully, the changes and the renewed purpose of the CMT program will result in students embracing the value of equipping mentorship beyond the walls of Alaska Bible College.

Research Implications

The value of mentorship is increasingly being understood within discipleship programs. As revealed in the literature review, the challenge is primarily implementation. Specifically in biblical higher education, mentorship focuses on preparing a student for success. Yet, the student's success is emphasized within the student's personal walk, academic endeavors, or ministry. While all of those are valuable foci, adding to existing programs, the goal of students embracing Christ's call to equip others is unique. This is not to say that organizations or institutions of biblical higher education are not implementing an equipping mentorship model. However, the literature at the time of this project's writing did not emphasize preparing students within biblical higher education to become equippers in their local context.

The value of relationships and the importance of authenticity within those relationships is seen within the current literature. The current literature emphasizes willingness, vulnerability, and trust alongside the general relationship. These essential components of mentorship were mirrored within the study. Mentors and mentees regularly discussed the value of relationships, willingness, vulnerability, and trust. The study found that these components are vital to developing a mentorship relationship. Without these aspects of relationship, the mentee is reticent to accept the encouragement and empowerment to become an equipper within the school and their personal ministry.

Setting a universal goal of equipping within the CMT program aided mentors in developing a purpose and direction for their mentor meetings. One of the greatest challenges to the Christian walk is application. The pursuit of the knowledge of Christ found within the Scriptures is often emphasized. It is from the Word and through the Spirit that believers can become more like Christ. Orthodoxy is essential to orthopraxy; without a continued growing

knowledge of God, one cannot become more like Him. Prior to the implemented changes, the CMT program was primarily focused on developing Christlikeness through the right understanding of the one who saved us. Adding the vision of becoming equippers helps the theoretical become practical. The findings of the study point to an understanding that a fuller Christlikeness entails eventual and perpetual discipleship of others.

The greatest challenge to this project was during the implementation, seeing areas that could be improved beyond the original proposed changes. The stakeholders in this research project, the faculty, staff, and students, challenged the researcher to consider additional changes beyond the original design. The experiences of the participants helped the researcher to see areas of improvement that had not been addressed within the research project.

One primary area that was beneficial during the research implementation but did not continue after the research period was the focus groups. During the research implementation period, the focus groups allowed the mentors and mentees to get together and talk about their experiences and challenges within the mentor relationship. When the focus groups stopped, one thing became apparent: the value of these group meetings was unseen by the researcher. The opportunity to talk with other mentors or mentees served to encourage the building of the mentor relationship in each individual mentor group.

The mentee focus groups challenged the students to consider their personal commitment and willingness to be vulnerable in the mentor meetings. Through this, the students encouraged one another to recognize that they, as individuals, had something to offer within the mentor meetings. From this, the researcher determined that adding two monthly mentee meetings would benefit the CMT program and the students. The first will be limited to the student mentees, where there is an opportunity to discuss mentorship and encourage each other. The CMT director

will attend the second meeting to allow the students to air grievances, evaluate the program, and give recommendations for improvement.

The faculty and staff meet weekly for prayer and staff meetings. The researcher has proposed allotting time to discuss mentorship, like the focus groups, during the research implementation. In effect, faculty, staff, and student mentors can encourage each other to grow in their mentorship abilities. This also will help the researcher, as the director of the CMT program, evaluate mentorship relationships and encourage the students in their journey at ABC.

Regarding the student focus groups, those who participated experienced a comradery. They challenged each other to surrender themselves to the equipping process. Upperclassmen students who were not mentors had a voice in the lives of the underclassmen students and were able to encourage the newer students to embrace the value of the CMT program. The students were also able to share their frustrations with the process. There was a cathartic element to the students sharing their challenges and frustrations with the mentorship program. Through this, the students challenged each other to embrace the values they so highly placed on the mentor relationship.

The students also recognized that mentorship was so valued by the faculty and staff that frequently, they were experiencing mentoring outside of their assigned mentor relationship. This high value on mentorship challenged the students to consider how they could participate alongside the faculty and staff to mentor each other beyond the CMT program. Some of the students were so sold on the value of equipping mentorship that they began implementing the model within their ministry. This, for the researcher, is the true goal of the research project. The desire to see students embrace and implement equipping mentorship in the local church and parachurch ministries is the ultimate driving force and aim for the researcher.

