

LIBERTY UNIVERSITY
JOHN W. RAWLINGS SCHOOL OF DIVINITY

**Discipleship: A Biblical Approach and Alignment to the Spirit of the Ministry at Kingdom
Collegiate Academies Early Childhood Program**

In fulfillment of the requirements for the completion of
the Doctor of Ministry Degree

Department of Christian Leadership and Church Ministries

by

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THE DOCTOR OF MINISTRY THESIS PROJECT ABSTRACT

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The purpose of this qualitative study was to examine the spiritual practices of early childhood teachers at Kingdom Collegiate Academies Early Childhood Program at Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship Church. The research study was designed to develop a professional training program to increase staff effectiveness and alignment with the Spirit of the Ministry traits at Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship Church. The program was delivered through a biblically based discipleship and Spirit of the Ministry training program. Through the Bible study, each trait was examined and discussed to solicit adherence to the various traits. During the study, early childhood teachers grew in their understanding that biblical knowledge and spiritual disciplines formed the foundation for a holistic worldview of discipleship. The literature review supports the various themes taught throughout the Bible study to the early childhood teachers. A focus on Lawrence Kohlberg's stages of Moral development and James Fowler stages of faith development provide context to the spiritual development of children through adulthood. The design of the research included a discipleship survey and questionnaires. Each instrument provided information, yet more specific research on the effects of the Bible study with the participants needs further exploration. The Bible study, daily devotions, and prayer served a purpose in supporting each teacher in their development for a deeper relationship with Christ and sensitivity to the Holy Spirit. The findings indicate the impact of the Bible study on early childhood teachers and the degree for continuous professional and spiritual growth development in discipleship.

Key Words: discipleship, spiritual disciplines, prayer, worship, Holy Spirit, early childhood, kingdom.

Dedication

To my incredible husband, Willie Brown Jr.

Through the journey of our lives together from the day God created you, I could not have imagined spending my life with you as my spouse and life companion. You have witnessed me grow and mature in my relationship with Christ. Thank you for your love, patience, relentless encouragement, while I worked on this dissertation. I can never repay you for giving so much of your time and patience. I am grateful for your love, care, kindness, and commitment to me.

To my late parents, Adell Sr., and Ola Bell Woods

You inspired me to devote myself to the Lord, family, and pursuit of education. Even though you were not able to attend college, you always wanted one of your children to attend college. It was the desire of my father, Adell for one of his children to become a teacher. He did not realize that his youngest daughter would be a teacher and administrator. Thank you for always believing and encouraging me to reach my highest potential in life.

To my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ

It was at a youth convention that I accepted you as my Lord and Savior. I never knew the decision to follow you would lead to many personal discoveries, failures, and triumphs in life. In Proverbs 3:5–6, Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths. This scripture passages have been my guide through the years. I know that my life with you has been spiritually intimate, discovering purpose in life, and understanding your desire and future for me.

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Abbreviations

ACSI	<i>Association Christian Schools International</i>
CEC	<i>Christian Education Center</i>
DMIN	<i>Doctor of Ministry</i>
DTS	<i>Dallas Theological Seminary</i>
EC	<i>Early Childhood</i>
EC2	<i>Early Childhood Two-Year old</i>
EC3	<i>Early Childhood Three-Year old</i>
EC4	<i>Early Childhood Four-Year old</i>
ESS	<i>Educational Support Staff</i>
EHD	<i>Emotionally Healthy Discipleship</i>
FCAEC	<i>Fellowship Christian Academy Early Childhood</i>
FCA	<i>Fellowship Collegiate Academy</i>
FLC	<i>Family Life Center</i>
GDI	<i>Global Discipleship Initiative</i>
HR	<i>Human Resources</i>
IRB	<i>Independent Review Board</i>
KCA	<i>Kingdom Collegiate Academies</i>
KCAEC	<i>Kingdom Collegiate Academies Early Childhood</i>
KABI	<i>Kingdom Agenda Bible Institute</i>
LUSOD	<i>Liberty University School of Divinity</i>
NT	<i>New Testament</i>

OCBFCDC	<i>Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship Child Development Center</i>
OCBF	<i>Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship Church</i>
OT	<i>Old Testament</i>
SOTM	<i>Spirit of the Ministry</i>
TD	<i>Toddlers</i>
TX	Texas
TXHHS	<i>Texas Health and Human Services</i>

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Introduction

The Early Childhood Program Ministry provides childcare services for working families throughout the metroplex of Dallas County, Texas (TX). The primary purpose of the ministry is to provide a safe, nurturing environment for young children. The vision of the ministry is to provide a superior education for young scholars with a biblical worldview. The Kingdom Collegiate Academies Early Childhood (KCAEC) staff comes from a variety of religious backgrounds and therefore does not acquire the doctrinal teachings of Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship Church (OCBF). The concern is that the KCAEC staff are unfamiliar with some of the core values of the ministry. Over 75 percent of the KCAEC staff attend other local churches or denominations in the surrounding area.

At OCBF Church the “Spirit of the Ministry” (SOTM) traits are foundational to the mission and vision of the ministry. Due to the diversity of religious beliefs, the new early childhood employees need opportunities to learn about the SOTM traits. The traits are designed to demonstrate an alternative Christian lifestyle in the workplace and community. It is through modeling the traits daily that one can witness the transformation of an individual. The KCAEC employees will have opportunities to learn and experience the transformative effects of the Holy Spirit in their lives through spiritual formation teachings. Throughout this project, an emphasis will be on teaching the SOTM traits to gain adherence to the foundational teachings of OCBF Church’s ministry. The seven “Spirit of the Ministry traits are Accountability, Joy, Unity, Integrity, Communication, Excellence, and Servanthood.”¹

¹ *Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship Employee Handbook: Working Together to Advance the Kingdom of God*, (Dallas: Human Resources OCBF Church, 2021), 11.

Ministry Context

Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship Church is an independent, non-denominational ministry located in the community of Oak Cliff in the metroplex of Dallas, TX. Dr. Anthony Tyrone “Tony” Evans is the founder and Senior Pastor of OCBF Church. Dr. Evans, pastors a congregation of over 9,500 people. The church had humble beginnings in the community of Oak Cliff. As a graduate of Dallas Theological Seminary (DTS), Dr. Tony Evans is the first African American to receive a doctoral degree from DTS. He and his wife, Lois Evans obeyed the call to ministry and became the leaders of OCBF Church. In 1976, OCBF Church began with a group of 10 people in the pastor’s home. The official anniversary of OCBF Church is June 6, 1976.² The celebration of this event provides an opportunity to reflect, celebrate and recognize the growth of the ministry. Even though the church’s stability is noteworthy today, there were several relocations in the early days of the ministry.

In the early development of the community of OCBF Church, Dr. Reuben Connor of Black Evangelistic Enterprise, a ministry dedicated to planting Bible churches, along with Dr. Gene Getz of Fellowship Bible Church North was concerned about the need for another strong Bible church in the community of Oak Cliff near Dallas, TX.³ They believed that a Bible Fellowship church could impact the community with an emphasis on the African American community, with biblical teachings by offering an alternative Christian experience. The two men presented this proposal to a young, gifted and, enthusiastic Dallas Theological Seminary student, Tony Evans. At the time, Tony Evans desired to serve God as an evangelist. The obedience to the plan of God produces life changes that will set an individual on a path of spiritual discovery.

² *Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship Employee Handbook*, 11–12.

³ *Ibid.*, 11.

The decision to pastor a local church was a challenge for him as he prayed over it for many days before reaching a decision. Once, Dr. Evans and his wife, Lois Evans accepted the opportunity he contacted his friend, Rev. Crawford Loritts of Norristown, Pennsylvania to join him in starting a new church. The ministry of Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship was built on the proclamation and application of the Word of God. From the core values to doctrine, philosophy, programs, and decisions have their origin and roots in God's Word.⁴

In late 1976, due to the growth of the church, the members moved from the pastor's home to the Cabana Room of the Briargate Apartments clubhouse. During this time the church began to develop programs to meet the needs of the various members of the church and community. The Learning Center designed to provide biblical teaching specifically to children was planned by several individuals. As the church grew from 10 members to 25 families, inadequate space for effective ministry was a challenge. In early 1977, the church moved to Advent Lutheran Church, while increasing the delivery of programs to the members and community. It was not long in 1978, another move became necessary as the church continued to grow and expanded into various other ministries. The next move was to Adelle Turner Elementary School.

One of the primary purposes for the existence of OCBF Church is to be a spiritual community that models the kingdom of God on earth through its members. Church growth creates an opportunity to serve the body of Christ through properly utilizing its resources. To find a permanent location, the church moved in 1979, into the former Faith Bible Church. This structure allowed the ministry to focus on the Oak Cliff community. OCBF Church's motivation to enhance the spiritual growth and development of the members was often done through the various ministries to meet the needs of families, singles, youth, and children.

⁴ *Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship Employee Handbook*, 11–12.

In 1983, as the church grew, the establishment of organizational structures, various ministries and, the restructuring of the four vital experiences of discipleship: Worship, Fellowship, Christian Education and Outreach were instituted throughout the ministry. These four elements would shape the future of the ministry. The goal of the local church is to glorify God by serving in the ministry through membership at OCBF Church. As the church continued rapid growth, Dr. Tony Evans realized the need for support in meeting the spiritual needs of the ministry. Martin Hawkins was hired as the first Assistant Pastor, and Mary Ann Tennison became the first church secretary.⁵

In June 1980, under the direction of Van Howard, the OCBF Child Development Center (OCBF CDC) was established, to provide total childcare for children from 18 months through pre-kindergarten. The establishment of the OCBF CDC represented one of the church's first efforts to reach the Oak Cliff community. In 1983, Larry Mercer joined the pastoral staff as the Associate Pastor of Christian Education. Throughout this time the church grew from 350 to 450 families and then to 600 families.

Due to the impact that education has on the lives of children, in 1984 Fellowship Christian Academy (FCA) was founded with one Kindergarten class in a one-room trailer. The establishment of the school meant families with children had an alternative to the public school. The former OCBF Academy name change was fostered by the desire to be more welcoming to families in the community. The focus on education included the first employees of Frances Harwell as principal, along with teachers, teacher's aides, and additional staff.⁶ Fellowship Christian Academy became an extension of the OCBF ministry to the community.

⁵ *Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship Employee Handbook*, 11.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 12.

Fellowship Christian Academy provided quality education for school-age children along with five employees. The OCBFCDC provided quality childcare in a Christian atmosphere with eighteen employees. By 1990, OCBF Church acquired and remolded the Apple Ridge Day Care Center to accommodate FCA and other OCBF educational programs. The growth of the church continued with goals of further expansion. In 1995, OCBF Church moved into the newly constructed Worship Center.⁷ This building would accommodate over 1,800 members and visitors.

During this time, Dr. Sonny Acho was added to the staff as Associate Pastor of Fellowship. The OCBFCDC adjoined the Family Life Center (FLC) was acquired and remodeled for the education programs. The building was renamed Christian Education Center (CEC). Throughout the growth of FCA, the school added one grade a year after the addition of kindergarten. The school continued to grow with additional teachers, staff, and administration.

The OCBF Worship Center motivated individuals to enhance other areas of the ministry. In 2004, the Christian Education Center was completed and became the new home for Fellowship Christian Academy and other OCBF educational ministries of the church. This building would serve as the permanent home for Fellowship Christian Academy and the Early Childhood (EC) Program.⁸ The opportunity to have both the elementary school and childcare center under one roof was a monumental accomplishment by providing enough room to support each department. The Christian Education Center continues to serve the educational needs of the church and community. Dr. Tony Evans emphasized the importance of providing a Christian Education for children in the community with a biblical worldview.

⁷ *Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship Employee Handbook*, 11.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 11.

The Oak Cliff Fellowship Day Care Center had grown through the decades from Fellowship Christian Academy Preschool to Fellowship Collegiate Academy Early Childhood. The name change did not diminish the unique features of the child development center. It remained dedicated to the spiritual development of young children along with a commitment to families in the community and metroplex of Dallas, TX.

The population of Oak Cliff is approximately 32,091 according to the 2016 United States Census Bureau. The demographics of Oak Cliff are 88 percent Hispanic, 9 percent White, and 2 percent African American. The education levels for individuals with some college or associate degree is 16 percent, Bachelor's degree 8 percent, and Master's degree or higher 3 percent. There is near equity in gender identification of males at 52 percent and females at 48 percent in Oak Cliff. The median household income is \$50,045.⁹ With the knowledge of the current demographics, it is a challenge to attract the nearby community to attend a private school.

Kingdom Collegiate Academies (KCA) is a private Christian school that is composed of two campuses. The main campus is KCA-Dallas Campus, which serves students from 18 months to fifth grade. The secondary campus is KCA-DeSoto that serves students in grades Kindergarten through 12th grade. The KCA Early Childhood (KCAEC) Program is located on the Dallas campus in Oak Cliff. The program serves Toddlers (TD) to Early Childhood four-year-old (EC4) children. Most of the children attending KCAEC are not from the immediate community of Oak Cliff. More than half of the students come from the surrounding communities of Cedar Hill, DeSoto, Duncanville and, Red Oak, TX. Since KCA was once Fellowship Christian Academy, many parents are bringing their children to the place where they attended school as a child.

⁹ United States Census Bureau, U.S. Department of Commerce, USA.gov, accessed May 18, 2021, <https://www.point2homes.com/US/Neighborhood/TX/Dallas-County/Oak-Cliff-Demographics.html>.

The demographics of Kingdom Collegiate Academy Early Childhood are diverse from the teaching staff to the administration. The KCAEC staff is 95 percent African American, 2 percent Hispanic, 2 percent White, and 1 percent Asian American. In the elementary division, the staff is 94 percent African American, 3 percent Hispanic, and 3 percent White. At the middle school and high school, the staff is 10 percent African American, 15 percent Hispanic, and 75 percent White. The KCA-DeSoto campus has a 50 percent African American student population, 10 percent Hispanic, and 40 percent White students. The primary differences in the staff's composition are due to the hiring of staff members from the original Canterbury Episcopal school staff to the KCA-DeSoto campus.

The recruitment of the staff is done through the Human Resources (HR) department. Applicants make their initial contact through the OCBF Church website. All the candidates are screened by a set of criteria established by each department. The candidate's resumé is reviewed by HR to determine if the individual meets certain criteria before setting up an interview. The KCA administrators do not get an opportunity to screen candidates before they are sent for an interview. Once the candidate is invited for an interview, the administrator can ask questions regarding their faith and religious practices.¹⁰ This is an important time to inquire about various beliefs of the candidate's religious background.

A set of interview questions are given to the KCA administrator from the HR department. Once the interview is completed, the questionnaire and recommendation for hire is sent back to HR. The HR team will contact the individual and set up opportunities to complete the application process. After the application process is completed and the candidate accepts the job, then an arrival date is set for the employee to meet with the administrator and staff.

¹⁰ *Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship Employee Handbook*, 25, 29.

The milestones of OCBF Church are remarkable given its humble origins in Oak Cliff, TX. With the diversity in the community, the church is a beacon of light to model an alternative Christian lifestyle to individuals. The church's membership is estimated to be composed of 80 percent African American, 10 percent Hispanic and 10 percent white families or individuals. The composition of the church reflects the cultural changes in the community surrounding OCBF Church. Education is essential to the church and community. With the provision of FCA and the FCA Early Childhood Center, families have become more involved in the ministry. Other notable accomplishments of the ministry include the creation of the Oak Cliff Christian Federal Credit Union to provide financial stability for the employees and families of the church and community.

In 2012, the Turnaround Agenda, and Resale Store provides specific services to the community through low-cost clothing, furniture, and housing materials. The Resale Store is in the church-owned Camp Wisdom Shopping centers in Oak Cliff. The Turnaround Agenda offers services to unemployed individuals, housing assistance and job skill training to local individuals. It is through various community partnerships that the Turnaround Agenda supports other ministries to meet the needs of the community.¹¹

In 2013, a major shift in ministry delivery with the introduction of small groups for singles, couples, women, and men ministries. This emphasis became part of the community life in the church with efforts to better engage, meet needs and connect members to the various programs at OCBF Church. With a new focus on ministry engagement, OCBF Church launched a new building expansion to the Worship Center, with the addition of The Grove. This building addition would serve as a gathering place for the ministry and school.

¹¹ *Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship Employee Handbook*, 11–12.

The Grove includes a conference center, expanded bookstore, snack bar, and administrative offices. The Grove serves as the event center for the entertainment of various ministries throughout the church.¹² The Desperate for Jesus Women's Conference and Kingdom Men Annual Conference is held in this facility. Kingdom Collegiate Academies sponsors recruitment events while showcasing the unique features of the school in the Grove. Parents and community members are invited to get information about enrollment, curriculum, and scholarships.

Frequently, KCA sponsors various informational events throughout the year to reach out to the community and encourage Oak Cliff residents to learn about the educational opportunities available at Kingdom Collegiate Academies. The KCA enrollment office collaborates with the OCBF Media department to advertise school events to the community. Various advertisement efforts are done to enhance and attract families from the community to the school. KCA sponsors a variety of sporting and social events at the school, to invite families to come and visit the school's facility.

Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship Church has maintained its focus on education. In 2019, the church purchased the 32-acre campus of Canterbury Episcopal School.¹³ With the purchase of this property, educational opportunities can be provided in DeSoto, TX. The school grades range from EC4 through twelfth grade. The school is composed of a principal, director of elementary services, office staff, and approximately 15–20 staff members. The enrollment of the school was under 200 students at the beginning of the acquisition of the property and school. There are numerous enrollment incentives to increase student enrollment on the campus.

¹² *Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship Employee Handbook*, 11–12.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 12.

The KCAEC center on the KCA-Dallas campus is the primary location for students 18 months to EC4. In 2020, the EC4 program was relocated from Canterbury to the KCA-Dallas campus. Since the original program at the Canterbury campus had one classroom, the OCBF Church leadership decided to move the teacher to the KCA-Dallas campus, to unite the early childhood program. The Canterbury campus was renamed KCA-DeSoto Campus with a new principal. The school maintained its identity of being a school of educational excellence while encouraging increased enrollment and diversity.