The researcher did not consider how transitioning from being a mentee to becoming a mentor would affect the upperclassman mentors. As the upperclassmen mentors began building relationships with their mentees, they experienced challenges similar to those the faculty and staff mentors were working through. This was expected; however, the implications of these experiences on the upperclassmen mentors' relationship with the faculty staff mentor were not even considered. Student mentors struggled to get their mentees to be vulnerable and share beyond the superficial. This caused the upperclassmen to reflect on their own willingness to be vulnerable in their relationships with the faculty or staff mentors. What resulted was growth and authenticity within the faculty or staff relationship. Understanding the challenges placed on the mentor to relate to their mentee opened the student mentor up to a deeper relationship with their personal mentor.

Within the mentor focus groups, mentors saw the value of communication with other mentors. The mentors appreciated being able to talk to other mentors and relate their challenges in mentoring the students. The focus group meetings helped the mentors understand that the students shared similar experiences, and knowing this, they could better serve their mentees. It is a recognition that the individual mentees face similar challenges in their personal walks, and these experiences were not unique to their mentor relationship. The time discussing mentoring within the focus groups was encouraging to the mentors. Mentors were able to equip each other to speak into the lives of their mentees more effectively. This recognition has created a potential new addition to the CMT program.

The season of life and level of maturity of the mentees will vary from student to student. The researcher recognized this reality within the study. Yet, there was an expectation that there would be immediate buy-in by the students when they saw how eager their mentors were to

engage in the equipping mentorship process. For many of the young students fresh out of high school or new to the Christian faith, there was not an understanding of the value of becoming an equipper. This posed a challenge for the mentors. Some of the students came to Bible college because their parents insisted upon it. These students struggled to answer the question, "Why am I here?" With that question in mind, the struggle to convince the students of the value of mentorship presented a challenge to the mentors.

Many of the mentors have two or three mentees, and each mentee is in a different season of life. The challenge for many mentors is recognizing what works and speaks to one mentee often does not work for another. The truth of God's Word and to be used to transform a believer does not change, but applying these truths to different seasons of the students' lives takes creativity and, ultimately, the Holy Spirit. Being sensitive to where a student is in their walk, seeking to speak truth into their lives, and encouraging Christlike growth are vital to effective mentorship. God's presence within indwelled believers cannot be overlooked in this process.

Research Applications

As stated, the researcher desires to see students take the equipping mentorship model into their ministries. There is no limit to applying this research to various settings. This mentorship model can be applied within a church setting throughout multiple ministries. The foundational principles applied in the research implementation are rooted in Ephesians 4:11-16 and 2 Timothy 2:2. These verses are a universal call to be equipped and become an equipper. Every church and ministry could benefit from applying this mentorship model or a variation of it.

The researcher uses this model within the context of his local church. The researcher has identified two men in their twenties who have sensed a call to pastoral ministry. The researcher has intentionally entered mentor relationships with these young men for the express purpose of

equipping them. These young men have been challenged to examine the youth ministry students to see if there is a young man that they can begin faithfully pouring into and equipping.

The senior mentioned earlier in the findings, who serves as his local church's middle school youth director, began utilizing this mentorship model to equip youth group leaders. This, in a limited capacity, reveals the desired outcome of the research implementation: that the students of Alaska Bible College would become equipping mentors within their ministry. These examples show the viability of this type of program within a church setting.

This senior's application of the mentorship model has resulted in reevaluating the youth ministries class taught at ABC. Many of the students begin their ministry experience within varied youth ministries. The youth ministries class falls under the discipleship emphasis at ABC. With the primary focus being discipleship, the researcher, the current instructor for the youth ministry class, has considered ways to present the equipping mentorship and its value within youth ministry. Challenging the students to take the mentorship modeled in the CMT program into their youth groups.