With a new administrative structure on both campuses, Dr. Larry Mercer, Executive Administrator of KCA is instrumental in giving ministerial direction to the educational enterprise for OCBF Church. The Lord has gifted Dr. Mercer with the vision for the educational mission of Kingdom Collegiate Academies. With the educational endeavors of the church in capable hands, the senior pastor can concentrate on various parts of the ministry. In 2019, Dr. Tony Evans became the first African American minister to publish a study Bible and commentary.¹⁴ The two accomplishments were the faithful endeavors of 10 years of dedicated commitment to this project. To maintain the church's focus on the community, OCBF Church purchased the Golf Club of Dallas to enhance community events around sports and recreation.

With the acquisition of the Golf Club of Dallas, it will provide opportunities for KCA to offer courses in golf, tennis, swimming and many other recreational services to the school and community. The advertisement of these opportunities will promote a unique distinction for KCA and other private or public schools. OCBF Church continues its mission to the congregation and community of Oak Cliff. Dr. Tony Evans desired that OCBF Church offer a variety of opportunities to be effective in delivering ministry to a diversity of individuals.

¹⁴ *Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship Employee Handbook*, 11–12.

The OCBF Ministry is an urban church with many unique features focused on the surrounding community of Oak Cliff. The scriptural foundation of OCBF ministry is rooted in its biblical focus on the local church. One of the primary ministries at OCBF Church is the Spiritual Growth Ministry. It forms the framework for small groups with a discipleship focus. Rikk E. Watts shares in Mark 1:16–20 a detailed account of the importance of discipleship as “Jesus call his first disciples.”¹⁵ John D. Grassmick agrees discipleship is prominent in Mark’s gospel, “Discipleship is the expected norm for all who believe the gospel.”¹⁶ Henry H. Halley shares, “Jesus’ primary purpose in coming into the world was to die as the Lamb of God, heal humanity’s broken relationship with God and to rise from the dead to bring eternal life to mankind.”¹⁷ Henry H. Halley states, “In the initial call of the disciples, they believed that Jesus’ purpose was to establish a political world empire and they would be administrators, not preachers telling the story of Jesus.”¹⁸

The disciples as they grew to understand the message of Jesus it became apparent that Jesus was not going to overthrow the Roman empire. As the disciples listened to Jesus, it became known that his message was about the transformation of the hearts of men. The kingdom of God came to create a change in the lives of individuals accepting the gospel message. In Matthew, one of the important themes is the lack of faith of the disciples. Regardless of their faith response, Jesus remained faithful to teach and train them to become disciples. Jesus knew that one day they would be the leaders to change the world.

¹⁵ Rikk E. Watts, *NIV Biblical Theology Study Bible: Follows God’s Redemptive Plan as it Unfolds throughout Scripture*, ed. D. A. Carson (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2018), 1770.

¹⁶ John D. Grassmick, *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: New Testament*, ed. John F. Walvoord and Roy B. Zuck (Colorado Springs: David C. Cook Publishers, 1984), 108.

¹⁷ Henry H. Halley, *Halley’s Bible Handbook* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2007), 515.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 516.

The KCA Early Childhood teachers will participate in a Bible study with the objective of training them to become disciple makers. The aim is to support their spiritual growth through the various experiences during the Bible study. Each of their biblical tasks will assist them in understanding the SOTM. Similar, to Jesus in training his disciples, the teachers will go through everyday encounters that will support them in understanding discipleship. Gerald L. Borchert shares, “Christian discipleship involves more than quoting the teacher. Christians are to take Jesus’ yoke upon them and learn of him (Matt. 11:29). They are to obey his commandments (John 8:51, 14:15). Obedience involves more than words (John 8:12, 2 Cor. 5:7, John 14:6).”¹⁹

As the KCAEC teachers go through their daily work tasks, an aim of the training is to support their integration of faith with relationships at work and home. The concept of discipleship will be explored in depth during the Bible study on discipleship and SOTM traits. One primary purpose is the application of the SOTM into the work environment. The teachers will explore some of the practices, like daily prayer and worship that will enhance their relationship with the Lord. Millard J. Erickson shares insights regarding discipleship. He states “Repentance and acceptance of the lordship of Christ is necessary for discipleship. Discipleship is embedded in Matthew 28:19, where Jesus commands his disciples to “go and make disciples.”²⁰ Donald A. Hagner shares, “The word for ‘disciple’ (mathetes) occurs more in Matthew (73 times) than in the other Synoptic Gospels, and the verb ‘to make disciples/be disciplined’ (matheteuo) is found only in the book of Matthew.”²¹

¹⁹ Gerald L. Borchert, *The Eerdmans Companion to the Bible*, ed. Gordon D. Fee and Robert L. Hubbard Jr. (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2011), 598.

²⁰ Millard J. Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2013), 868.

²¹ Donald A. Hagner, *New Dictionary of Biblical Theology*, ed. T. Desmond Alexander et al. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), 266.

Problem Presented

The problem is the KCAEC staff are unfamiliar with the seven “Spirit of the Ministry” traits that are foundational to the church. There is a lack of a professionally developed mission-aligned training program for Early Childhood Educators serving at Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship Early Childhood Program. To address the problem, the researcher will develop a mission-align professional training program to increase staff effectiveness and alignment with the mission, vision, and values of Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship in the following ways:

1. Develop a Pre-Training program survey to assess the level of staff alignment with discipleship and the Spirit of the Ministry traits.
2. Develop and deliver a biblical based Discipleship and Spirit of the Ministry Training Program to align the Early Childhood staff with the values of Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship.
3. Develop a Post-Training Program Survey to assess the level of staff alignment with the Spirit of the Ministry. The Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship’s Spirit of the Ministry provides a framework for establishing curriculum topics to equip teachers with a mission-aligned research-based training program. The Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship Spirit of Ministry values serve as the resource used to develop the traits in their membership and staff.²¹

Many of the staff members in the EC program do not attend OCBF Church and therefore are unfamiliar with the ministry’s vision, mission, and goals. In the EC program, it is estimated that approximately 75 percent of the 31 KCAEC staff do not attend OCBF Church. Current hiring practices requires employees to be Christian, yet they are not required to attend OCBF Church. The administrative leaders and directors are required to be members of OCBF Church.

²¹ *Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship Employee Handbook*, 8–10.

The KCA leadership team is constantly involved in professional development trainings regarding the ministry. There are opportunities to read various books, director's meetings along with lunch and learn seminars for all administrative staff members. These staff development opportunities do include the EC teachers and staff. It is important for each department to be responsible for the staff development of their employees. Therefore, it is imperative through a staff development program designed for every new and existing EC employee to know the mission, vision, and values of OCBF Church. Many of the EC employees maintain their membership at other local churches or denominations. Due to the EC staff attendance and membership in other ministries, they are not hearing or receiving the same teachings offered at OCBF Church. One main difference is the Christian education opportunities, OCBF Church offers through the Kingdom Agenda Bible Institute (KABI) to employees to support their spiritual growth and maturity.

One essential focus of OCBF Church is the spiritual formation and discipleship among the membership. Jonathan Morrow shares, "Spiritual formation develops through a personal relationship with God, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit."²² It is the transforming of individuals into Christlike behavior and character. At the same time, Morrow shares, "Discipleship is the ability to make sure that the principles of the gospel are in the lives of mature believers in Christ, to be transferred on to future generations."²³ By equipping the teachers with a thorough understanding and practical application of the church's ministry philosophy, it is anticipated that they will be better positioned to contribute to the spiritual development of their students, thus extending the church's mission within and beyond the classroom.

²² Jonathan Morrow, *Foundations of Spiritual Formation: A Community Approach to becoming like Christ*, ed. Paul Pettit (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publication, 2008), 45.

²³ Ibid., 47.

Every day the children are introduced to biblical stories meant to support their spiritual growth and development. If the individual teaching the curriculum is not familiar with the specific curriculum scope and sequence, along with the teaching focus and doctrinal beliefs of OCBF Church, in that case, the biblical knowledge cannot be properly transferred to the children. All the teachers are Christians, yet there is a need for a biblically based, mission aligned discipleship program.

As the EC teachers are exposed and learn about the SOTM traits, the teacher will teach the traits to the children as part of their daily Bible study and instruction. The EC teachers participate in Bible studies and devotions throughout the school year. However, specific OCBF Church doctrinal teaching is not the focus of these Bible studies. Darrell L. Bock shares, “A discipleship and spiritual formation framework can be emphasized during bible study sessions.”²⁴ If EC teachers and staff are invited to participate in authentic spiritual formation instruction, then they can understand, and appreciate the SOTM traits, and utilize the traits in their personal lives. As a Christian ministry, every employee in the EC program is to understand the importance of doctrinal beliefs through discipleship and spiritual formation with the SOTM at OCBF Church.

Through this research, the intention to gather in depth insights into the teachers’ perspectives, their application of spiritual principles in the classroom, and the challenges they face in aligning with the church’s ministry philosophy are essential to the personal and professional development of the EC educators. The goal of this initiative is to ensure that the EC program not only aligns with, but also actively promotes the mission of OCBF Church.

²⁴ Darrell L. Bock, *Foundations of Spiritual Formation: A Community Approach to Becoming Like Christ*, ed. Paul Pettit (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publication, 2008), 105.

Purpose Statement

This DMIN action research project aims to teach affirmation and adherence of the SOTM traits to the KCAEC staff. The seven Spirit of the Ministry traits are Accountability, Joy, Unity, Integrity, Communication, Excellence, and Servanthood. These attributes form the foundation for the ministry and teaching.²⁵ The desired goal is to model and teach each SOTM traits systematically to encourage participation, comprehension, and retention of the information.

Each staff member will embrace the alignment of the SOTM attributes in teaching and spiritual formation. The EC teachers will model the SOTM attributes daily throughout the work environment and culture. The staff will affirm and internalize the SOTM by being more spiritually attuned to the teaching and example of Jesus Christ. The transfer of knowledge will occur when the teachers and staff are consistently modeling through behavior, speech, and character the seven SOTM traits. The EC program's function is to create a positive, nurturing, caring environment that permits individuals to thrive and grow as they teach children.

The EC program is the initial introduction to teachings about Christ for many students. According to Richard Averbeck, "Worship of the triune God is the most spiritually formative practice available to Christians."²⁶ Worship, prayer, scriptural reading, and teaching of Bible stories are an essential part of the continued growth of the EC children during their formative years. The EC children will be taught the SOTM traits and worship in a developmentally appropriate manner. Richard Averbeck shares, "Spiritual formation begins with calling on the name of the Lord."²⁷

²⁵ *Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship Employee Handbook*, 8–9.

²⁶ Richard Averbeck, *Foundations of Spiritual Formation: A Community Approach to Becoming Like Christ*, ed. Paul Pettit (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publication, 2008), 52.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 60.

Basic Assumptions

During a meeting with the senior pastor and executive administrator of KCA, there is an assumption of affirmation and encouragement to work on a thesis project discussing the history of Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship Church. This thesis project assumes that OCBF Church will support the gathering of historical data, artifacts, and general information regarding the history of the church and KCA child development center. Documents will be provided to the researcher.

Another assumption is that the early pioneers in the OCBF ministry and school will embrace the thesis project and share some of the oral histories of the church. Documents that show some of the histories of OCBF include school yearbooks, a photo gallery in the Senior Pastor's office, and church photo albums of members in the early evolution of the church. An important assumption is that church officials and influential individuals that were part of the origins of the ministry and school will make themselves available for interviews, conversations, and sharing of stories, as members of OCBF Church.

It is assumed that if the KCAEC teachers and staff learn and adopt the SOTM traits, it will enhance the operational procedures of the center. The adherence to the SOTM traits will make a difference in the educational influence on the students. It is assumed that this research approach is the most effective way to enhance discipleship and spiritual growth. An assumption aligned with the purpose of the church is that through equipping the teachers to understand the practical application of the church's ministry philosophy, they will promote the mission of Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship Church, "Disciple the church to impact the world." It is assumed that the teachers will experience changed behavior due to learning about the SOTM and applying them to their lives. The assumption that this research can be used to affect the future staff development of KCA and the church community. It is assumed that on June 6, 2023, Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship Church will celebrate 49 years of ministry in the community of Oak Cliff.

Definitions

Spiritual Formation

The term spiritual formation has been confused with other terms such as spiritual development, spiritual growth, and spiritual enrichment. None of these words get at the true meaning of spiritual formation. Individuals have used these terms to explain and clarify spiritual formation with other words that might support its importance. Jonathan Morrow shares, “The simple definition that spiritual formation is divinely enabled by God, which requires the Father, Son, Holy Spirit, and the Word of God along with God’s people.”²⁸ Spiritual formation is the transformation by Holy Spirit to resemble the behavior and traits of Jesus Christ.

Spiritual formation cannot happen effectively outside of the body of Christ. Evan B. Howard shares, “Christian transformation is a Spirit and human led process of ever changing into the likeness to the life and gospel of God.”²⁹ Howard shares, “Spiritual formation is a life journey for every believer in Christ. In essence, spiritual formation requires a change towards the image of Christ through behavioral, emotional, social, and spiritual changes.”³⁰ It requires a commitment of daily dying to self and taking up the cross to follow Jesus (Luke 9:23). Spiritual formation requires a deep change in our attitudes and beliefs system. As a person develops a personal intimacy with the Holy Spirit, there are significant changes in the individual’s personal worldviews. There may be times when the Holy Spirit requires an individual to make significant life-style changes. The Holy Spirit can reach into the deeper places of our lives that deal with the emotions, intellect, and relationships to create change.

²⁸ Morrow, *Foundations of Spiritual Formation*, 45.

²⁹ Evan B. Howard, *A Guide to Christian Spiritual Formation: How Scripture, Spirit, Community and Mission Shape our Souls*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2018), 84.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 46–47.

Discipleship

The comprehension of discipleship has taken on new meaning with the resurgence of spiritual formation that is tied to discipleship. Ministries throughout the world are searching for the most effective ways to encourage discipleship within the church. Howard states, “The distinctive features of discipleship are the disciple, follower, or apprentice look to the teacher who is modeling spiritual formation through guidance, encouragement, mentoring and coaching on spiritual matters with Bible studies, teaching, preaching but mainly through direct contact and modeling.”³¹ Bobby Harrington and Alex Absalom views “Discipleship as simply helping people to follow Jesus. As individuals learn to follow Jesus, it flows through a trusting relationship. One believes that God’s Word and promises are valid to change one’s life.”³² Being a disciple means giving Jesus’ priority in one’s life.

Many leaders establish disciples by leading emerging adults to accept the Lord, Jesus Christ as one’s Savior and giving spiritual food for growth. David Odom shares, “The goal of community building with disciples is to lead them to become disciples-makers. Some individuals believe that leaders should establish four growth areas of developing relationships, building community, establishing disciples, and producing disciple-makers.”³³ Discipleship fosters a maturity in relationships with other people. The early childhood teachers are encouraged through this process to develop positive relationships with each other. The EC teachers are encouraged to share their faith with family and friends. The process of sharing one’s faith requires simply praying for the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

³¹ Evan Howard, 52.

³² Bobby Harrington and Alex Absalom, *Discipleship that Fits: The Five kinds of Relationships God Uses to Help us Grow* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2016), 19.

³³ David Odom, *Together We Equip: Integrating Discipleship and Ministry Leadership for Holistic Spiritual Formation*, ed. Jody Dean and Hal Stewart (Bloomington, IN: West Bow Press, 2018), 146–47.

Kingdom of God and Kingdom Agenda

A kingdom approach to ministry is the theme that is part of the biblical approach to ministry at Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship Church. Psalm 145 refers to God's kingdom as an everlasting kingdom, that the rule of this kingdom will endure through all generations. This means that God's authority is eternal. A focus of OCBF Church is the Kingdom Agenda. The Kingdom Agenda stated by Tony Evans, "As the visible demonstration of the comprehensive rule of God over every area of life. OCBF Vision statement is to have transformed lives that transfer the values of the kingdom of God. To understand the ministry of OCBF Church is to embrace the Kingdom Agenda. The mission statement is discipling the church to impact the world."³⁴ At OCBF Church, members are taught the principles of the kingdom of God so they can learn to function under the authority of the kingdom in every dimension of life. Through the proper blending of God's Word with good works, the church's goal is to visibly model God's kingdom on earth as it is in heaven.

The focus of the early childhood program is to model Christlike behavior in the workplace among their colleagues, families, and the children. One of the reasons why parents choose KCA-Early Childhood is because of the Christian environment. The staff is aware of how their behavior affects the work environment. Frequently, there are conversations as to how the staff can improve their relationships with each other. It is important for the teachers to become aware of the seven traits of the ministry. The traits of the ministry include Accountability, Joy, Unity, Integrity, Communication, Excellence and Servanthood. For the teachers to understand the essence of the Kingdom Agenda, they will participate in a biblically aligned approach to support their understanding of kingdom principles.

³⁴ Tony Evans, *The Kingdom Agenda: Life under God* (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2013), 29.

Limitations

One of the limitations to this thesis project is the Early Childhood staff may not desire to participate in the project. There are time schedules limitations on arranging meetings for interviews and amount of time to conduct the research. Another significant limitation is the changes in staff due to resignations or retirements with childcare personnel. A limitation in the population of the individuals chosen to be part of this thesis project. The participants are early childhood female teachers, not the entire KCA teaching staff. The location of the research will be limited to the KCA-Dallas center, because most of the EC employees work at this site. The limitation of choosing to focus on discipleship and the SOTM instead a broader theological topic, along with the need for adherence to the traits in the school's culture and work environment can limit the scope and findings of the thesis project.

The proposed time for the teaching of the traits will be seven to twelve weeks. Will this be enough time to gather important information regarding change to get an accurate sample of spiritual transformation and discipleship? Another important limitation will be whether transformational change is due to the participation of the Early Childhood director in this thesis project, or a heartfelt desire for change by the participants due to the relational change with Jesus. These limitations are significant to the overall success of the thesis project.

Delimitations

The purpose of this study of the KCA Early Childhood Program in spiritual formation and discipleship is to enhance the growth of each staff member regarding the importance of spiritual formation and adherence of the seven Spirit of the Ministry traits in their personal lives and workplace. The researcher delimited this research to the following: educational setting of the study, participants, location of the study, the age range of the participants, gender of the

participants, local church of the participants and the research method. One of the most significant delimitations in this study is the selection of conducting the thesis project on the campus of KCA-Dallas campus with the Early Childhood Program teachers and staff. Another delimitation is this group of teacher's age range will include female teachers from 20 years to 70 years to observe the differences in spiritual maturity. The ministry of OCBF Church may be a delimitation due to its location in southern Dallas. The choice to delimit multiple child development centers for this research, is due to time, transportation, and availability of EC teachers at another location.

Thesis Statement

If the Kingdom Collegiate Early Childhood Staff practices the seven traits of the Spirit of the Ministry through a spiritual formation biblical program, then their lives will be transformed. The SOTM traits is designed to become part of the spiritual transformation of individuals working at OCBF Church. The knowledge and comprehension of the seven traits should be applied throughout the day by observation and practice. Employees are encouraged to internalize the essence of the traits to monitor changed behavior, attitudes and work ethic throughout the campus and their personal lives.

The EC Program is one of over fifty ministries at OCBF Church. Each ministry's focus is on the spiritual formation of the employees. Greg Ogden shares, "The New Testament teaches discipleship through the Apostle Paul, "I urge you to intimate me," (1 Cor 4:16) and "You become imitators of us and the Lord," (1 Thess 1:6)."³⁵ Over a three-year period Jesus taught his disciples principles that have been transferred to millions throughout church history.

³⁵ Greg Ogden, *Discipleship Essentials: A Guide to Building your Life in Christ* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2018), 7.

Discipleship is a process that requires time and devotion to the apprentice through consistent attention to the relationship. It is a vital step to understanding and evaluating the needs of spiritual growth of the mentee. Clearly, as Greg Ogden shares, “Discipleship is transferred through modeling Christian values and disciplines to the lives of individual.”³⁶ Each EC staff member is encouraged to pray, read the Bible, learn scripture, and worship the Lord. The teaching of the SOTM traits can lead to spiritual formation of the EC staff. Each teacher can develop a deeper relationship with the Lord. The observable difference of spiritual formation in the staff should transfer to the teaching of the Bible to the children.

Leadership is a key ingredient to the success of a discipleship program. As a leader, periods of solitude are essential to personal growth. M. Robert Mulholland Jr. and Ruth Haley Barton shares, “The discipline of solitude is a key for all leaders who seek after God. It is the primary place where the leader’s soul is strengthening and renewed.”³⁷ In the EC program, leadership provides the direction, guidance, and motivation to the staff. Yet, opportunities to engage in personal discipleship can be elusive if one does not focus on being in the presence of God. The journey of leadership is modeled in Moses. He had to find his identity and purpose in God to fulfill the destiny God had for him. Throughout his relationship with God, he discovered periods of time with God were essential in understanding how to govern the Israelite people (Ex. 24:12–18). During challenging times, Moses’ encounters with God in solitude were clearly his lifeline, and only means of survival. Every leader will experience times of uncertainty, yet the discipline of solitude assists the individual in developing a deeper relationship with God. The EC teachers are encouraged to practice solitude to deepen their relationship.

³⁶ Ogden, *Discipleship Essentials*, 71.

³⁷ M. Robert Mulholland Jr., and Ruth Haley Burton, *Invitation to a Journey: A Road Map for Spiritual Formation* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2016), 159-61.

CHAPTER 2: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Literature Review

Spiritual formation is the process of allowing the Holy Spirit over time to develop Christlike character, behavior and attitudes in the work environment and culture. The staff at KCAEC is responsible for the care and welfare for approximately 190 children. The EC program is designed to support the cognitive, physical, social-emotional, and spiritual development of children ages 18 months through 4 years of age.

New employees may not be aware of the seven Spirit of the Ministry traits and their implication for spiritual growth and development. The literature review covers spiritual formation, discipleship, leadership, worship, a community of faith, teaching, preaching, the kingdom of God, and missions. One of the most interesting aspects of working in a Christian early childhood educational setting is to equip individuals to understand the doctrinal truths of the OCBF ministry. Among the employees at Kingdom Collegiate Early Childhood Program at OCBF Church, there are significant differences in the spiritual knowledge and comprehension of the basic core values of the ministry. According to the OCBF Handbook, *The Spirit of the Ministry*, at OCBF Church, describes the core values of the church.¹ These seven ministry elements are Accountability, Joy, Unity, Integrity, Communication, Excellence, and Servanthood.² These core values are taught routinely to the members of OCBF Church. However, employees throughout the ministry may not attend OCBF Church, therefore, the core values of the ministry may not routinely be taught to all staff in various ministry areas. Therefore, it is essential for the EC teachers to learn about the SOTM traits.

¹ *Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship Employee Handbook*, 11.

² *Ibid.*, 13.

The KCA Early Childhood Program provides an essential service to the community and church. The teaching staff will benefit from a teaching framework that focuses on the core values of the ministry. To support the employees in understanding the core values of the ministry, the literature review will focus on a variety of themes related to spiritual growth and development.

Salvation and Prayer

According to Jonathan Morrow, who explains the importance of the “Doctrine of salvation (soteriology) in which an individual becomes a Christian and joins in a love relationship with Christ, where individuals can begin to understand the benefits of salvation. Believers experience the benefits that accompany justification through substitution, regeneration (John 3:3, Titus 3:5), redemption (Gal 3:13), propitiation, reconciliation (2 Cor 5:18–21), adoption (John 1:12, Rom 8:14–17), baptism by the Holy Spirit and eternal security/assurance of salvation.”³

Once an individual becomes a believer in Christ, there is a change in their relationship with the world. The process of understanding the basic tenets of discipleship begins. Greg Ogden, author, and partner in the Global Discipleship Initiative (GDI), shares, “Disciple-making ensures that the gospel is embedded deeply in the lives of mature believers who serve as links to the future. Discipling is the relationship where we intentionally walk alongside a growing disciple or disciples to encourage, correct, and challenge them in love to grow toward maturity in Christ.”⁴ As individuals grow in maturity in Christ, the discipling relationships are essential in modeling behaviors and attitudes that imitate Christ. Prayer is an essential element of personal growth as new converts understand the meaning of devotion to Jesus Christ.

³ Morrow, *Foundations of Spiritual Formation*, 43.

⁴ Ogden, *Discipleship Essentials*, 7.

The process of maturity takes time, effort, and planning to ensure growth and development of the believer. In an employer-employee relationship, there are opportunities to assist in the personal growth of employees, yet dedicated time to specifically focus on spiritual formation can be illusive in the work environment. So, the question becomes what are some of the first steps towards spiritual maturity? With a new believer in Christ, one of the first steps is to teach the individual how to pray. Prayer is communication with God. Evan B. Howard, author, founder and director of Spirituality Shoppe, shares, “Christian prayer is communication with God. It includes three central elements: speaking (using verbal communication as a model), listening, and what can be referred to as the space in between.”⁵

In the Lord’s Prayer, Jesus taught his disciples to pray (Matt 6:9–13; Luke 11:2–4). It contains adoration, petitions, confessions, and consecration along with thanksgiving. Learning how to pray effectually (Jer 33:3, Matt 7:7–8, I John 5:14–15) is a daily process that requires commitment, dedication, and a growing relationship with the Lord. Prayer is the essential element that will yield substantial growth in a believer’s life.

Worship and Holy Spirit

In a Christian environment, worship and praise to God is important in the spiritual formation process. Evan Howard shares, “Learning how to worship was one of the critical elements in the Old Testament and throughout Scripture.”⁶ After Creation (Gen1–2) Adam and Eve enjoyed a close relationship with God. It was not until after the Fall of Mankind (Genesis 3), that the Creator’s alienation from his creation came into existence. The Creator’s desire for humanity is to live in harmony with him and the rest of nature (Genesis 1:1).

⁵ Howard, *A Guide to Christian Spiritual Formation*, 129.

⁶ Ibid., 114–15.

God taught his people how to worship him throughout the Bible (I Chr 16:29, 29:28, Ps 66:4, 95:6). Bernie A. Van De Walle, professor of historical and systemic theology at Ambrose University, shares that the clear teaching of the Old Testament is, “God and God alone is worthy of worship (Exod 20:3; 34:14, Deut 5:7; 6:13–14; Ps 94:4–5, 2 Kgs 17:35–36). This worship is due him because of his mighty deeds of creation and salvation.”⁷ As an individual matures in their journey with Christ, learning how to honor the Lord is in worship, praise, thanksgiving, and adoration. Spiritual formation occurs when the individual cooperates with the Holy Spirit for renewal and growth.

When our human spirit is renewed through acceptance of Christ through redemption for salvation, the Holy Spirit comes to do specific things in our life. Klaus Issler, professor of Christian education and theology at Biola University, shares, “The significant work of the third Person of the Trinity. The sanctification and empowerment for ministry is strictly the work of the Holy Spirit. The ministry of the Holy Spirit gives the assistance for living well within God’s kingdom. It is only through the Holy Spirit that one can mature in a Christian community.”⁸

Understanding the value of worship is essential to the spiritual growth and development for the early childhood staff. Evan Howard emphasizes, “Everyone will eventually come to the knowledge of how to express their personal admiration, absolute surrender, and unconditional obedience to God.”⁹ The Early Childhood teachers will participate in activities to enhance their understanding of the Holy Spirit. The journey to spiritual maturity is a lifetime pursuit with worship being at the core of the process.

⁷ Bernie A. Van De Walle, *Rethinking Holiness: A Theological Introduction* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2017), 34.

⁸ Klaus Issler, *The Formation of Christian Character: Living into the Life of Jesus* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2012), 129.

⁹ Howard, *A Guide to Christian Spiritual Formation*, 120.

Community of Faith and Leadership

The church exists as a unique body of individuals formed and centered around the Word of God. Ecclesiology stands as an assembly, group of individuals formed by the Holy Spirit to accomplish God's divine will on Earth. There is no other body that functions quite like the church and its ministry calling to the world. Gordon Johnston defines the community of faith by sharing, "Scripture emphasizes the role of the community of faith, the church in cultivating the ethical morality of the individual. While the character of God is the focus of the moral life, the community of faith, the church serves as the catalyst."¹⁰

It is through this community of faith, the church, develops relationships that assist in the spiritual formation process. A central focus of the church is to develop and enhance an individual's relationship with God. New believers especially need support to grow and mature. Paul Pettit shares, "Spiritual formation is the enlightening process of the triune God transforming the believer's life and character towards the new life and character of Jesus Christ, accomplished by the ministry of the Holy Spirit in the context of biblical community."¹¹

With all the many ministry functions of the church, it would not exist without biblically based teaching and the role of leadership in the body of Christ. The ministry of OCBF Church is a biblically based ministry that teaches its members about the principles and authority of the kingdom of God and to be a visible model of God's kingdom on earth as it is in heaven. Even with the varied denominations throughout the world, the Christian church stands as a beacon of hope for individuals seeking a relationship with the Savior, Jesus Christ.

¹⁰ Gordon Johnston, *Foundations of Spiritual Formation: A Community Approach to Becoming like Christ*, ed. Paul Pettit (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publication, 2008), 76.

¹¹ Paul Pettit, *Foundations of Spiritual Formation: A Community Approach to Becoming like Christ*, ed. Paul Pettit (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publication, 2008), 24.

Leadership is the key to the success of any spiritual formation and discipleship quest within the local church. A leader's role is essential in the acquisition of knowledge and expertise in identifying the problems and working towards a realistic solution. In describing an effective leader, J. Oswald Sanders, author, and consulting director of Overseas Missionary Fellowship shares, "Spiritual leadership requires the Holy Spirit empowerment, which can never be generated by the self. There is no such thing as a self-made spiritual leader. Leaders influences others, spiritually only because the Holy Spirit works in and through the individual to a greater degree than in those he leads."¹²

The spiritual role of the leader is important because ultimately, ministers desire to lead like Jesus. Sanders further asserts, "Jesus' classroom were the highways of life among people. His principles and values came through during daily existence. Jesus placed disciples into internships (Luke 10:17–24), that enabled them to learn through failure and success (Mark 9:14–29). He delegated authority and responsibility to them as they were able to receive it."¹³ It is the desire of the future trainings with the KCAEC teachers for them to embrace their leadership qualities.

Leaders within the church cast vision for the community of faith. Alignment with the community of faith and the role of leaders is critical to the spiritual formation of individuals. A leader influenced by the Holy Spirit will be sensitive to the need for personal spiritual growth and development of individuals in the congregation. The challenge is whether the individuals see the need for a deeper experience with Christ. The leadership of the early childhood program is committed to the spiritual growth of each employee through a discipleship process.

¹² J. Oswald Sanders, *Spiritual Leadership: Principles of Excellence for every Believer* (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2007), 28.

¹³ Ibid. 51.

Teaching, Preaching and Spiritual Warfare

Kingdom Collegiate Academy Early Childhood is a Christian-based child development center. Our beliefs include understanding that every child is made in the image of God (*imago dei*) and has limitless potential for physical, emotional, and spiritual growth and development. As a result, one of the primary goals is to teach biblical based practices through the curriculum, *Frog Street* and *Purposeful Design* Bible curriculum. Spiritual formation is vital to the maturity of the teachers and has a significant role in the research related to spiritual formation in children. Kathy Frady, Department Chair, SUM Bible College and Theological Seminary, shares, “There are parallels between the social-emotional elements of *Frog Street Curriculum* and potential spiritual formation of young children. While this is not the intent of the curriculum, spiritual formation parallels are present in the curriculum and may be used by teachers in faith-based early learning centers to support the spiritual formation of young children.”¹⁴ Frady further shares, “Even though the Frog Street curriculum was not designed to promote spiritual formation in young children, due to the various teaching components of the curriculum, children acquire the beginnings of spiritual formation through the usage of the curriculum.”¹⁵

Since the Frog Street curriculum emphasizes positive patterns of behavior, it supports the objectives of OCBF Church without really focusing on Christian values. It is important to reiterate that one of the unexpected outcomes of the research on Frog Street is that it supports shaping the spiritual lives of young children. The spiritual formation of the teachers at KCAEC is significant to the well-being of themselves and the development of the children.

¹⁴ Kathy Frady, “Spiritual Formation Parallels to Social-emotional Learning Curriculum: A Contextual Analysis of Frog Street Curriculum,” *International Journal of Children’s Spirituality* 24, no. 4 (2019): 405. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1364436X.2019.1672629>.

¹⁵ Ibid. 405.

Early Childhood teachers are encouraged to seek the Lord through prayer, reading their Bibles, devotionals, attending chapel and worshipping God. Richard Villodas emphasizes, “All these disciplines are encouraged to enhance their relationship with the Lord, because God is committed to our spiritual formation.”¹⁶ Each employee is encouraged to focus on their spiritual growth. Change occurs when teachers develop a personal, intimate relationship with the Lord. Ruth Haley Barton, founder of Transforming Center, shares, “Working together for a common purpose, we seek to find ways to be loving toward each other in the work environment, to affirm one another’s gifts and unique contributions to our shared work and purpose.”¹⁷

The shared work of the EC teachers includes biblical teaching as well as educational instruction to the children. One of the benefits of being in a Christian environment is the opportunity to engage with other believers. It promotes unique experiences for spiritual growth through discipleship. Teaching is a ministry gift from God (Rom 12:6–7, Luke 1:1–4). It is the desire to share with students spiritual and natural knowledge. The teaching ministry is one that requires patience, practice, and professional development. The EC teachers receive professional development in Christian Education every year. Bobby Harrington shares, “To have the opportunity to share the Word of God with young children is a unique calling, given the age and maturity of the audience. People are not born knowing how to embrace Jesus as Lord.”¹⁸ Young children are taught about Jesus through the Word of God. Early Childhood teachers embrace opportunities to gather, share, pray and celebrate the achievements of the children.

¹⁶ Richard Villodas, *The Deeply Formed Life: Five Transformative Values to Root us in the Way of Jesus* (Colorado Springs: Water Brook, 2020), 19.

¹⁷ Ruth Haley Barton, *Strengthening the Soul of your Leadership: Seeking God in the Crucible of Ministry* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2018), 181.

¹⁸ Bobby Harrington and Josh Patrick, *The Disciple Maker’s Handbook: 7 Elements of a Discipleship Lifestyle* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2017), 25.

In seeking a personal relationship experience, Robert Cox and Robert Peck shares, “The ultimate purpose of God for all people is to be more like Jesus (Rom 13), in whose image humanity was originally created. Ultimately, life is all about personal and relational son-ship development with Christ.”¹⁹ It is this developmental process that is encouraged in the spiritual formation of the KCAEC teachers. The gifts of teaching and preaching are the heartbeat of a Christian school and campus. Whether the staff is listening to a sermon by the pastor/ministers, participating in chapel or sharing a Bible lesson with each other, there is this constant revelation of God’s Word being shared among staff members.

Regardless of the atmosphere, there is a continued need and reliance on prayer with the EC teachers. Sanders shares, “All Christians need more teaching in the art and practice of prayer, and the Holy Spirit is the master teacher. The Spirit’s help in prayer is mentioned in the Bible more frequently than any other help He gives us.”²⁰ KCAEC teachers guide children in prayer and Scripture memory verses daily. This investment in the children has yielded an awareness of God’s Word by the children.

It is through prayer that individuals get an opportunity to know the Lord. Taking the time to pray can be a challenge even in the life of Jesus. Bruce Epperly, author, and professor of Practical Theology at Lancaster Theological Seminary shares, “A Day in the life of Jesus. After teaching, preaching, and healing all day, Jesus arises early and goes to a quiet place to pray. He needs to seek solitude to be with the Father.”²¹ Every day is an opportunity to seek solitude and spend time with the Lord. This practice is a model for the KCAEC teachers.

¹⁹ William Cox, Jr., and Robert A. Peck, “Christian Education as Discipleship Formation,” *Christian Education Journal*, 15 no. 2 (2018): 251, DOI:10.1177/0739891318778859.

²⁰ Sanders, *Spiritual Leadership*, 86.

²¹ Bruce Epperly, *A Center in the Cyclone: Twenty-First Century Clergy Self-Care* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2014), 118.

In the daily disruptions throughout KCA, there is a tendency to not be fully equipped to deal with various challenges from individuals, administration, parents, and staff members. Spiritual warfare and distractions become evident when things begin to unsettle the natural flow of the day and ministry. Prayer is the first weapon to use in KCAEC staff's arsenal of tools to fight against destructive spiritual forces (Eph 6:11–13, Jas 4:7, 1 Pet 5:8).