There is a real sense that a congregation will imitate leadership. If the leadership of a church began implementing these mentorship principles within the pastoral, elder, and ministry leadership teams, and the mentorship was embraced, a church, over time, could be transformed into an equipping force that exists to glorify God and edify the saints. Not to say that those things do not already exist in the church, but the building up of the body is a primary call of those gifted in leadership.

Parachurch ministries could benefit from implementing the principles of equipping mentorship. These organizations exist to come alongside the body of Christ and serve. Mission organizations, institutions of biblical higher education, worship ministries, Bible camps, service

ministries, evangelistic and apologetic ministries, and many others are places where equipping

mentorship can empower servants of God to prepare others to use their gifts for God's glory. The

equipping mentorship outlined in this research project could be modified to serve every one of

these different types of parachurch ministries.

Mission organizations could greatly benefit by utilizing the principles of mentorship

displayed within this project. In Alaska, pastoral leadership is one of the most significant

challenges facing rural communities. Mission organizations could come alongside established

churches to equip leaders within these churches rather than coming into a village to do the work

for the saints. Mission organizations could empower believers to lead the local gathering and

equip the body of Christ in their context. It would be a unique shift in how missions in Alaska

are done within the state.

Currently, the model sends missionaries to do all of the ministry work in these

communities. Embracing equipping mentorship as a model for missions could be the impetus for

drastic change where leadership within the local church is equipped to continue the model as

they faithfully serve the community. The president of Alaska Bible College addresses this

challenge of leadership transition within the Alaska native church in his dissertation titled

Spiritual Leadership Transition in the Alaska Native Evangelical Church: Exploring the

Experiences and Perspectives of Alaska Native Evangelical Leaders.[1] The potential value of

equipping mentorship in the Alaska native church is highlighted within this work.

This model for equipping mentorship could be applied within institutions of biblical

higher education. Some organizations are already implementing forms of mentorship. However,

shifting the emphasis to preparing students to become equippers and implementing this

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[1] David P. Ley, "Spiritual Leadership Transition in the Alaska Native Evangelical Church: Exploring the Experiences and Perspectives of Alaska Native Evangelical Leaders" (PhD diss., Biola University, 2022).

mentorship style could transform mentorship programs within these organizations. Schools with smaller student populations could more easily implement the research as designed. With creativity and a broadening of the mentor pool, larger institutions could implement equipping mentorship.

Research Limitations

In reviewing the current literature that addresses mentorship within institutions of biblical higher education and identifying a gap in the literature, the limits of this research project must be considered. When writing this project, the researcher could not find any academic or scholarly sources that addressed equipping mentorship within an institution of biblical higher education. This project was limited to a small student population in a unique geographical location. The results that were gathered may not be the same in a larger school, in a different geographic location, or in a more diverse demographic.

The findings may have differed if the research was implemented within a different student population and with a different mentor pool. The commitment to mentorship within the administration, faculty, and staff affected the findings. If the commitment to equipping mentorship was not a priority or was not present in the leadership or faculty and staff, the findings could vary considerably. The mentor's willingness to implement the changes to refocus the vision toward equipping is a factor that influenced the outcome of the research project.

While the researcher attempted to interpret the data collected as objectively as possible, there remains the possibility that a different individual given the same data would come to a different conclusion. The goal was not to insert a bias toward the benefit of equipping mentorship. The use of triangulated research helped to minimize the insertion of a bias. The researcher desired to see if implementing these changes would result in a more extraordinary

equipping experience and the increased value placed on mentorship by the students at Alaska Bible College.

As previously mentioned, the season of life and the students' willingness as stakeholders varied. This external influence can only be mitigated but not removed. In many ways, it takes a student a year or more to recognize the value of the mentorship. Once the value is recognized, the student's commitment to the mentorship relationship and the level of vulnerability generally increases. One factor that creates limitations is the willingness of the students to surrender to the process.

The faculty, staff, and student mentors are not immune to external influences like the season of life and additional stresses. These influencing factors are an uncontrollable limitation. Each participant in the program is a unique human being made in the image of God. Each one is affected by the reality of living in a sinful, fallen world. Humanness is a variable that cannot be controlled. Certainly, the goal of every believer is to mature in Christlikeness. However, these factors greatly influence the day-to-day mentorship relationship.

The capacity of each mentor to effectively pour into and equip their mentees is limited. The faculty and staff mentors have a minimum of two mentees, and some have as many as five. The stated goal of the CMT director is that no mentor has more than three mentees. The limited size of the faculty and staff and the needs of each individual student sometimes cause more experienced mentors to take on more than three mentees. This limits the time available for each mentee beyond the required mentor meeting.

Further Research

As current students and graduates of Alaska Bible College transition into ministry roles within the local church and parachurch organization, the possibility of equipping mentorship being applied within these organizations increases. The effects on these organizations and the stakeholders participating in the mentorship model are yet to be seen. If the goal of equipping equippers translates to these ministries, an area of future research will be opened.

Another apparent area of future research is the relationship between mentorship and the genders. It seems that the male mentors and mentees more readily accepted the value of equipping mentorship. The female mentors appeared to face more significant challenges in transitioning the goal of the mentorship to equipping. There seemed to be a greater desire within the female mentorship relationships to address life challenges like personal issues, trauma, romantic relationships, and interpersonal conflict, for example. The biblical roles for males and females and the value of equipping mentorship within those roles pose a further research question.

One final area of potential future research deals with generational relationships. The age gap between mentors and mentees had more influence than expected. For some mentor relationships where the age gap was multiple decades, the intrinsic value was placed on the life experience of the mentor by the mentee. However, the greater the age gap, the more difficult it was for the mentor to feel they could relate with the student. On the converse, within the upperclassmen mentor relationships, there was a challenge for the mentee to feel like the mentor had the experience to speak into the mentee's life. The mentee saw their mentor as someone at the same place in the journey as them. The students could relate well but struggled to know the

value of mentorship and struggled to call the relationship one of mentoring. Is this a struggle of current societal and cultural influences, or is it a universal, timeless struggle?

Implementation is a continued challenge within the CMT program. The value of the research is truly seen in the willingness of individuals to participate. It is one thing to identify a problem, but it is something quite different to take the proposed changes and implement them in an effective way. This research project's actual value is in the investments that are being made in the lives of the students. The hope is that through a Spirit-empowered surrender, the students of Alaska Bible College will outgrow and out-serve the faculty and staff who have committed their lives to equip the next generation.

APPENDIX A

EQUIPPING EQUIPPERS OVERVIEW

Equipping Equippers

Training Alaska Bible College Students for
Equipping Ministry through Mentorship

1

You're Invited

You are invited to participate in a research study. To participate, you
must be 18 years of age or older, a faculty or staff member of Alaska
Bible College, a graduate of Alaska Bible College, or currently enrolled
in a degree program at Alaska Bible College. Taking part in this
research project is voluntary.

2

What is this Study about, and Why is it being Done?

The purpose of this study is to change the CMT program and implement a 2 Timothy 2:2 model within the program to focus on faculty mentoring, underclassman mentorship, and ministry mentoring that prepares students to fulfill equipping roles within the local church.

3

What will Happen if You take Part in this Study?

- During the 8 weeks of the study, participants can expect to complete surveys, focus groups, and interviews.
- Mentors will participate in an initial mentor training class during week one. Faculty, Staff, and active students will meet in weekly scheduled mentor meetings.
- Mentors will participate in mentorship training and equipping classes on weeks four and eight.
- Focus groups for mentors and mentees will meet separately during the even weeks of the study.
- Faculty, staff, and student interviews will be conducted during weeks four through eight and will be scheduled to accommodate the participant's schedule.
- Faculty, staff and students will complete an exit survey during weeks seven and eight.