Kingdom of God and Discipleship

The central theme and identity of OCBF Church and KCA is the belief in being the reflection of God's kingdom on earth. From the usage of the seven SOTM traits into daily life on the campus, all of it is seen from the perspective of the kingdom. Jesus taught about the kingdom of God, as God's transforming presence, power and goodness manifested in the community of Jesus' disciples and other individuals (Matt 5:13–16). Bruce Demarest shares, "The lifelong process of spiritual transformation is the work of the triune God."²² With a focus on kingdom principles, the KCAEC teachers are encouraged to understand their role as reflected in the seven SOTM and the relevance to their personal lives. Richard Foster shares, "The importance of understanding the biblical perspective of "seeking first (Matt 6:33) the kingdom of God and righteousness."²³ In essence, it is getting to know the Lord in a deep, personal relationship. The OCBF ministry focus is adherence to the Word of God. The KCAEC teachers are encouraged to understand the focus of the church and adhere to the doctrinal beliefs. The biblical curriculum, *Purposeful Design* allows the children to focus on a biblical personality each week. The children are taught Christian principles through the daily lessons.

²² Bruce Demarest, *The Kingdom Life: A Practical Theology of Discipleship and Spiritual Formation*, ed. Alan Andrews (Colorado Springs: NAVPRESS, 2020), 246.

²³ Richard J. Foster, *Celebration of Discipline: The Path to Spiritual Growth* (New York: Harper Collins, 2018), 86.

The kingdom agenda along with discipleship reflects the core values of the OCBF Church's ministry. To understand discipleship, its importance to the ministry, the equipping process, and growing in a group setting requires commitment to the spiritual growth and development of the employees. Individuals have shared the value of understanding group dynamics in a ministry context. At KCAEC, the teachers are in grade level teams. For example, there are the Toddlers (TD), Early Childhood two years old (EC2), Early Childhood three-year old (EC3) and Early Childhood four-year old (EC4) grade level teams. Each team has a leader and Bible teacher for Bible study each month. The teachers do self-study, then come together once a month to share the chapter or lesson focus. It is during this time that the potential for spiritual growth can occur. Preparation is key for the Bible study and spiritual understanding to apply the teachings to their personal lives.

Even though individuals need explicit teaching throughout their discipleship training. The church has various ways of accomplishing this task. Other thoughts in the literature review revealed from Greg Oden shares, "Discipleship demands a willingness to put God's rule first. It means placing God's kingdom rule over every area of your life."²⁴ Similar to this view, Tony Evans, author, and pastor of OCBF Church shares, "The kingdom disciple is a believer in Christ who participates in the spiritual development process of progressively learning to live all of life in submission to Jesus Christ's authority."²⁵ The KCAEC teachers will be taught about the Kingdom Agenda and the kingdom of God through a Bible study approach. The teachers will meet in small groups to discuss the concepts and application to their personal lives. In becoming a kingdom disciple, the teachers will be immersed into the teachings of OCBF Church.

²⁴ Ogden, *Discipleship Essentials*, 7.

²⁵ Tony Evans, *Kingdom Disciples: Heaven's Representatives on Earth* (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2017), 16.

Missions

Missions provide the motivation to fulfill the Great Commission (Matt 28:16–20). It has been used for many years to support missionaries around the world to promote Christian evangelism. However, it can be used to motivate every believer in Christ to make disciples. The making of disciples starts with the individual. Many individuals are hesitant about sharing their faith with other people. Often, they feel inadequate to speak or teach the Bible. However, there should be a healthy balance in being with God and doing for God. The goal of missions is not only sharing your faith but modeling Christian character. Peter Scazzero shares, “Spiritual balance that spiritual fullness reveals itself in a healthy balance. Individuals are careful not to engage in more activities than their spiritual, physical, and emotional reserves can sustain. They are encouraged to receive from and enjoy the Jesus they share with others.”²⁶

Missions is an opportunity to draw closer to individuals through small groups, prayer groups, Bible study groups and individualize witnessing. The method of sharing one’s faith are varied to fit each situation. The central theme is to share Jesus Christ with other people. On this Steven L. Porter shares, “Keeping Jesus’ commands, listening to what he knows is best for us is to engage in a way of life with him.”²⁷ Keeping the Lord’s commands and listening to the guidance of the Holy Spirit are keys to effective missionary work. It is through a discipleship approach that the KCAEC teachers will come to understand the motivation behind missions and how they can be effective witnesses in their communities. Missions is the opportunity for the staff to build relationships with individuals and families living near the center.

²⁶ Peter Scazzero, *Emotionally Healthy Discipleship: Moving from Shallow Christianity to Deep Transformation* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2021), 41.

²⁷ Steven L. Porter, “Will/Heart/Spirit: Discipleship that forms the Christian Character,” *Christian Education Journal* 16, no.1 (2019): 79, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0739891318820334>.

Conclusion

One of the most significant elements in the literature review is researching what the literature addresses regarding the spiritual development and discipleship of individuals. The KCAEC teachers are a group of individuals that are working in a Christian environment with limited information and knowledge of the core doctrinal values of the OCBF ministry. Due to their attendance and membership at various churches throughout the area, they are not exposed to the seven traits of the SOTM at OCBF Church. There is an apparent lack of understanding of the mission and vision of OCBF Church. Individuals from other churches do not embrace the same focus on discipleship, spiritual formation, kingdom teaching and preaching. It is imperative that a framework be developed, to connect the KCAEC staff to the core doctrinal values of the OCBF Ministry through a discipleship process.

One of the ways to address this concern is to create a biblically based spiritual formation and discipleship program that will introduce the KCAEC staff to the key elements of OCBF Church. Through this program, the literature suggests that explicit biblical teaching of the core values can be part of the on-going professional development of the staff. The adherence and affirmation of the core values is expected to be the outcome of their learning experience.

The development of the program will be centered around discipleship and the core values of the ministry with research-based practices to enhance affirmation and understanding of the traits of SOTM. Leadership with the EC director and grade level team leaders is important to the success of the program. In the final analysis, the plan and purpose of God in the lives of the KCAEC teachers will be evident because they participated, learned, and acquired skills on the SOTM and discipleship from OCBF Church that will influence their behavior and relationship with Jesus Christ.

Theological Foundations

The theological foundations are developed from the understanding that every Christian should continue to mature and be transformed in their relationship with Jesus Christ. In the beginning, God created Adam and Eve (Gen 1:26–2:25) with moral purity until sin (Gen 3:1–20) entered the world. Through this act of disobedience that sent man on a trajectory of needing salvation. One of the tragic results of sin is separation from God. In Rom 5:10, reconciliation with God comes through the death of His Son, Jesus. In Gen 3, the recognition of the original sin brings into the world death, sickness, poverty, destruction of the earth (ground), difficult work, and pain in childbirth. All these conditions changed the trajectory of life in harmony with God.

The remedy for sin has always been in a renewed relationship with the Father, through the work of Jesus Christ, the Lord and Savior. Evan B. Howard views, “Salvation as the transformational change of an individual.”²⁸ Douglas C. Walker shares, “Salvation is considered the rescue from sin and death. It is through the gift of salvation that renews the spirit and allows the person to live a life that is morally pleasing to God.”²⁹ Walker states, “Throughout the Bible, salvation has included rescue, renewal, and restoration.”³⁰ Evan Howard shares, “The Greek word for salvation (*sōzo*, save; *sōtēria*, “salvation”) is used throughout the New Testament.”³¹ Throughout biblical history, humans have tried to live life without Jehovah God. In developing a relationship with God, it includes recognition of his holiness and being the God of redemption. Throughout biblical history, God has attempted to bring man into a harmonious relationship with him.

²⁸ Howard, *A Guide to Christian Spiritual Formation*, 86.

²⁹ Douglas C. Walker, *Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary*, ed. Chad Brand, Charles Draper, Archie England, (Nashville: Holman Bible Publishers, 2003), 1434.

³⁰ *Ibid.* 1434.

³¹ Howard, *A Guide to Christian Spiritual Formation*, 87.

Salvation refers to being saved or rescued. Evan Howard shares, “Humans are incapable of saving themselves. People are alienated in four areas. They are alienated from God, one another, other people, and the rule over all of creation.”³² Humanity drives individuals towards sin under the guidance of the devil and various systemic temptations to rebel against the wisdom and acceptance of God. In the Garden of Eden, Adam and Eve were tempted through the lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, and the pride of life (1 John 2:16–17). These three areas of temptations are continuously at work in every human being. The way one thinks, feels, or behaves can be governed by self-centered motivations and concerns. Evan Howard emphasizes, “People are oppressed by Satan and the evil structures within society. Jesus Christ has given believers authority over Satan through the church (Luke 10:19).”³³ Salvation allows people to be free to participate in the missions and ministries for God to support people.

The salvation of God permits people to understand the broader scope of transformation. The ongoing process of salvation is not our own, it is God working in and through us for his good pleasure (Phil 2:13). Transformation is the change of the Holy Spirit working in the believer to allow one to live a life for God. Evan Howard focuses on, “The believer that has been transformed, live like one is accepted by God, demonstrate authority over the devil and share in a community of unity among believers.”³⁴ As the Early Childhood teachers are engaged in a small group discipleship Bible study, it is anticipated for the individuals to embrace the Spirit of the Ministry traits that can lead to transformation. Each person will understand that transformation takes time as one develops an intimate relationship with God.

³² Howard, *A Guide to Christian Spiritual Formation*, 87.

³³ Ibid. 88.

³⁴ Ibid. 89.

Billy E. Simmons shares, “Understanding the depth of sin on all humanity requires one to comprehend that the actions of people and their rebellion against God will cause them to miss the purpose for their lives, while surrendering to the power of evil rather than to the Holy Spirit. Simmons defines sin as the malignancy that has affected all of humanity.”³⁵ It is known that humanity inherited a sinful nature (Rom 1:18–20, 5:12–21, Ezek 18:4, 19, 20) and every individual is responsible for their own choices. In the Bible, Adam and Eve introduced sin into humanity by their rebellious acts. Scripture affirms that every human since that time have followed in their example (Gen 5:3, Rom 3:23, 5:12, 1 John 3:4). Due to the constant downward spiral of sin, God used various ways to develop a relationship with man.

One way was the establishment of a covenant. Steven B. Cowan explains, “In the Old Testament (OT), the Hebrew word covenant is translated as, *berît*.”³⁶ It means a binding relationship between two individuals or parties. Paul Williamson refers to, “The relationship with God and Adam as a covenant of works or covenant with creation.”³⁷ Even though Adam had a relationship with God, the covenant lacks mutual obligations, such as a sworn oath. One of the first divine covenants is the Noahic Covenant. In this covenant, God announces his intent to flood the earth of its inhabitants yet preserve Noah and his family (Gen 6:18–22). This covenant would allow a disruption in the natural order of creation, yet God promises that the suspension of the natural order will never again be interrupted (Gen 8:20–9:17), by a flood. The Abrahamic Covenant involves the relationship that God has with a family to create a nation.

³⁵ Billy E. Simmons, *Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary*, ed. Chad Brand, Charles Draper, Archie England (Nashville: Holman Bible Publishers, 2003), 1505.

³⁶ Steven B. Cowan, *Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary*, ed. Chad Brand, Charles Draper, Archie England (Nashville: Holman Bible Publishers, 2003), 355.

³⁷ Paul R. Williamson *NIV Biblical Theology Study Bible: Follow God’s Redemptive Plan as it Unfolds throughout Scripture*, ed. D. A. Carson (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2018), 2335.

Even though it would take many years for the revelation of the promises, it took the faith of Abraham to trust God through difficult circumstances. Abraham was in Haran (Gen 12:1–3) when he was called by God to leave his country, kindred and father’s house and go to a new land. Edward G. Dobson shares, “The personal sacrifices made would not compare to the blessings, Abraham would receive.”³⁸ Edward G. Dobson states, “The promises given to Abraham included, (1) land, (2) great nation (seed), and (3) blessing the entire world.”³⁹ Abraham would be tested in each of these areas. The land promised to him would be occupied by Canaanites, his wife Sarai was barren, and he did not know how the blessings for the world would manifest with an heir.

In Genesis 12–22, according to John MacArthur, “One can trace the first line of God’s redemptive divine blueprint of Jesus’ birth. From all the people of the earth, God chose Abraham to be the father of a chosen nation.”⁴⁰ It is through this nation that Abraham’s son, Isaac would begin the lineage that would eventually produce Jesus Christ. MacArthur emphasizes, “God’s promise of a nation would continue through Jacob and his twelve sons, the descendants (HEB: אֲבִרָם וְאַמְרָ לְיִשְׂרָאֵל אֶתְּן אֶת־). The focus of blessing the world is through the redemptive function of Jesus Christ as the seed (zera) of Abraham. God’s revealed plan of redemption includes the protection of the earliest people in Christ’s lineage.”⁴¹ The plan of redemption was not apparent to the early descendants of Jesus. Abraham’s promise of a son in his old age was a miracle from God. Even though it took patience the promise was fulfill with the birth of Isaac.

³⁸ Edward G. Dobson et al., *KJV Bible Commentary* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Inc. 2005), 40.

³⁹ Ibid., 40.

⁴⁰ John MacArthur, *The MacArthur Bible Handbook: A Book-by-Book Exploration of God’s Word* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2003), 10.

⁴¹ Ibid., 10.

In Exodus, the end of oppression is marked for the descendants of Abraham (Gen. 15:13) with the beginnings of the fulfillment of the covenant promise to Abraham. Paul R. Williamson shares, “Abraham’s descendants would reside in the Promise Land, while becoming a great nation (Gen 12:1–3; 7).”⁴² Williamson further shares, “The primary concern of the Mosaic Covenant was the maintaining of the divine-human relationship between Yahweh and Israel.”⁴³ It was no doubt that Israel would possess the land, yet the focus was on their behavior in the land. Williams believes, “God wanted to make Israel unique in the land. They would be his special treasure, priestly kingdom, and a holy nation.”⁴⁴ In order for this to happen, Israel was to be obedient to the divine commands (Exod 20:1–17), ordinances of the Book of the Covenant (Exod 21–23). For Israel to be their God, they were to be like him (Lev 19:2). Michael Horton emphasizes, “God is majestic, glorious, holy and beyond reproach.”⁴⁵ The Hebrew word for holy (qôdeš) means to cut or separate. God is distinct from his creation.

The Mosaic Covenant guaranteed the preservation of Israel as a nation. It would persevere until Abraham’s ultimate seed and covenant heir arrived (Gal. 3:19). This covenant gave guidance to the nation of Israel. Even through the crisis of the golden calf, God maintained them with the promise of nationhood and not to annihilate them. It was done through the condition of loyal obedience to his commands that Yahweh agreed to maintain his special relationship with Israel (Exod 32:7–34). The patience of God was on display with the call of his new nation out of Egypt and into a relationship with him. Moses had no idea what this new relationship would be like during the early formation of a nation.

⁴² Williamson, *New Dictionary of Biblical Theology*, 424.

⁴³ Williamson, *New Dictionary of Biblical Theology*, 424.

⁴⁴ Ibid. 424.

⁴⁵ Michael Horton, *The Christian Faith: A Systematic Theology for Pilgrims on the Way* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2011), 268.

The Mosaic Covenant introduced the priestly covenant by the ordination of Aaron and his sons as priests (Exod 28–29). Paul R. Williamson emphasizes, “The priestly and Mosaic covenants are distinct yet run parallel to each other and are closely related to the purpose of the perpetuity of the relationship between God and Israel.”⁴⁶ The Davidic Covenant has a similar relationship in that it flows through the genealogy of Abraham. In 2 Sam 7, establishes the Davidic Covenant, in which David is promised a great name and inherits the promises of the patriarchal covenant. John MacArthur shares, “The events in David’s life foreshadow the actions of David’s Son (Christ) in the future (2 Sam 7:12–16). It is framed in the evolving narrative of a Messiah, the King who would triumph over the nations who are opposed to God (Gen 49:8–12, Num 24:7–9, 17–19).”⁴⁷

According to Paul R. Williamson, “The Davidic Covenant continues the trajectory of the Mosaic and Abrahamic Covenants. God’s plan for David and Israel are interwoven (2 Sam 7:8–11, 23–26) in the following manner. (1) God promised both a great name (Gen.12:2, 2 Sam 7:9). (2) In the future, both will conquer their enemies (Gen 22:17, 2 Sam 7:11, Ps 89:23). (3) Both will have a special divine-human relationship (Gen 17:7–8, 2 Sam 7:24, Ps 89:26). (4) A special line of “offspring” perpetuates both of their names (Gen 21:12, 2 Sam 7:12–16). (5) The descendants of both must keep God’s laws (Gen 18:19, 2 Sam 7:14, Ps 89:30–32; 132:12). (6) The offspring of both would mediate international blessings (Gen 22:18; Ps 72:17).”⁴⁸ These relationships between the covenants show the revelation of God’s divine plan to bring salvation to all humanity. The purpose of the Davidic Covenant was designed by God to share his ultimate desire for the kingdom and eventual rulership of his son, Jesus Christ.

⁴⁶ Williamson, *New Dictionary of Biblical Theology*, 425.

⁴⁷ MacArthur, *The MacArthur Bible Handbook*, 91.

⁴⁸ Williamson, *New Dictionary of Biblical Theology*, 425.

Paul R. Williamson states, “The persistent failure to live according to God’s covenant and sin led to the disaster for both the nation and its monarchy, which culminated in judgment of the destroyed temple and Babylonian exile.”⁴⁹ Paul R. Williamson emphasizes, “With consistent human failure, God continued his covenantal plan. In Jer. 31:31, he speaks of internalizing the Torah.”⁵⁰ Ezekiel speaks of spiritual surgery and radical transformation (Ezek 36:26–27). Both prophets address in inner renewal to focus the problem of sin and promote the ideal divine-human relationship. Paul R. Williamson shares that “This new covenant will attain climactic fulfillment and eschatological expression.”⁵¹

Paul R. Williamson emphasizes, “The New Testament declares that all of God’s covenant promises are realized in and through Jesus (Luke 1:54–55, 69–75; 2 Cor 1:20), the long awaited Davidic Messiah, (Matt 1:17–18, 2:4–6, 16:16, 21:9, Luke 2:11, John 7:42, Acts 2:22–36), As the ultimate offspring of Abraham (Matt 1:1, Gal 3:16) and royal offspring of David (Matt 1:1, Luke 1:27, 32–33, 2:4, Rom. 1:3; 2 Tim 2:8, Rev 5:5, 22:16), Jesus fulfills the role of Israel’s servant (Acts 3:18, 4:27–28, 8:32–35), not only in redeeming Israel (Luke 2:28, Acts 3:25–26; Heb 9:12, 15) but also by mediating God’s blessing to an international community of faith (Acts 10:1–11:18, 15:1–29, Rom 1:2–6; 3:22–24, 4:16–18, 15:8–12, Gal 3:7–14, 29). In Matthew 1:17–18, declares the OT covenant promises find their fulfillment the Jesus Christ.”⁵² According to Apostle Paul, along with the author of Hebrews declare that the New Covenant is far superior to the old Mosaic Covenant. The forgiveness of sins is fully attainable in the New Covenant. One of the most remarkable features of knowing about the covenants is the fulfillment of salvation.