4

Intervention Steps

Intervention Steps		
Step 1	Alumni Survey	Week 1
Step 2	Baseline Survey Active Participants	Week 1
Step 3	Identifying Student Mentors	Week 1
Step 4	Initial Mentor Training Class	Week 1
Step 5	Pairing Mentor and Mentee	Week 1
Step 6	Weekly Mentor Meetings	Weeks 2-8
Step 7	Mentorship Training and Equipping Classes	Weeks 3 and 6
Step 8	Focus Groups	Weeks 2,4,6,8
Step 9	Interviews	Alumni Interviews weeks 1-4 Faculty/Staff/Student interviews weeks 4-8
Step 10	Exit Survey	Weeks 7-8

5

If you agree to be in this study, I will ask you to do the following

1. Participate in a baseline survey that should take 15 minutes.
2. Faculty, staff, and student participants will take part in weekly mentor meetings of at least 30 minutes.
3. Participate in bi-weekly focus groups. The focus group recorder will keep a written record of the meeting. The meetings will be one hour in duration.
4. Participate in an in-person, audio-recorded interview that will take no more than 1 hour.
5. If you are identified as a mentor, you will be asked to participate in three mentor training classes. The duration of the class will be one hour. The instructional portion of the classes will be recorded, and slide shows will be made available if you cannot attend the training.
6. Participate in an exit survey that should take 15 minutes.

6

How Could You or Others Benefit from this Study?

The direct benefits participants should expect to receive from taking part in this study include weekly mentorship. Mentors will benefit from the three mentor training classes.

Benefits to society include perpetuating equipping through mentorship within Alaska Bible College, the local church, and para-church ministries.

What Risks might You experience from being in this Study?

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

I am a mandatory reporter. During this study, if I receive information about child abuse, child neglect, elder abuse, or intent to harm self or others, I will be required to report it to the appropriate authorities.

How Will Personal Information be Protected?

The records of this study will be kept private. Published reports will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a subject. Research records will be stored securely, and only the researcher will have access to the records.

9

How Will Personal Information be Protected?

- Participant responses to the online surveys anonymous
- Participant responses to the interviews will be kept confidential by replacing names with pseudonyms.
- Interviews will be conducted in a location where others will not easily overhear the conversation.
- Confidentiality cannot be guaranteed in focus group settings. While discouraged, other members of the focus group may share what was discussed with persons outside of the group.
- Data will be stored on a password-locked computer in a password-protected drive. Hard copy focus group data will be stored in a locked file cabinet behind a locked office door. After seven years, all electronic records will be deleted and/or all hardcopy records will be shredded.
- Recordings will be stored on a password-locked computer on a password-protected drive for seven years/until participants have reviewed and confirmed the accuracy of the transcripts and then deleted. The researcher will have access to these recordings.

10

Is the researcher in a position of authority over participants, or does the researcher have a financial conflict of interest?

The researcher serves as a professor at Alaska Bible College. To limit potential or perceived conflicts, there is no grade associated with the co-curricular mentorship program. This disclosure is made so that you can decide if this relationship will affect your willingness to participate in this study. No action will be taken against an individual based on his or her decision to participate or not participate in this study.

11

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 Alaska Bible College. If you decide to participate, you are free not to answer any question or withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.

12

What should you do if you decide to withdraw from the study?

If you choose to withdraw from the study, please contact the researcher at ███████████ or by email at ████████████████.

13

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

The researcher conducting this study is Justin Archuletta. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, you are encouraged to contact him at ██████ ██████████ or by email at ████████████████████. You may also contact the researcher's faculty sponsor, R. Peter Mason, at ████████████████████

14

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 IRB. Our physical address is Institutional Review Board, 1971 University Blvd., Green Hall Ste. 2845, Lynchburg, VA, 24515; our phone number is 434-592-5530, and our email address is irb@liberty.edu.

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February 8, 2023

Justin Archuletta
R. Peter Mason

Re: IRB Application - IRB-FY22-23-890 Equipping Equippers: Training Alaskan Bible College Students for Equipping Ministry through Mentorship

Dear Justin Archuletta and R. Peter Mason,

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

Decision: No Human Subjects Research

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

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

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

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

Sincerely,

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

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APPENDIX B

ALUMNI SURVEY

Alumni 2018-2022 Survey

1. I met weekly with my Mentor during my time at ABC

    Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Nev	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Always

2. Comments

    _____

    _____

    _____

    _____

    _____

3. Mentor meetings challenged my Christlike growth

    Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Not	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Absolutely

117

4.   Comments

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_____

5.   Mentor meetings prepared me to serve in the Church

Mark only one oval.