⁴⁹ Williamson, *New Dictionary of Biblical Theology*, 425.

⁵⁰ Ibid. 2336.

⁵¹ Williamson, *New Dictionary of Biblical Theology*, 2336.

⁵² Ibid. 2336.

Finally, the transformation of an individual's life begins with acceptance of Jesus Christ as one's Savior and Lord. The process of Christian spiritual formation involves the Holy Spirit and human relationships in communities that evolve over time into the likeness to the life of Jesus Christ. The believer takes the initiative in response to the Holy Spirit to engage in tasks of formation and act on the appropriate step in the next phase of growth and discipleship. There are many ways to work with small groups of individuals to form discipleship groups. The main emphasis of the group is to focus on maintaining their existence with one another over time.

Theoretical Foundations

The theoretical foundations are built on the research methods of educating early childhood teachers regarding spiritual formation and discipleship. Considering the importance of spiritual formation to individuals in their maturity in Christ, it is imperative that a theoretical framework become a priority. The life of an early childhood teacher in a Christian environment requires more than educational knowledge and skill. There is an expectation that the teacher will instruct the students about Christian values, behavior, attitudes, literature from the Bible and the church's foundational values.

The teacher's secular knowledge will support a particular worldview however it is the Christian worldview that is essential at Kingdom Collegiate Academy. From the view of Evan Howard, "Spiritual formation affirms direct experience, fosters character development, and is nurtured within a context of personal and congregational practices."⁵³ As an individual begins the journey of an intimate relationship with the Lord, the changes occur in one's behavior and worldview are remarkable.

⁵³ Howard, *A Guide to Christian Spiritual Formation*, 9.

Evan Howard shares, “In the process of spiritual formation, it is important to understand that it is a deep personal transformation.”⁵⁴ Spiritual formation is a lifetime journey. In the literature review, many of the essential elements to aid in this process are relevant to support the transformational process.

Understanding and Educating Young Children

The spiritual formation of children is essential to their growth and development in a Christian environment. Marcia McQuitty states, based on the research by George Barna, found, “Four out of five parents were not aware that they had the primary responsibility for the moral and spiritual development of their children. Most of them abdicate that responsibility to the church.”⁵⁵ Young children can learn Bible stories, scripture, songs and how to pray. Early childhood students are spiritually sensitive. Godly teachers and parents can nurture the spiritual domain of the children with intentional teaching of spiritual truths. In addition to the teachers receiving training on the spiritual development of young children, parents are encouraged to receive the essential training to support their child. According to Marcia McQuitty, “Educational engagement theories, young children learn best when the teacher has a variety of methods to teach the Bible stories and spiritual truths.”⁵⁶

At KCAEC there are many curriculum resources available to the teacher for usage with the children to enhance their understanding of biblical truths. The students go through a yearly Bible curriculum with visuals, charts, scripture memory cards, and activities. These elements are essential for Christian educational attainment of knowledge about the Bible.

⁵⁴ Howard., *A Guide to Spiritual Formation*, 9.

⁵⁵ Marcia McQuitty, *The Teaching Ministry of the Church*, 2nd ed., ed. William R. Yount (Nashville: B & H Publishing Group, 2008), 288.

⁵⁶ McQuitty, *The Teaching Ministry of the Church*, 290.

The question is if the teacher has the spiritual knowledge and understanding to teach the students? Since most of the teachers are from other local churches, then the reality of whether they are teaching the children in a manner that is acceptable to OCBF Church is to be examined. Personal beliefs can influence the way that biblical truth is shared with the children.

The Theoretical Frameworks of the Teaching Ministry

Christian education has been known as the way to discover the divinely ordained process by which individuals grow in Christlikeness. Rick Yount shares, “The spiritual formation of teachers is essential to the process. They are the core group of individuals that instruct the children and assist them on their spiritual journey in knowing Christlikeness.”⁵⁷ The challenge at KCAEC is to make sure that the teachers are growing in Christlikeness as they teach the children. Rick Yount states, “The focus of Christian education is to analyze the divinely ordained process of supernatural transformation as it intersects relevant life changes in preschoolers, children, youth and adults who live in the natural world.”⁵⁸ Rick Yount shares, “Dallas Willard describes Christian education as transforming disciples inwardly, in such a way that doing the words and deeds of Christ is not the focus but the natural outcome or side effect.”⁵⁹ It is to become like Christ inwardly so that we naturally behave like Christ outwardly to our family, friends, neighbors and co-workers.

In thinking about theoretical frameworks of self-awareness, Jane I. Lu shares, “Many of the theories belong to constructivist schools of learning, such as Piaget’s developmental learning theory, Bruner’s discovery-learning theory and Malcolm Knowles andragogy.

⁵⁷ Rick Yount, *The Teaching Ministry of the Church*, 2nd ed., ed. William R. Yount (Nashville: B & H Publishing Group, 2008), 6.

⁵⁸ Yount, *The Teaching Ministry of the Church*, 7.

⁵⁹ Ibid. 7.

It is assumed that developmental learning theory claims that one's learning process is based on accommodation and assimilation of existing cognitive structure to the environment or to new events."⁶⁰

Reflection on the theories of transformative learning explains how adults formulate understandings and beliefs. This occurs due to the individual becoming aware of their environment, assumptions, and those others around them. The transformative learning process, an individual may create new frames of reference and one may become more dependent on previous frames. According to Jane I. Lu, "The transformation process may include the following phrases: A disorienting dilemma, self-examination with feelings of fear, anger, guilt or shame, a critical assessment of assumptions, recognition that one's discontent and the process of transformation are shared, exploration of options for new roles, relationship and actions, planning a course of action, acquiring knowledge and skills for implementing one's plans, provisional trying new roles, building competence and self-confidence in new roles and relationships and a reintegration into one's life based on condition dictated by one's new perspective."⁶¹

Self-awareness can be enhanced by going through the various steps of transformative frames. Self-reflection is a way to grow in self-knowledge and self-awareness. The journey to self-awareness can assist teachers in forming deeper bonding experiences. As teachers learn how to trust one another in a social school context, then this experience will give them courage to build relationships outside of the school environment. Discipleship is focus on relationships.

⁶⁰ Jane I. Lu, "Educational Models of Spiritual Formation in Theological Education: Introspection-based Spiritual Formation," *Teaching Theology and Religion* 24, no.1 (March 2021): 5, accessed June 7, 2021, <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com>.

⁶¹ Lu, "Educational Models of Spiritual Formation in Theological Education," 21.

There are many activities that the teacher can engage in to be more self-reflective and responsive to spiritual integration within the learning environment. The development of Christian values in preschoolers is captured through the inquiry process. Young children are inquisitive about the world around them. The teacher is one of the most influential early educational professionals in the life of a child. Deborah Moore shares, “Developmental theorists Piaget, Kohlberg and Fowler have explained that relationships are important to the child within this maturing process. First, Piaget theorized that learning is a social activity and children must interact with people to grow. Kohlberg believed that to aid in moral development, the teacher initiates discussions about issues to challenge the student’s thinking. Lastly, Fowler asserts that faith begins in a relationship and implies trust in another.”⁶²

One important aspect from Piaget’s theory is the relationship between the teacher and the student. Deborah Moore states, “Piaget believed that the natural interaction between students and adult figures, which includes parents and teachers, ensures the normal development of social responsibility. Piaget recognized a relationship between the teacher and student in the developmental stages that involves helping students to understand moral responsibilities.”⁶³ The conceptual framework for Kohlberg’s stages of moral development theory is based on Piaget’s stages of cognitive development. As one comprehends the Kohlberg’s stages of moral development theory, the first level focus on reward and punishment. This stages for young children provide guidance as the child develops self-interest focused on wants and needs. The child learns how to get needs met, then pleasing others is a part of the process.

⁶² Deborah Moore, “Most Common Teacher Characteristics Related to Intentionally in Students’ Spiritual Formation,” *Journal of Research on Christian Education* 23, no. 2 (2014): 255–70, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10656219.2014.963269>.

⁶³ Moore, “Most Common Teacher Characteristics Related to Intentionally in Students’ Spiritual Formation,” 255-70.

Deborah Moore emphasizes, “Kohlberg’s moral stages of development focuses on until a child can reason, make decisions, and move past egocentric thoughts, the individual is not able to develop through the stages of moral reasoning.”⁶⁴ It is believed that children develop the ability of make moral judgments as they face situations and know how to develop a plan for moral behavior. As Kohlberg developed his theory, John C. Gibbs shares “Kohlberg’s driving insight included the premise that moral development is not complete by the end of childhood, but instead continues throughout the human life span.”⁶⁵ John C. Gibbs emphasizes, “During the lifetime of Lawrence Kohlberg, his contribution to the field of moral development were substantial focusing on the social and behavioral sciences.”⁶⁶ Understanding the value of moral development in a child is significant to them becoming a Christian believer. The Early Childhood teachers from the biblical foundation of moral development through teaching the children’s biblical principles. The practices of teaching about biblical personalities and their relationship with God in the Old Testament and Jesus in the New Testament, supports the development of their relationship with the Trinity.

The EC teachers receive professional development in biblical integration. The purpose of the training is to support the principles that God created the universe and continues to be evident in his creation. For example, the Early Childhood students experience life science in visiting plants in the courtyard and going on nature walks around the school. These opportunities support their understanding of God’s creation in a tangible way. The KCA-EC center has over 50 science kits for the students to explore on a weekly basis. The kits draw on experiments that involve the

⁶⁴ Moore, “Most Common Teacher Characteristics Related to Intentionally in Students’ Spiritual Formation,” 255-70.

⁶⁵ John C. Gibbs, *Moral Development and Reality: Beyond the Theories of Kohlberg, Hoffman, and Haidt*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, Inc., 2023), 91, accessed on June 20, 2023, ProQuest eBook Central.

⁶⁶ Ibid. 91.

five senses. The students and teachers can have discussions on how the experiments integrate into their understanding of God and the universe. The students have science logs to record their responses. The integration of God in everything supports the child's understanding of his omnipresence, omniscience, and omnipotence.

Kohlberg Stages of Moral Development



Figure 2.1. <https://practicalpie.com/kohlbergs-stages-of-moral-development/> March 2023. (Accessed June 20, 2023).

The stages are pre-conventional which is reflected in reward/punishment and self-interest. The next stage is conventional that includes pleasing others along with law and order. The last stage is post-conventional which includes social contact and the ultimate principle.

The stages of Kohlberg's theory of moral development are explained in Figure 2.2. Moral development is the process by which an individual learns how to distinguish between right and wrong choices throughout life. The Kohlberg's Moral Stages explains the elements that shape decisions in moral development. In each stage of development, the individual is engaged in

various decisions and behavioral choices. In the early childhood environment, the child is becoming aware of choices of right and wrong. The child will experiment by using the five senses to become aware of the immediate environment. It is the adult that will give the signals to the child regarding what is appropriate in the learning environment. It is through this experiment that the child learns and grows to develop a sense of morality.

Kohlberg's Moral Stages		
Level and Age	Stage	What determines right and wrong?
Preconventional Up to the age of 9	Punishment & Obedience	Right and wrong defined by what they get punished for. If you get told off for stealing then obviously stealing is wrong
	Instrumental-Relativist	Similar, but right and wrong is now determined by what we are rewarded for, and by doing what others want. Any concern for others is motivated by selfishness.
Conventional Most adolescents and adults	Interpersonal concordance	Being good is whatever pleases others. The child adopts a conformist attitude to morality. Right and wrong are determined by the majority.
	Law and order	Being good now means doing your duty to society. To this end we obey laws without question and show a respect for authority. Most adults do not progress past this stage.
Postconventional:1 0 to 15% of the over 20s.	Social contract	Right and wrong now determined by personal values, although these can be over-ridden by democratically agreed laws. When laws infringe our own sense of justice we can choose to ignore them.
	Universal ethical principle	We now live in accordance with deeply held moral principles which are seen as more important than the laws of the land.

Figure 2. 2. <https://practicalpie.com/kohlbergs-stages-of-moral-development/March 2023>. (Accessed on June 20, 2023)

A Christian school can provide the structure and foundation for spiritual formation of preschool children. KCA-Early Childhood is part of a Christian school community. Deborah Moore shares, “Christian schools provide the avenue for the intentional, multifaceted process of providing for students to mature and be transformed into the image of Christ.”⁶⁷ James W. Fowler shares, “Moral choice is not just a matter of feelings or values. It involves the interpretation of a moral dilemma situation.”⁶⁸

⁶⁷ Moore, “Most Common Teacher Characteristics Related to Intentionally in Students’ Spiritual Formation,” 255–70.

⁶⁸ James W. Fowler, *Stages of Faith: The Psychology of Human Development and the Quest for Meaning* (New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 1981), 49.

The spiritual formation of students is significant in a Christian private school. One of the purposes for the growth and development of the early childhood center is to provide high-quality child development services to the community. It is based on the premise of supporting a Christian worldview to families. The Early Childhood teachers provide daily opportunities to support the engagement of the children through Bible stories and songs. Spiritual formation is a priority in a Christian private school.

Stages of Faith Development



Figure 2:3 Source: <https://faithontheedge.com/2016/06/29/understanding-christians-in-fowlers-stages-of-faith/> (Accessed 6/30/2023)

In reviewing the moral reasoning of young children, James Fowler shares, “Moral judgment requires the construction and coordination of the points of view of self and others. It involves balancing self-interest with the interests, rights and needs of others.”⁶⁹ From Fowler’s perspective individuals go through stages of faith development as in Figure 2:3. James Fowler, “Believes faith is an orientation of the total person, giving purpose and goal to one’s hopes and strivings, thoughts, and actions.”⁷⁰ Each stage is significant in a child’s development.

⁶⁹ Fowler, *Stages of Faith*, 57–58.

⁷⁰ Ibid., 14.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

The purpose of the intervention plan is to teach the seven Spirit of the Ministry core values and discipleship in a Bible study format to the Kingdom Collegiate Academies Early Childhood Staff. The problem is the KCAEC staff are unfamiliar with the seven Spirit of the Ministry traits that are foundational to the vision and mission of the church. There is a lack of a professionally developed mission aligned training program for Early Childhood Educators serving at Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship Early Childhood Program. To address the problem, the researcher will develop a mission-aligned professional training program to increase staff effectiveness and alignment with the vision of Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship ministry.

The teachers will practice the integration of faith learning through spiritual formation and discipleship. They will enhance their spiritual growth and development through various spiritual disciplines daily. Evan Howard explains, “Spiritual formation is not just about a change in our character or behavior; it is a change in our relationship with the Trinity”.¹ The desire of the KCAEC staff, is by reading the Bible and practicing spiritual disciplines, will experience an intimacy in their relationship with Christ. Spiritual formation is a process that takes time and practice with the guidance of the Holy Spirit. The development of the theoretical framework focused on the theories of James Fowler’s Stages of Faith, and Lawrence Kohlberg’s Moral Stages of Development. The theoretical framework emphasizes adult and student learning experiences, along with socio-emotional and spiritual development of the individual.

In exploring the development of faith from infancy to adulthood, James W. Fowler shares the meaning of faith. Fowler states that “Faith is a person’s way of seeing him or herself in

¹ Howard, *A Guide to Christian Spiritual Formation*, 50.

relation to others against a background of shared meaning and purpose.”² Through the literature review, identification of practicing faith is a typical response for the teachers and children.

According to James Fowler, “In the earliest development of faith is Stage 1 Intuitive projective faith (Ages 3–7). Children at this stage develop faith through stories, visual images, influence of others, along with a deep intuitive sense of right or wrong. This stage is aligned with Piaget’s stage of pre-operational thinking.”³

During the Stage 2: Mythic-literal stage for ages 6 to 12 years, information is organized into stories. Children take these stories to understand them in a literal and concrete sense of justice and fairness. James Fowler shares “Stage 3: Synthetic-Conventional stage is the beginning of the conventional level of moral judgment. It includes mutual interpersonal expectations, relationships, and interpersonal conformity. In this stage individuals are expected to do what others expect of them.”⁴ In Stage 4: Individuative-Reflective Stage is when individuals begin to ask questions and notice contradictions or problems in their personal belief system. James Fowler shares, “Stage four and the conventional level have no way of shaping moral decisions beyond interpersonal concord, societal expectations, and the legal point of view.”⁵ In this stage, there is a strong reliance on the rational mind and self.

As an individual continues in their personal development of faith, James Fowler suggests in “Stage 5: Conjunctive faith involves going beyond the explicit ideological system and clear boundaries of identity.”⁶ Individuals in this stage are comfortable dialoging about their faith

² Fowler, *Stages of Faith*, 11-14.

³ Ibid., 57–73.

⁴ Ibid., 74–75.

⁵ Ibid., 79.

⁶ Ibid., 186.

while seeking information about other individuals' beliefs. Personal beliefs can be discussed without the person letting go of their faith. This stage permits individuals to share their faith and convictions about spiritual growth and personal development.

In Stage 6: Universalizing Stage is characterized by viewing humanity as one brotherhood and taking self-sacrificing actions to care for all humanity due to their personal faith and viewpoint. James Fowler shares, "Persons in this stage typically exhibit qualities that shake the usual criteria of normalcy. Their heedlessness to self-preservation and the vividness of their taste and feel for transcendent moral and religious actuality give their actions and words an extraordinary and often unpredictable quality."⁷ Individuals described in this stage are Gandhi, Martin Luther King Jr., and Mother Teresa of Calcutta.

These individuals modeled a type of self-actualization different from the normal person. James Fowler asserts that, "Stage 6 is exceedingly rare. The individual best described by it have generated faith compositions in which their felt sense of an ultimate environment is inclusive of all being. They have become incarnators and actualizers of the spirit of an inclusive and fulfilled human community."⁸ With the teachers at KCA-EC, the purpose of our faith plan is to support them as they journey to self-actualization and knowledge regarding the theories of James Fowler.

The purpose of the intervention plan is to teach the seven Spirit of the Ministry core values and discipleship in a Bible study format to the Kingdom Collegiate Academies Early Childhood staff. The problem is the KCAEC staff are unfamiliar with the seven Spirit of the Ministry traits that are foundational to the church. There is a lack of a professionally developed mission aligned training program for Early Childhood Educators serving at Oak Cliff Bible

⁷ Fowler, *Stages of Faith*, 200.