         1   2   3   4   5   6   7

Not   ◯   ◯   ◯   ◯   ◯   ◯   ◯   Absolutely

6.   Comments

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7.   Mentor meetings emphasized the importance of preparing or equipping others within my minist

Mark only one oval.

         1   2   3   4   5   6   7

Not   ◯   ◯   ◯   ◯   ◯   ◯   ◯   Always

8. Comments

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9. I am currently being mentored by someone in my ministry.

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Not	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Regularly

10. Comments

_____

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_____

11. I am currently mentoring someone in my ministry

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Not	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Regularly

APPENDIX C

BASELINE MENTOR SURVEY

Baseline Mentor Survey

1. I meet weekly with my Mentor during my time at ABC

    Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Nev	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Always

2. Comments

    _____

    _____

    _____

    _____

    _____

3. Mentor meetings emphasize Christlike growth

    Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Not	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Absolutely

4.   Comments

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_____

5.   Service in the Church/Ministry is a regular topic in my mentor meetings

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Not	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Absolutely

6.   Comments

_____

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_____

_____

7.   Mentor meetings focus on building my relationship with God

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Not	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Always

8.   Comments

_____

_____

_____

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_____

9.   Mentor meetings focus on the importance of koinonia (one anothering)

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Not	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Regularly

10.   Comments

_____

_____

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_____

11.   Mentor meetings focus on sharing the gospel with unbelievers

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Not	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Regularly

122

12.   Comments

_____

_____

_____

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_____

13.   Mentor meetings emphasize the importance of equipping others to serve in the church/minist

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Nev	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Always

14.   Comments

_____

_____

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15.   My Mentor challenges me to begin mentoring in my church or ministry

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Nev	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Always

16.

Mark only one oval.

◯ Option 1

17. Most of the ministry in my church/parachurch ministry is done by paid/supported staff

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Nev	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯		Always

APPENDIX D

FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

Mentee Focus Group

- Have you been in a formal mentor relationship before attending ABC?
- What were your initial thoughts when you found out you were required to be in a mentor relationship at ABC?
- What is the most challenging part of meeting with your mentor weekly?
- How has meeting with a mentor changed your understanding of service in the local church?
- What needs to be added to your mentor meetings?
- How would you improve mentor meetings if you were a mentor?
- Have you ever mentored someone in a discipleship context?
- In what ways are you being challenged to begin mentoring?
- What are the top three essential elements of a mentor relationship?
- If mentor meetings were not required, would you still attend?
- How have mentor meetings enhanced your relationship with Christ?
- Have you considered how mentorship might augment your ministry?
- Do you see mentorship relationships happening in your ministry?
- What is your favorite part about mentor meetings?
- How does equipping or preparing people for ministry relate to mentorship?
- Has your perspective changed on the value of mentorship since you began being mentored?
- What things do you admire about other mentor relationships?
- What do you think prevents people from entering mentorship relationships?
- Have you noticed a relationship between vulnerability and the depth of the relationship in mentoring?
- What relationship do you see between mentorship and discipleship?

Mentor Focus Group

- Have you participated in mentorship before ABC?
- Is mentorship emphasized in your church?
- What are your biggest frustrations with the mentorship at ABC?
- What role, if any, does equipping play in your mentorship?
- What is your favorite part about mentor meetings?
- What would help you mentor more effectively?
- What role do you see in mentorship as it relates to discipleship?
- What are the top three essential elements of a mentor relationship?
- What do you think prevents people from entering mentorship relationships?
- What needs to be added to your mentor meetings?
- What is the most challenging part of meeting with your mentee weekly?
- What have you learned from your mentees while mentoring?
- Have you noticed a relationship between vulnerability and the depth of the relationship in mentoring?
- What are some shortcomings you've been faced with while mentoring?
- How can you encourage your mentee to begin mentoring in their ministry?
- What types of training would help you mentor more effectively?
- How long do your mentor meetings usually last?
- Do you meet with your mentor outside of regularly scheduled mentor meetings?
- How can ABC better equip students to mentor in their ministries?
- What questions would you ask about mentoring?