⁸ Ibid.

Fellowship Early Childhood Program. To address the problem, the researcher will develop a mission-aligned professional training program to increase staff effectiveness and alignment with the vision of Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship ministry.

The teachers will practice the integration of faith learning through spiritual formation and discipleship. They will enhance their spiritual growth and development through various spiritual disciplines daily. The Early Childhood staff will practice prayer, daily devotions, meditation, worship/praise music, fasting, and fellowship. Evan Howard explains that “Spiritual formation is not just about a change in our character or behavior; it is a change in our relationship with the Trinity.”⁹ At the same time, developing a Christian worldview, to have the transformation necessary to be effective teachers of the children through faith-based instruction. The development of the theoretical framework focused on the theories of Piaget, Jerome Bruner’s theory of development, and Malcolm Knowles’ andragogy. Jane I. Lu shares, “The theoretical framework emphasizes adult student learning experiences, and socio-emotional and spiritual development.”¹⁰

The Bible study and discussions group’s intended result is to equip teachers to mature in their relationship with Jesus Christ through planned professional development in spiritual formation and discipleship. The worldview survey (Appendix H) socio-emotional and spiritual development along with the Emotionally Healthy Discipleship (EHD) tool (Appendix I) throughout each phase of the project. The EHD will be used to determine the individual spiritual growth status along with descriptions and recommendations for personal growth. Each of the tool will show the early childhood teacher’s worldview and emotional disposition about life.

⁹ Howard, *A Guide to Christian Spiritual Formation*, 50.

¹⁰ Lu, “Educational Models of Spiritual Formation in Theological Education,” 21.

After Liberty's University Independent Review Board (IRB) approves, meetings are organized in small groups with each team, Toddlers through EC4 teachers. Upon IRB (Appendix A) approval, teachers are given an opportunity to discuss the surveys or questionnaire in the Bible study groups. The teacher's participation is through release time at work to complete the surveys or questionnaires. An agenda and attendance sheet are available for teacher's signature to ensure everyone opportunity to hear all the information regarding the problem and purpose of the project. Eddie Mosley emphasizes, "Small groups assist in life changes through studying the Bible, serving others, building community, and practicing accountability."¹¹

The Bible study groups will consist of Lead teachers and Educational Support Staff (ESS) teachers. Each group will meet weekly to discuss a chapter from the *Kingdom Disciples: Heaven's Representatives on Earth* book read the story of a female biblical personality modeling a SOTM trait along with the application of the trait. As described by Eddie Mosley, "Transformational growth happens most effectively within small groups. It is the model of Jesus that lays out the process of evangelism, discipleship, and multiplication."¹²

The study will be conducted over twelve to sixteen weeks on the KCA-EC Dallas campus with the KCA-EC staff. There are approximately twenty-six EC staff members. Each member is part of a small discipleship group. An essential feature of the Bible study is modeling of the trait in the workplace. As Early Childhood teachers mature in their relationship with God, a feature encouraged is for them to develop specific spiritual disciplines. There are various spiritual disciplines that are practiced with the teachers. During the beginning of each year, the EC teachers practice fasting once a week for the first month of the year.

¹¹ Eddie Mosley, "Small Groups," in *Together We Equip: Integrating Discipleship and Ministry Leadership for Holistic Spiritual Formation*, ed. Jody Dean and Hal Stewart (Bloomington, IN: WestBow Press, 2018), 54.

¹² Ibid., 57.

According to Donald S. Whitney, “A spiritual discipline is the patterns in Scripture that promote spiritual growth within believers and reflected in the gospel of Jesus Christ.”¹³ Whitney states, “Spiritual disciplines include praying, reading God’s Word, worshipping music, and praise, fasting, and serving.”¹⁴ Each of these disciplines aims to grow in godliness and relationship with Christ. The focus of discipleship means that believers learn spiritual disciplines in their journey to maturity in Christ. For example, if an athlete stops practicing the drills to stay ready for competition, then when that individual competes, he may not win the game due to lack of preparation. Spiritual disciplines are similar because they must be practiced for the believer to grow in strength through spiritual warfare. Prayer is one of the most essential spiritual disciplines encouraged to be practiced by the EC teachers. Prayer is communication with God. Prayer is one of the most effective ways to reduce stress. It is an opportunity for the individual to share their feelings, thoughts, desires, transgressions, hopes and fears. At KCA-EC, the teachers are encouraged to pray daily with their colleagues and the children. During the Bible study lessons with the students, teachers are encouraged to pray and teach the children how to pray.

Spiritual disciplines are practices of living a Christian life. Whitney shares, “Godliness is the result of a biblically disciplined spiritual life.”¹⁵ The EC teachers are to model SOTM attributes for their colleagues and community. Some of the spiritual disciplines are listed on the chart (Appendix K). The chart illustrates how each spiritual practice supports the development of the individual as one grows in relationship with Jesus Christ.

4. ¹³ Donald S. Whitney, *Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life* (Colorado Springs: NAVPRESS, 2014),

¹⁴ Ibid. 5.

¹⁵ Ibid. 159.

One of the significant spiritual disciplines is hearing the Word of God. Dallas Willard shares, “Knowledge and experience of hearing God teach us many things that can keep us from harm and keep us from harming others in our spiritual adventure of life in God’s kingdom.”¹⁶ Hearing God comes from listening and reading Scripture. It is through reading the Word of God that one receives understanding, guidance, and purpose for one’s life.

Spiritual disciplines are designed to benefit believers in their Christian lives. Dallas Willard shares, “Spiritual formation in Christ is the process leading to the ideal end, and its result is love of God with all of the heart, soul, mind, and strength, and of the neighbor as oneself.”¹⁷ Whitney believes, “Many of the other disciplines like journaling, silence and solitude are equally essential in developing our relationship with God.”¹⁸ The EC teachers will maintain a journal during Bible study sessions to record notes, observations, and insights into God’s Word. The teachers use journaling to reflect on what they are learning through the Bible study. These thoughts are kept confidential to the teacher and shared in the small groups.

In a Christian school environment, are there spiritual disciplines that will assist teachers in dealing with stress? Robin LaBarbera and June Hetzel researched the practice of spiritual disciplines and job satisfaction. They share, “Prayer is the discipline focused on during their research. The three significant sources of stress for educators are administrative stress, classroom-based stress, and relational challenges.”¹⁹ These factors can influence the way an individual strives in a particular educational environment.

¹⁶ Dallas Willard, *Hearing God: Developing a Conversational Relationship with God* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2021), 144.

¹⁷ Dallas Willard, *Renovation of the Heart: Putting on the Character of Christ* (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress/Tyndale House Publishers, 2021), 25.

¹⁸ Whitney, *Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life*, 252.

¹⁹ Robin LaBarbera and June Hetzel, “Christian Educators’ Use of Prayer to Cope with Stress,” *Journal of Religion and Health* 55, no. 4 (August 2016): 1433-48.

Some of these factors can be part of a Christian school environment. LaBarbera and Hetzel share, “Some of the administrative factors of stress include workload, insufficient planning time and lack of general support from administration.”²⁰ Early Childhood teachers work in preparing the youngest students to be successful in school. Students are to become acquainted with biblical concepts at an early age. Teachers are accountable for their social-emotional, academic, and spiritual growth. The teachers at KCA-EC teach a comprehensive literacy curriculum, Bible curriculum, science, cooking, art, and social-emotional wellness. The teachers work a regular day without adequate planning time. There are various opportunities throughout the school year for staff development, vacation days and paid leave. Job satisfaction can be attributed to the well-being of the students, compliments along with recognition from parents, and formation of community relationships. Many of the teachers at KCAEC have been a part of the Christian school ministry for over twenty years. KCA, formerly FCA has been in operations as a Christian school for over thirty-five years with clear distinctives in assisting families in developing a Christian worldview.

Intervention Design

Step 1: Liberty University IRB, Senior Pastor, and Executive Administrator approval

The process of spiritual formation in the KCAEC teachers through the SOTM traits will be conducted in the following manner. The KCAEC teachers will participate through a series of steps. A request for approval to conduct the study will be submitted to the Liberty University Institutional Review Board (IRB) (Appendix A) before beginning the research for this project. The KCAEC staff will learn about the project after the IRB approval (Appendix A).

²⁰ LaBarbera and Hetzel, “Christian Educators’ Use of Prayer to Cope with Stress,” 1434.

The researcher will not start the project, collect any data for this study, or begin interviews until approval is received from Liberty IRB, senior pastor of OCBF Church and executive administrator of KCA (Appendix B). Once approval has been granted, then the researcher will send out the recruitment letters (Appendix C, F) to the EC staff.

Step 2 – Consent letter, Emotionally Healthy Discipleship survey and Questionnaires

A consent letter (Appendix C) will be sent to the EC teachers and staff. The SOTM Spiritual Life Interview Questionnaire (Appendix G) will include questions related to their knowledge base of the SOTM and Faith Learning experiences. The teachers will participate in the EHD survey (Appendix I). Peter Scazzero, “Uses an instrument that offers a fresh view to build a counterculture that informs every aspect of spiritual and community life.”²¹ The EHD survey has seven sections for each participant to rate themselves. The categories are: (1) Be before you do, (2) Follow the crucified, not the Americanized, Jesus, (3) Embrace God’s gift of limits, (4) Discover the hidden treasures buried in grief and loss, (5) Make love the measure of spiritual maturity, (6) Break the power of the past, (7) Lead out of weakness and vulnerability.²²

Demographic questions will include information regarding KCAEC teachers church affiliation, age, and number of years in education. The distribution of the questionnaire is done at KCA-Dallas campus to the KCAEC staff members. The teachers will have time to complete the questionnaire. This process is done individually by the staff member. Teachers will return the questionnaire to the researcher to be kept in a confidential file. The file will include the name of the individual and assignment of a number for reporting of data in the research project.

²¹ Peter Scazzero, <https://www.emotionallyhealthy.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/EHD-Personal-Assessment-2021.pdf>, accessed May 21, 2022.

²² Scazzero, <https://www.emotionallyhealthy.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/EHD-Personal-Assessment-2021.pdf>.

The questionnaire will survey all 25 staff members to find out about the teacher's local church: name, location, denomination, doctrine/beliefs on spiritual formation and discipleship, definition of discipleship, personal activities/commitment to local church. This data will be used to inform the researcher about the beliefs held by the staff members. Tim Sensing shares, "Qualitative research serves as a multi-method in focus that is practiced through live experiences."²³ Each teacher will be interviewed regarding the process and progress of the thesis project. The teachers will share with the researcher any concerns about the project, integration of faith learning with the children, spiritual formation, discipleship, or curriculum integration. Sensing describes "The intervention as an opportunity to implement change through a specific plan of action."²⁴ As the teachers share their personal insights, they are encouraged to participate in various personal disciplines, including prayer to support their spiritual growth and maturity. The data and conclusions will be reviewed for accuracy by senior pastor, executive administrator, KCA Early Childhood staff and, Liberty University Mentor professor.

The Emotionally Healthy Discipleship (EHD) is an instrument used to inform leaders about individuals and where they are in their spiritual development. Peter Scazzero shares, "One valuable feature of this instrument includes slowing down to cultivate a deep, personal relationship with Jesus. The five aspects of a human being are physical, emotional, spiritual, social, and intellectual."²⁵ In order for humans to experience wholeness, one must understand the role of each part of our human body. The EHD is designed to engage the participant in an authentic measure to support spiritual maturity.

²³ Tim Sensing, *Qualitative Research: A Multi-methods Approach to Projects for Doctor of Ministry Thesis* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 2011), 57.

²⁴ Ibid., 63.

²⁵ Peter Scazzero, <https://www.emotionallyhealthy.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/EHD-Personal-Assessment-2021.pdf>.

The Early Childhood teachers will identify through this instrument whether they are an emotional adult, emotional adolescent, emotional child, or emotional infant. Each of these designations will assist the teachers in recognizing where they are along with how we relate to the Lord and each other. The ultimate desire is for individuals to become more mature in their relationship with the Lord and effectively manage their relationships with each other.

In understand the various designations, of the EHD instrument, the participants take the assessment, compile the scores, and then review the designations of emotional infant, emotional child, emotional adolescent, and emotional adult. Scazzero states, “In describing the emotional infant, the individual expects other people to take care of them spiritually and emotionally. In this context, individuals want to quit God and the Christian life when challenges occur in their personal lives. The experience of God, for the emotional infant is shallow. They do not have the deep relationship experiences with God. This individual might experience God in church yet limited in their experience at home and work.”²⁶

The Early Childhood teachers comprise a unique group on the KCA-Dallas campus. They work with the youngest children in helping them to learn, grow and become knowledgeable regarding the fundamentals of school life. Working through the development of a child, the adult teacher is encouraged to adjust and adapt to different situations. Scazzero shares, “The designations of the EHD instrument, the emotional child has some similarities to a natural child. The emotional child is challenged in handling disagreements, criticism, and disappointments. This individual may complain, withdraw, manipulate, drag their feet, become sarcastic or take revenge if not given their way in a situation.”²⁷

²⁶ Scazzero, <https://www.emotionallyhealthy.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/EHD-Personal-Assessment-2021.pdf>.

²⁷ Ibid.

The most significant change in this individual is their prayer life with God. Their prayer life can often be laborious and not a pleasurable experience. Prayer is absent of the dynamic communication in God's presence. Scazzero shares, "The emotional adolescent can make quick judgements, misinterpretations of people's behavior, withhold forgiveness, avoid, or cut them off if they hurt the individual. The emotional adolescent has difficulty really listening to another's person's pain, disappointments, or needs without becoming preoccupied with oneself. This individual attend church, yet too busy to have adequate time nourishing a spiritual relationship with God."²⁸ Scazzero shares, "An intimate relationship with God is not the primary motivation of this individual. The busyness of church life preoccupies the individual. The central belief is that the more done for God is valuable in the relationship, instead of being with God and waiting on him for direction. Prayer life is missing the essential elements of silence, solitude or attentively listening to God."²⁹

The emotional adult is a different profile that represents respect and love as Jesus instructs us to love one another. Scazzero shares, "Many Christians have several areas of need when it comes to loving and accepting one another without judgment. This individual take responsibility for his own thoughts, feelings, goals, and actions."³⁰ Being loved by God is recognized and intimacy in the relationship can occur due to the individual being sensitive to the Holy Spirit. Scazzero states, "Accurate assessment of oneself is a challenge, yet the emotional adult is willing to self-assess one's limits, strengths, and weaknesses."³¹ It takes a true self-reflection of oneself to examine every thought, action and behavior of the individual.

²⁸ Scazzero, <https://www.emotionallyhealthy.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/EHD-Personal-Assessment-2021.pdf>.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Ibid.

In this context, Peter Scazzero states, “The emotional adult has moved from simply serving Christ to loving him and enjoying communion with him. The emotional adult is mature and understands the human limits of self-drive and motivation. The discovery of self is awakened to the guidance of the Holy Spirit, through humility and submission.”³²

Each of the designations are designed to assist with self-awareness and development of how to move from one designation to another. This maturing process can only be accomplished through a relationship with Jesus Christ (Phil 4:13). The role of the Holy Spirit is to help us in this development and relationship with God (John 14:15–21). J. T. English draws “The focus on hearing God in his Word as a prerequisite to doing God’s Word in our lives. The goal of biblical literacy is faithful participation in God’s mission, to be both hearers and doers of God’s Word.”³³ Discipleship requires intentionality in one’s commitment to God.

Step 3: Worldview Survey interviews

The worldview survey is a list of questions for the teacher to respond to from the researcher regarding the individual’s worldview. The interviews will be conducted according on a schedule. Each teacher will have an appointment time. The appointment will be for at least twenty minutes. The information will be typed, recorded, or written in response to questions from the researcher. Each teacher will have an opportunity to review the information for accuracy. The teacher will have a numerical code and name associated with the questionnaire for confidential purposes. The worldview survey is designed to seek information regarding the teacher’s view on spiritual topics.

³² Scazzero, <https://www.emotionallyhealthy.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/EHD-Personal-Assessment-2021.pdf>.

³³ J. T. English, *Deep Discipleship: How the Church can Make Whole Disciples of Jesus* (Nashville: B & H Publishing Group), 111.

The worldview survey (Appendix H) is created by the researcher to better understand the beliefs of everyone. The categories include Supreme God, other gods, spirits, Supreme Evil Spirit, God's Word, People, Death, Creation, Holiness, and Sin. The simplicity of the survey is to get a glimpse and gather information regarding one's beliefs about a variety of spiritual topics. The responses to the questions are yes or no. Once the survey is completed, the researcher can discuss the individual's responses with the teacher. The worldview survey will shape the teacher's motivation and value for discipleship in the workplace. J. T. English emphasizes, "That the sequence of discipleship does not pretend to do the work of the Holy Spirit, but this sequence assumes that the Holy Spirit can use spiritual development steps to support growth to become mature disciples."³⁴ English shares, "Deep discipleship requires that participants are held accountable to the process."³⁵ Discipleship is the focus of modeling the behaviors of Jesus. It includes a worldview that is consistent with biblical principles.

Step 4: Spiritual Life Interview Questionnaire

The spiritual life interview questionnaire (Appendix G) is designed to give a personal glimpse into the spiritual development and involvement of the EC teachers in the local church. The questionnaire focuses on the beliefs of the EC teacher. For example, one of the questions asked, If the individual is called from God? J. T. English shares, "It is important that individuals understand that they are commissioned to lead in the discipleship process."³⁶ The questions are designed to assist in understanding the EC teacher's commitment to Christian service.

³⁴ English, *Deep Discipleship*, 138.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 202.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 171.

The spiritual life interview questionnaire seeks to assist the early childhood teachers in answering the question, how are you growing and leading in your relationship with Christ? In the workplace, the early childhood staff understands the significance of leading through influence with their family, friends, colleagues, and community. The question of what life changes would make one grow more spirituality, serves to deepen the individual's experience of self-reflection. Robby Gallaty and Chris Swain share, "Equipping the saints of the ministry is more than teaching them to be a greeter or teacher in church. It should focus on their faith and helping others to grow. In essence, that is discipleship."³⁷

Another question for the teachers focused on what spiritual disciplines are practiced such as fasting, prayer, scripture reading or any other discipline that will increase their awareness of the Holy Spirit and Jesus' purpose in their lives. Discipleship with Early Childhood teachers involves daily practice of one's faith in the classroom. By using this tool with the early childhood teachers, it will assist them to understand their spiritual journey with Christ. The researcher will compile the information and communicate the findings to the staff.

The spiritual life of the early childhood teachers is essential to their development, purposes, and objectives with biblical instruction to the children. The teachers hired to work in EC teach biblical knowledge to the children through curriculum, music, songs, dance, and play. Teaching the children to pray and develop a relationship with God is essential to the spiritual growth and development of the children. The training process can take time for every staff member to become proficient at teaching biblical stories to the children. They want to make the Bible personalities come alive to the children in order to spark their interests to learn.

³⁷ Robby Gallaty and Chris Swain, *Replicate: How to Create a Culture of Disciple-making Right Where You Are* (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2020), 130-131.

Step 5: Coding and analysis of data

Once the data is collected, the coding and analysis are essential to the reporting of the data. The analysis of the information gathered from the questionnaire and the interview will be assimilated and documented for the project. The data will be gathered and checked for validity based on the questions and information from the teachers. Peter Scazzero shares, “As the individuals grow in their relationship with the Lord and practice emotionally healthy discipleship, they will come to understand that the emphasis is on being with God, more than doing for God.”³⁸

In a Christian school, there is the tendency to focus on the tasks at work, rather than one’s spiritual growth and development. As the data is collected, it will become apparent if the teachers are using personal disciplines to develop a closer relationship with Christ. A part of the data collection will be to discuss with the teachers, personal journaling as a discipline along with prayer and fasting. Natasha Sistrunk Robinson shares, “Journaling is a way of taking what we are learning about God and making it personal.”³⁹

Step 6: Bible Study on SOTM/Discipleship

The format of the Bible Study (Appendix L) for the teachers will be created by the researcher. Each week, the Bible study will include one SOTM trait and a biblical personality modeling the trait in biblical history. The individuals will read the life story of a biblical personality, along with questions for application and reflection. For example, SOTM trait: Integrity, Bible personality: Ruth.

³⁸ Scazzero, *Emotionally Healthy Discipleship*, 5.

³⁹ Natasha Sistrunk Robinson, *Mentor for Life: Finding Purpose through Intentional Discipleship* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2016), 123.

The teachers will read the book, *Kingdom Disciples: Heaven's representatives on Earth*. The format of the Bible study will include selected Scriptures on each SOTM trait. Each lesson will include a section for application. One of the purposes for the Bible study is to give individuals an opportunity to apply the principles of the seven SOTM traits. For example, the application questions for compassion are:

TABLE 1.1 Spirit of the Ministry Trait (SOTM) Questions

1. How can you explain the value of compassion in your personal life?
2. What are some ways you can promote the trait of compassion with your colleagues/supervisor at work?
3. What are some specific steps you can take in your professional practices to demonstrate compassion as you care for children and/or service their families at KCA-Early Childhood?
4. How would you generate a plan to demonstrate your commitment to compassion in the workplace with your supervisor by your next evaluation conference?

Natasha Sistrunk Robinson shares, “God has a specific purpose for each of us.”⁴⁰ Robinson further shares, “Discipleship is a command from God (Matt.28:16–20).”⁴¹ The mission of KCA-EC is to make disciples whose lives will be fruitful and fulfill God’s kingdom purposes on earth. As Early Childhood teachers mature in their relationship with God, a feature encouraged is for them to develop specific spiritual disciplines. According to Donald S. Whitney, “A spiritual discipline is the patterns in Scripture that promote spiritual growth within believers and reflected in the gospel of Jesus Christ.”⁴² Whitney further shares, “Spiritual disciplines include praying, reading God’s Word, worshipping music, and praise, fasting, and serving.”⁴³

⁴⁰ Robinson, *Mentor for Life*, 195.

⁴¹ Ibid., 215.

⁴² Whitney, *Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life*, 4.

⁴³ Ibid., 5.

The focus of discipleship means that believers learn spiritual disciplines in their journey to maturity in Christ. For example, if an athlete stops practicing the drills to stay ready for competition, then when that individual competes, he may not win the game due to lack of preparation. Spiritual disciplines are similar because they must be practiced for the believer to grow in strength for spiritual warfare. One of the most significant spiritual disciplines encouraged with the EC teachers is prayer. Prayer is communication with God. It is one of the most effective ways to reduce stress. It is an opportunity for the individual to share their feelings, thoughts, desires, transgressions, hopes and fears.

At KCA-EC, the teachers are encouraged to pray daily with their colleagues and the children. During the Bible study lesson with the students, teachers are encouraged to pray and teach the children how to pray. The elements of prayer can include petition, thanksgiving, confession, humility, and worship. Frequently, Jesus prayed and taught his disciples to pray (Matt 6:9–13). The disciples desired to emulate the practices of Jesus. The effectiveness of daily prayer and acknowledgement of the presence of the Holy Spirit operating in the lives of the staff, is part of setting a positive climate in early childhood.

Spiritual disciplines are practices of living a Christian life (Appendix K). Whitney shares, “Godliness is the result of a biblically disciplined spiritual life.”⁴⁴ The EC teachers are encouraged to model SOTM attributes with their colleagues and community. Thom S. Rainer shares “A spiritual discipline is a habit one develops in God’s power to become more like Jesus.”⁴⁵ As the teachers practice spiritual disciplines, the practices will assist them in their growth and intimacy with Jesus Christ.

⁴⁴ Whitney, *Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life*, 159.

⁴⁵ Thom S. Rainer, *Sharing the Gospel with Ease: How the Love of Christ can Flow Naturally from Your Life* (Franklin, TN: Church Answers, 2022), 29.

Daily prayer requires a quiet time devoted to an individual listening to God and sharing in the intimacy of the relationship. Rainer shares another discipline that has world reaching impact. Thom S. Rainer shares “The importance of evangelism as a spiritual discipline.”⁴⁶ Sharing the gospel is encouraged. The more individuals become comfortable in sharing their beliefs with others, the Word of God will become easier to share. Thom S. Rainer’s position is, “Christians can be quick to deflect responsibility when it comes to evangelism.”⁴⁷

Spiritual disciplines are designed to benefit believers in their Christian experience. Whitney shares, “Disciplines like journaling, silence and solitude have equal importance in developing our relationship with God.”⁴⁸ Personal journaling is encouraged during the Bible study with the EC teachers. Journaling provides an opportunity to be reflective and communicate with God through written expression. Thom S. Rainer shares, “The Great Commission is a general commandment to all believers. Jesus did not select only certain Christians with specific gifts or callings to share the gospel. He gave the mandate for all believers.”⁴⁹

Teaching can be challenging with significant work-related indicators of stress. In a Christian school environment, are there spiritual disciplines that will assist teachers in dealing with stress? Robin LaBarbera and June Hetzel researched the practice of spiritual disciplines and job satisfaction, “Prayer is the discipline focused on during their research. The three significant sources of stress for educators are administrative stress, classroom-based stress, and relational challenges.”⁵⁰ These factors can influence the way an individual strives in a particular job.

⁴⁶ Rainer, *Sharing the Gospel with Ease*, 29.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 34.

⁴⁸ Whitney, *Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life*, 252.

⁴⁹ Rainer, *Sharing the Gospel with Ease*, 35.

⁵⁰ LaBarbera and Hetzel, “Christian Educators’ Use of Prayer to Cope with Stress,” 1433-48.

There are factors that influence the interactions with a child and some of them can change the way children perform at school. LaBarbera and Hetzel share, “Some of the administrative factors of stress include workload, insufficient planning time and lack of general support from administration.”⁵¹ Many of the above features are present in a Christian school environment. Early Childhood teachers work in preparing the youngest students to be successful in school. Students are to become acquainted with biblical concepts at an early age. Teachers often feel accountable for their social-emotional, academic, and spiritual growth. The teachers at KCA-EC teach a comprehensive literacy curriculum, Bible curriculum, science, cooking, art, and social-emotional wellness. The teachers work a regular day without planning time.

There are various opportunities throughout the school year for staff development, vacation days and paid leave. Job satisfaction can be attributed to the well-being of the students, compliments along with recognition from parents, and formation of community relationships. Many of the teachers at KCAEC have been a part of the Christian school ministry for over twenty years. KCA, formerly FCA has been in operations as a Christian school for over thirty-five years with clear distinctives on assisting families in developing a Christian worldview.

The KCA-EC teachers will follow the chart (Appendix L) to maintain the structure for each assignment. The chart is a guide for the participants to use the various resources with the Bible study. Participants read, study, and prepare for the weekly meetings using the chart as a guide. Every week the staff is assigned a Bible lesson to complete, then meet to discuss the lessons in small groups. Each group has mixed EC grade levels. Bobby Harrington and Josh Patrick shares, “The early church devoted themselves to teaching, fellowshiping together.”⁵²

⁵¹ LaBarbera and Hetzel, “Christian Educators’ Use of Prayer to Cope with Stress,” 1433-48.

⁵² Bobby Harrington and Josh Patrick, 125.

Harrington and Patrick share, “The early church emphasized discipleship and growing together.”⁵³ One of the essential elements of the KCA-Early Childhood Bible study is the usage of resources (Appendix M) given to the teachers by KCA and the Early Childhood ministry. The selection of materials provides a framework for a comprehensive study of discipleship.

The KCA Early Childhood Bible Study Schedule (Appendix O) provides the organization and structure for the participants to know the date and time for the Bible Study. Every group has an instructor leader to guide the discussion. The size of the small group allows for more participation and discussion. The time and day of the week permits the individual teachers to be prepared for the Bible study. Bill Hull describes, “The process of transformation by stating the three concepts of sanctification, discipleship and spiritual formation are intimately related and essentially describe the process of spiritual growth. He further asserts, “Discipleship occurs when one answer Jesus’ call to learn how to live by his perspective and standards.”⁵⁴

The organization of the Bible study gives structure to the meetings and accountability for attendance, preparation, and participation in the meetings. Participants are assigned a number for confidentiality and research purposes. To emulate disciple development like Jesus, Bobby Harrington and Alex Absalom share that Jesus’ method used small group as his forum for leadership development.⁵⁵ Harrington and Absalom share, “Jesus’ focus was on small groups more than public group gatherings. Discipleship is a balance of relationships, experiences, and information.”⁵⁶ The EC teachers will participate in small groups on a weekly basis.

⁵³ Harrington and Patrick, *The Disciple Maker’s Handbook*, 125.

⁵⁴ Bill Hull, *Conversion and Discipleship: You Can’t Have One Without the Other* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2016), 104-05.

⁵⁵ Harrington and Absalom, *Discipleship that Fits*, 133.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 132.

Each discipleship group will consist of a mature Christian individual with experience in leadership and teaching. Group leaders are selected and trained to guide the group discussions. Training for the group leaders will include how to guide a discussion group with questions, prayer, and effective engagement strategies. The same biblical materials will be used with each group. The teachers at KCAEC will receive (Appendix M) a tote bag, *Kingdom Disciples: Heaven's representatives on earth* book, *Ultimate Bible Guidebook*, *Quiet Times with God* devotional book, prayer journal, Books of the Bible flipbook and Selected verses from the Bible flipbook.

Discipleship centers around change in one's own growth and development with others. The data collected through the interviews will show if the teachers have grown in their personal relationship with Christ as they practice the personal disciplines. Throughout the Bible Study, teachers will be asked to engage in scripture memorization, prayer, and reading their Bibles. As the EC Staff participates in each stage of discipleship, personal growth is encouraged.

The SOTM biblical materials are organized in a notebook. The consistency of schedule, (Appendix M, O), materials and instructional procedures will enhance the development of relationships. Bobby Harrington and Josh Patrick share, "To develop real, authentic relationships require investments of time and energy."⁵⁷ Harrington and Patrick state, "As disciple makers, believers need to return to the concept of spiritual friendships that permeated the early church."⁵⁸ As one matures in Christ, friendships are developed and maintained in a Christian school environment. The teachers will become familiar with OCBF Church vision, mission, and goals through the discussions within the Bible study groups.

⁵⁷ Harrington and Patrick, *The Disciple Maker's Handbook*, 74.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

The SOTM traits in the workplace are vital to approaching discipleship from a biblical perspective. The following chart (Appendix P) illustrates the value of the SOTM traits to OCBF Church. The Spirit of the Ministry traits embody the essence of the mission, vision, and values of OCBF Church ministry. In, the ministry context describes the intentionality of OCBF relationship to the Oak Cliff community. At KCA Early Childhood, there is the same focus and intentionality to discipleship. In (Appendix P), the SOTM traits are defined with a Scripture reference. The additional traits were included to complete the chapters in the book. Every chapter in the *Kingdom Disciples: Heaven's Representatives on Earth* (Appendix L, P, Q), Bible study for the early childhood teachers is devoted to one of the traits. Since there are twelve chapters in the book, the researcher included several traits that can be present in a workplace environment. The Bible study is multi-layered to include creative activities for application and response. The teachers complete the assignments and use the application activities for personal response.

Every week, the Bible study includes one SOTM trait and a biblical personality modeling the trait in biblical history. The teacher will read the featured life story of a biblical personality, along with questions for application and reflection. For example, SOTM trait: Integrity, Bible personality: Ruth. Bobby Harrington and Josh Patrick emphasizes “The importance of developing a tool, plan, and process for discipleship.”⁵⁹ Harrington and Patrick share, “That a tool/guide, can teach and direct the disciple in the journey towards Jesus and Christlikeness.”⁶⁰ The level of questions will graduate from factual to application using Patricia Armstrong’s “Bloom’s Taxonomy of different levels of questions.”⁶¹

⁵⁹ Harrington and Patrick, *The Disciple Maker's Handbook*, 164.

⁶⁰ Ibid. 164.

⁶¹ Patricia Armstrong, *Bloom's Taxonomy*, Vanderbilt University Center for Teaching, accessed June 25, 2021, <https://cft.vanderbilt.edu/guides-sub-pages/bloos-taxonomy/>.

For example, using Patricia Armstrong's Bloom's Taxonomy, "One can compose the questions like, what country did Ruth come from? (Knowledge) to How would you feel if your spouse suddenly died? (Evaluation). The questions will range from Knowledge, Comprehension, Application, Analysis, Synthesis to Evaluation."⁶² The questions and answers are shared during the Bible study small group sessions. Each Bible study lesson (Appendix R) will focus on the book, *Kingdom Disciples: Heaven's Representatives on Earth*. The EC teachers will read and study the book from 12 to 16 weeks on discipleship. Tony Evans share, "The focus of discipleship is spiritual formation."⁶³ Discipleship works in a small group environment. Spiritual growth is a process of developing an intimate relationship with Jesus through prayer, reading scripture and obedience to the Holy Spirit's guidance.

The schedule (Appendix O) contains the staff members date and times for their Bible study session. The Bible study includes a thought for today, key thought, questions on the focused chapter, women of faith story, application of spirit of the ministry traits, and activity for engagement with the trait. Each section is designed to promote discussion and engagement. This qualitative study sought to determine, if early childhood teachers being taught the SOTM traits in a Bible study with the focus on discipleship, whether it would result in significant change in the workplace environment?

In chapter one, the problem was identified as being a lack of a professionally developed missional aligned training program for Early Childhood Educators serving at Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship Early Childhood Program. The alignment (Appendix K, L, M, Q) illustrates the correlation of using the *Kingdom Disciples: Heaven's Representatives on Earth* book, SOTM

⁶² Armstrong, *Bloom's Taxonomy*.

⁶³ Evans, *Kingdom Disciples*, 62.

traits and biblical personality in a Bible study format, along with spiritual disciplines would enhance the individual's spiritual and personal relationship with Christ. Each Bible study lesson contains a spiritual discipline such as prayer, fasting, scripture memorization, reading the Bible and journaling. The teachers are encouraged to share their personal stories with each other throughout the Bible sessions. Tony Evans encourages, "Individuals to become disciples in their home, workplace, and community."⁶⁴ Bobby Harrington and Josh Patrick share, "If we want people to become disciples of Jesus, they need good discipleship plans and wise direction from disciple makers. Good intentions are not good enough. Discipleship is more than just hanging out with people and having a good time."⁶⁵

Intervention Design: Data Triangulation

The main sources for collection of data are interviews, surveys, questionnaires, and journals (Appendix G, H, I). Each of these are used to check the validity of the participants responses. Since this is a qualitative study, then Data triangulation and Methodological triangulation are used. According to Tim Sensing, "Describes data triangulation as using a variety of data such as comparing data from observations, official records, and interviews. Methodological triangulation includes the usage of interviews, observation, questionnaires, and documents."⁶⁶ These two methods of triangulation allow the researcher to use both methods for collecting data. Each teacher is given a journal, to record personal responses to the spiritual changes occurring as the group progresses through the Bible study. Journaling is an intimate dialog with oneself and provides opportunities to be reflective and responsive to personal needs.

⁶⁴ Evans, *Kingdom Disciples*, 65.

⁶⁵ Harrington and Patrick, *The Disciple Maker's Handbook*, 105.

⁶⁶ Sensing, *Qualitative Research*, 73-74.

The KCAEC teachers are assessed using the Worldview Survey (Appendix H), Emotionally Healthy Discipleship Personal Assessment (Appendix I), and Spiritual Life Interview Questionnaire (Appendix G). Each of these instruments serve to answer the questions about an individuals' beliefs, motivations, and relationship with the Lord. Tim Sensing shares, "Data triangulation use a variety of data in a study."⁶⁷ Understanding each of the instruments will assist in the purpose for using the tool. The Worldview Survey is used to solicit information about the personal beliefs of the KCAEC teachers. The questions range from their knowledge of a Supreme God to sin and death. Each response gives a visual representation of the individual's perspective about spiritual topics. The Spiritual Life Questionnaire gives a broader range of questions to solicit the individual's participation and ministry goals.

The Emotionally Healthy Discipleship Personal Assessment in Step 2 is an in-depth spiritual instrument used to solicit deeper thoughts regarding one's relationship with the Lord. The triangulation of the three instruments gives a broader analysis of the individual teacher. In gathering the data, each participant shared their thoughts, feelings, and reflections about the personal journey of salvation. Each tool provided insight into the spiritual life of the individual.

Intervention Design: Ethical Issues

The researcher of this project serves as the Early Childhood Director at Kingdom Collegiate Academies. The EC staff are teachers and employees of OCBF Church. Through our accreditation body, Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI), the KCA Early Childhood staff must participate in a Bible study experience every year. The engagement in a Bible study can be an enriching experience.