APPENDIX E

MENTEE INTERVIEW QUESTION

Question 1 Imagine I have no concept of mentorship. In your own words, explain

mentorship to me.

Question 2 What benefits, if any, do you personally see from mentorship?

Question 3 What has the main focus of your mentor meetings been?

Question 4 How, if at all, has mentoring affected your understanding of service?

Question 5 In what ways have you implemented these principles in other relationships?

Question 6 How has mentorship affected your understanding of equipping others for

ministry?

MENTOR INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Question 1 Imagine I have no concept of mentorship. In your own words, explain

mentorship to me.

Question 2 What benefits, if any, do you personally see from mentorship?

Question 3 What has the main focus of your mentor meetings been?

Question 4 How, if at all, have your mentor meetings encouraged mentees to serve in the

local church or ministry?

Question 5 In what ways have you challenged mentees to mentor and equip others?

Question 6 To what extent, if at all, have your mentor meetings focused on the

importance of mentorship as it relates to equipping?

ALUMNI INTERVIEW QUESTION

Question 1 Are you currently being regularly mentored by anyone?

Question 2 What was the greatest takeaway from mentorship at ABC?

Question 3 What was your greatest frustration about mentoring at ABC?

Question 4 What was the primary focus of your mentor meetings at ABC?

Question 5 Was equipping others ever emphasized in your mentor meetings at ABC?

Question 6 Are you currently mentoring anyone in your ministry for the purpose of equipping?

Question 7 Is mentorship valued and practiced in your ministry?

APPENDIX F

CLOSING SURVEY MENTOR SURVEY

Closing Survey Mentor Survey

1. I meet weekly with my Mentor during the research project

    Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Nev	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Always

2. Comments

    _____

    _____

    _____

    _____

    _____

3. Mentor meetings emphasize Christlike growth

    Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Not	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Absolutely

4.   Comments

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

5.   Service in the Church/Ministry is a regular topic in my mentor meetings

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Not	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Absolutely

6.   Comments

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

7.   Mentor meetings focus on building my relationship with God

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Not	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Always

8. Comments

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

9. Mentor meetings focus on the importance of koinonia (one anothering)

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Not	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Regularly

10. Comments

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

11. Mentor meetings focus on sharing the gospel with unbelievers

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Not	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Regularly

131

12. Comments

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13. Mentor meetings emphasize the importance of equipping others to serve in the church/minist

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Nev	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Always

14. Comments

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15. My Mentor challenges me to begin mentoring in my church or ministry

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Nev	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Always

16.

Mark only one oval.

⬭ Option 1

17. My understanding of mentorship has changed over the study

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Not	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Absolutely

18. Comments

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19. Mentorship is vital in preparing others to use their gifts in service to Christ and His Church

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Not	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Absolutely

20. Comments

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Mentor Closing Survey

1. I meet weekly with my Mentee during the research project

    Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Never	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Always

2. Comments

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3. Mentee meetings emphasize Christlike growth

    Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Not	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Absolutely

4.   Comments

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5.   Service in the Church/Ministry is a regular topic in my mentor meetings

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Not	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Absolutely

6.   Comments

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7.   Mentor meetings focus on building my relationship with God

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Not	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Always

8.   Comments

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9.   Mentor meetings focus on the importance of koinonia (one anothering)

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Not	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Regularly

10.   Comments

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11.   Mentor meetings focus on sharing the gospel with unbelievers

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Not	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Regularly

12.   Comments

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13.   Mentor meetings emphasize the importance of equipping others to serve in the church/ministry

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Neve	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Always

14.   Comments

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15.   I regularly challenge my mentee to begin mentoring in their church or ministry

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Neve	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Always

16. Comments

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17. My understanding of mentorship has changed over the study

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Not	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Absolutely

18. Comments

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IRB APPROVAL LETTER

LIBERTY UNIVERSITY.
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

February 8, 2023

Justin Archuletta
R. Peter Mason

Re: IRB Application - IRB-FY22-23-890 Equipping Equippers: Training Alaskan Bible College Students for Equipping Ministry through Mentorship

Dear Justin Archuletta and R. Peter Mason,

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

Decision: No Human Subjects Research

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

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

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

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

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