⁶⁷ Sensing, *Qualitative Research*, 73.

The teachers participate and have an opportunity to share with one another. Throughout the process, Daniel Im shares, “Discipleship attributes as Bible engagement, obeying God and denying self, serving God and others, sharing Christ, exercising faith, seeking God, building relationships and transparency.”⁶⁸ Each of these attributes contribute to the development of the teacher. According to Daniel Im, “Bible engagement includes learning with the intellect and will, engage with a wide range of behaviors and habits that lead to gaining knowledge, wisdom, and ultimately significant life change.”⁶⁹ Due to meeting the requirements of the accreditation body for a Bible study, book, religious materials each year, then ethical issues were not violated in working with the KCAEC Staff. The Bible study served to meet the biblical requirement for ASCI.

Step 7: Adjustment to Intervention

A fair trial of the intervention plan may take three to four months to get a sample for the effectiveness of the intervention to the problem. There will be some adjustments to evaluate the intervention. As concerns develop, then the researcher will make changes to the project. The KCAEC teachers will be informed of changes through professional development opportunities scheduled on the school’s calendar. Participants will always have an opportunity to ask questions and share concerns with the researcher.

The change in the problem will occur if the teachers through the spiritual formation disciplines do not develop a closer relationship with the Trinity. The SOTM traits are to be evident in their daily lives. Since this experience is about spiritual formation and discipleship,

⁶⁸ Daniel Im, *No Silver Bullets: Five Small Shifts that will Transform your Ministry* (Nashville: B & H Publishing Group, 2017), 56–57.

⁶⁹ Ibid., 56.

the teachers will gain confidence in sharing their personal life story with other individuals in a discussion or teaching environment. The assessments throughout the journey of reading and spiritual growth will assess the outcome of the project.

Most of the EC teachers have a relationship with Jesus Christ, even though they attend other local churches. The goal of this project is to put in place a systemic way of working with every staff member and helping them to mature in Christ along with being able to disciple other people. Robby Gallaty and Chris Swain share, “It is more than mentoring because the desire is the repetition of other employees spiritually growing with passion and enthusiasm to be examples of Christ on earth.”⁷⁰ Gallaty and Swain emphasizes, “It is important for believers to know that as a biblical community, we must learn how to engage with others.”⁷¹

Implementation of the Intervention Design: Demographics

The implementation of the thesis project will occur after receiving acceptance from the Liberty University IRB and gathering permission from the senior pastor and executive administrator of KCA. The design will be in a Bible study format with the KCAEC teachers. There are twenty-five teachers on staff at KCAEC, this includes 10 ESS teachers.

Table 1.2 EARLY CHILDHOOD STAFF

TODDLER TEACHERS	3 TEACHERS, 3 ESS TEACHERS
EC – 2 YEAR OLDS	4 TEACHERS, 2 ESS TEACHERS
EC – 3 YEAR OLDS	4 TEACHERS, 3 ESS TEACHERS
EC – 4 YEAR OLDS	4 TEACHERS, 2 ESS TEACHERS
TOTAL STAFF	15 TEACHERS, 10 ESS TEACHERS

⁷⁰ Gallaty and Swain, *Replicate*, 115.

⁷¹ Ibid., 140.

During the intervention, the teachers will meet weekly to go over the SOTM Bible study questions along with discussions and reflections. The *Kingdom Disciples Heaven's Representatives on Earth* Bible study (Appendix R) will take approximately 12 to 16 weeks. It will cover discipleship and spiritual formation. The teachers are expected to read the book, record any reflection questions, and get ready to participate in the discussion groups. Each discussion group will have a group leader and approximately 3-5 teachers. Harrington and Patrick believe, "In a traditional model of discipleship, individuals are organized in either an educational discipleship or intentional relational discipleship model."⁷² The models are explained in (Appendix R) for examination.

Discipleship through small group meetings provides an essential ingredient in the spiritual development of the staff. One element of growth are methods of teaching people to pray. Robby Gallaty suggests, "Praying Scripture includes praying actual prayers that are in the Bible and communicating back to God the scriptural statements about His character, His promises, and His love."⁷³ As an early childhood program, there are many opportunities throughout the day for biblical integration with the children. Teaching the children specific Scripture verses is a part of the daily routine of teaching Bible. Robby Gallaty states, "Reading the Bible, praying, fasting, and memorizing Scripture without a goal in mind causes us to lose direction and focus."⁷⁴ It is imperative for the EC staff to have a specific goal for daily prayer. Those requests can be personal or professional. As Jesus taught his disciples to pray in Matthew 6:9–13, his model continues to be effective for today.

⁷² Harrington and Patrick, *The Disciple Maker's Handbook*, 77.

⁷³ Robby Gallaty, *Growing Up: How to be a Disciple who Makes Disciples* (Nashville: B & H Publishing, 2013), 81.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 57.

The model of discipleship used by Jesus is like intentional relational discipleship. The KCAEC staff will use a blend of the educational and intentional relational model (Appendix R). Harrington and Patrick share, “Since the educational model has been dominated in churches for a long time, it is essential to consider the setting and context for the Bible study.”⁷⁵ Harrington and Patrick believe, “Discipleship, first and foremost is relational, it is making time to relationally engage people and love them.”⁷⁶ Through this discipleship model, EC teachers can engage in a teaching, modeling and coaching approach to spiritual transformation.

The goal for the Bible study is to use a layered approach in engaging the EC teachers to study the Word of God along with the Kingdom Disciples book to align with the values of OCBF Church. On a weekly basis, the groups will engage in reading and discussions centered around the book. The questions in the lessons serve as a guide for deeper discussion. The flow of the Bible study is similar for every chapter of the book (Appendix L, M).

One way, Gallaty and Swain share is, “Discipleship groups remain faithful to the Bible is by praying with expectancy to hear from God. The groups can remain faithful to Scripture by reading daily.”⁷⁷ A central focus of the Bible study is to identify with a female biblical personality modeling the SOTM trait.

The intervention design chosen for this project is done through a Bible study format. Gallaty and Swain share, “Discipleship requires relationship development, preferably in small groups.”⁷⁸ The EC teachers are familiar with small groups from previous Bible studies. The small groups will have approximately 4-6 people.

⁷⁵ Harrington and Patrick, *The Disciple Maker's Handbook*, 78.

⁷⁶ Harrington and Patrick, *The Disciple Maker's Handbook*, 78.

⁷⁷ Gallaty and Swain, *Replicate*, 279.

⁷⁸ Ibid., 280.

Setting up a similar structure for groups that is familiar to the EC audience provided an acceptable way to disseminate information. The materials used will allow for deeper learning and discussions within the groups. The books and resources are designed to inspire further investigation in Scripture and personal time with the Lord by use of the devotional. The surveys and questionnaires provided an opportunity for the participants to reflect on their own personal beliefs. Since many of the EC participants come from different religious backgrounds, each assessment tool is beneficial to gather information. The assessment tools are used to get a deeper response on the effectiveness of the discipleship project with the EC staff.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

Overview of Research

Discipleship is an essential ingredient in the life of the church. The motivation to go into the world to spread the gospel is given through the Great Commission in Matthew 28:18–20. Several critical scriptures (Mk. 16:15, Lk. 24:47, Jn 20:21, Acts 1:8) addresses the importance of making disciples, which is every Christian believer motivation in developing their relationship with Christ. A disciple is a committed and devoted follower of Christ, who seeks to reflect him on earth. The Great Commission encourages individuals to make disciples of all nations. Bobby Harrington and Alex Absalom emphasizes, “Discipleship is a balance of relationships, experiences, and information.”¹ Jesus’ focus on discipleship serves as a model for every believer. Harrington and Absalom further shares, “The Great Commission assumes two critical things, God has commanded that we make disciples, and Jesus is with us in the process, working through us to accomplish the assignment.”²

Since Jesus is our example of taking 12 individuals and transforming them to serve people over three years, Christians are encouraged to practice and understand the importance of spiritual formation. Discipleship in the work environment has similar elements of building trusted relationships over time. At KCA-Early Childhood, every teacher can develop a relationship with a trusted guide through the discipleship process. In Chapter 1, the need for discipleship among the KCA-Early Childhood staff is due to the variety of beliefs among faith groups represented by the staff. It is understood that the discipleship process will take more time than this research project will allow, yet it is a beginning to awareness of discipleship at work.

¹ Harrington and Absalom, *Discipleship that Fits*, 28.

² Ibid., 29.

The research problem is KCAEC staff are unfamiliar with the seven traits of the ministry (Accountability, Joy, Unity, Integrity, Communication, Excellence and Servanthood) that are foundational to OCBF Church. Also, there is a lack of a professionally developed mission-aligned training program for Early Childhood educators serving at OCBF Church. To address the problem, the researcher developed a mission-aligned professional biblical-based training program to increase staff effectiveness and alignment with the vision of OCBF Church. The professional biblical-based training program included a pre-training program survey. The Spiritual Life Interview Questionnaire focuses on the teacher's involvement in church, age of staff member, church attendance, and the number of years in education. The survey instrument asked the participants to describe their faith journey and participation in the spiritual life within their community. Teachers described ways of being active in ministry and how they view their school's work environment.

Another focus is the way the teachers use their faith in the classroom and how they promote spiritual formation in the lives of their young students. Robby Gallaty and Chris Swain emphasize, "Discipleship demands commitment. The Bible never gives a prescriptive step-by-step method for making disciples."³ Gallaty and Swain describe, "The difference between evangelism and discipleship. Evangelism is introducing an individual to Christ by sharing the good news of the gospel. Discipleship is taking the person and helping them become more like Jesus."⁴ The teachers at KCAEC are encouraged to participate in the various discipleship groups. It is through the small groups that individuals will participate and learn about discipleship. The small group setting will provide an opportunity to share intimately about their experiences.

³ Gallaty and Swain, *Replicate*, 166.

⁴ Ibid., 170.

The DMIN project is to teach affirmation and adherence to the SOTM traits to the KCAEC staff. The seven traits of the Ministry are Accountability, Joy, Unity, Integrity, Communication, Excellence, and Servanthood. The Bible study developed is a discipleship course based on the book, *Kingdom Disciples: Heaven's Representatives on Earth* (Appendix T). Several topics were included as a companion to the chapters in the book. They are Faithfulness, Adaptability, Empathy, Confidence, and Compassion. The definitions of Spiritual Formation, Discipleship and Kingdom of God, and Kingdom Agenda are essential to the foundational principles of discipleship.

The *Kingdom Disciples: Heaven's Representatives on Earth* Bible Study (Appendix T) includes a welcome to the Bible Study, EC Bible Study Covenant, Prayer of Salvation, Bible Study and Reading Guide, OCBF Church Employee Handbook, Scriptures on the SOTM Traits, Kingdom Disciples chapter focus and questions, Women of Faith stories and Application of the SOTM trait in the workplace. The application of the SOTM trait allows the individual to reflect on their practice of the trait in the workplace. The structure of the Bible study is inter-generational. Jody Dean shares, "To intentionally involve women across different age groups, one must communicate the leader's desire to form inter-generational groups."⁵ Dean believes, "One of the most effective ways to create harmony among groups is to ensure that the older leaders have instruction in discipleship and encourage others."⁶ At KCAEC, the Bible study leaders intentionally work with younger women in their group. The age range for the leaders is from 25–72 years old. The inter-generational emphasis of incorporating a diverse group of individuals is to have a variety of different perspectives and experiences within the groups.

⁵ Dean and Stewart, ed., *Together We Equip*, 194.

⁶ Ibid. 194.

One of the most challenging aspects of conducting discipleship in the workplace is scheduling. The work schedule is different throughout the EC center. The beginning of the day starts at 7:00AM with the initial opening at the center. At approximately, 8:00AM most of the classroom teachers arrive with the ESS teachers arriving at 9:00AM. The DMIN project took seven months to implement with the staff. The research project began on January 5, 2022 and completed on July 20, 2022. One of the issues in creating a schedule became a concern due to absences from work with the staff. The researcher scheduled one-on-one sessions with the individuals to assess the progress of the project. During one of the sessions, the EC teachers wanted the Emotionally Healthy Discipleship Personal Assessment explained in more depth. The researcher spent time going over specific questions from the assessment.

As the teachers became more comfortable with the weekly Bible studies, sharing personal reflections became effortless and transparent within the group. The teachers could identify different areas of their spiritual journey with growth by reading the resources and practicing spiritual disciplines. J. T. English agrees, “Spiritual habits help disciples not just their heads but also their hearts and bodies as disciples of Christ.”⁷ English shares, “Spiritual habits help us to become whole people.”⁸ Teachers are able to identify one area of the SOTM traits that presents a personal challenge. EC teachers are to describe the features of the Spirit of the Ministry (SOTM), personal changes to maturity, the teacher’s understanding of the Christian gospel message, and the spiritual disciplines practiced during the Bible study. The goal is to witness changes in their personal relationships with their colleagues at work. The questions on the reflective pages gave the individuals an opportunity to share how they were changing because of the Bible study.

⁷ English, *Deep Discipleship*, 106.

⁸ Ibid. 106-07.

Compilation Protocol and Measures

The data collection phase of this research project began on January 4, 2022, and ended on July 20, 2022. The compilation of data continued through the summer. Due to several changes in staffing at KCAEC, the data will only reflect individuals that begin and concluded the research project. In reviewing the data from this project, there are measurable goals accomplished through this process. At the beginning of this project, 25 staff members of KCAEC committed themselves to the project. The thesis project description to the staff occurred during a seminar on January 4, 2022, on the KCA-Dallas campus. The teachers asked various questions about the project's expectations and outcomes. The researcher explained the features of the Bible study and the SOTM traits with the focus on discipleship through spiritual formation. Each teacher received a tote bag of several books and a devotional. An explanation of the schedule was given, along with any questions regarding the process and procedures.

The project took seven months to implement with the staff. One of the issues of creating a schedule became a concern due to absences from work with the staff. There were medical issues with several staff members and KCA children. A significant challenge was the coverage for the teachers with support staff, while they attended the Bible study. The Table 1.8 illustrates some of the major challenges in conducting this research project.

TABLE 4:1

Major Challenges to Implementation of the Research Project

1. Medical concerns with the staff and KCA children related to the pandemic.
2. Excessive absenteeism of staff members related to family or personal illness.
3. Inadequate staffing to cover classes for teachers due to resignations of ESS teachers.
4. Significant changes in scheduling for staff to meet for Bible Study.

Emotionally Healthy Discipleship Personal Assessment

One of the most significant aspects of the research project centered around individual's relationship with God, identifying their gifts and talents, understanding love and spiritual maturity, breaking powers of the past, and lead out of weakness and vulnerability. The teachers at KCAEC answered the survey instrument in January 2022. Each of these areas were measured and graphed in the chart below. The Emotionally Healthy Discipleship Personal assessment (Appendix I) was given to 20 participants. The participants are comprised of 12 early childhood teachers and 8 ESS teachers. Each section of the survey required the participants to rate themselves using a 1 to 4 scale. Once the participants read and rate themselves, a total sum was calculated for analysis by the researcher. The participant's total scores give a rating of emotional adult, emotional adolescent, emotional child, and emotional infant. The designation is based on the summation of the scores. From the initial analysis, (Appendix S), illustrates the emotionally healthy discipleship the distribution of individual scores. The classification of the individual scores is significant to give some indication of the person's growth and maturity in Christ (Col.1:28–29, Eph. 4:13).

The data indicates a significant number of staff members classified as emotionally adolescent. The characteristic of this designation clarifies some of the features of the individual's relationship with Christ. The teacher's growth in discipleship is depended on the strength of their relationship with Christ. Bobby Harrington and Josh Patrick emphasizes, "Disciple making is about becoming the kind of people who are prepared for heaven, whose loves and desire and habits are attuned to a world where God is visibly glorified."⁹ The Early Childhood teachers participated in a personal and spiritual journey to become more like Jesus daily.

⁹ Harrington and Patrick, *The Disciple Maker's Handbook*, 39.

An emotionally healthy relationship with Christ is designed to transform the way individuals relate to one another. Peter Scazzero shares, “An emotional healthy disciple slows down to be with Jesus.”¹⁰ One must allow the Holy Spirit to go beneath the surface and permit Jesus to deeply transform our lives. Scazzero states, “Becoming an emotionally healthy disciple means practicing contemplative spirituality. It is creating a place of daily practices of daily office, Sabbath-keeping, silence, solitude, and Scripture reading.”¹¹

In describing the Emotional Adolescent there are several characteristics on the chart that are reflective of an individual’s relationship with Christ. The features of the emotional adolescent, foci are on one’s relationship with Christ. Bill Hull emphasizes, “The goal of discipleship is to become imitators of Christ (I Cor. 11:1).”¹²

TABLE 4.2 Description of Emotional Adolescent

1. Do not like it when people question the individual.
2. Make quick judgments and interpretations of people’s behavior.
3. Withholding forgiveness from those who sin against the individual, avoiding or cutting them off when they do something to hurt the person.
4. The individual subconsciously keep records on the love given to others.
5. May have trouble really listening to another person’s pain, disappointment or needs without becoming preoccupied with oneself.
6. Too busy to spend adequate time nourishing one’s spiritual life.
7. Attend church and serve others but enjoy few delights in Christ.
8. Christian life is still primarily about doing, not being with Jesus.
9. Prayer continues to be mostly the individual talking with little silence, solitude or listening to God.

Source adapted from: Peter Scazzero, *Emotionally Healthy Discipleship: Moving from shallow Christianity to deep transformation*, Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2021.

¹⁰ Scazzero, *Emotionally Healthy Discipleship*, 26.

¹¹ Ibid. 26-27.

¹² Hull, *Conversion and Discipleship*, 53.

In analyzing the features of the emotional adolescent, unforgiveness, busyness, and going through life self-absorbed are part of this individual's character. Bill Hull states, "Forgiveness is the benefit of confessing sin, acknowledge faults, and receive blessings from God."¹³ Hull emphasizes "Forgiveness puts joy in the heart, a bounce in the spirit, and health in the bones and gives us a positive outlook on the future."¹⁴ The emotional adolescent needs to recognize that busyness can prohibit the individual from being sensitive to the Holy Spirit and seeking guidance in making decisions. The attitude of doing for Jesus may give an individual a sense of satisfaction for a short period of time, yet unsatisfied spiritually with the relationship with Jesus. Each of the KCAEC teachers surveyed with this instrument indicated that busyness is one of the central inhibitors of developing a mature relationship with Christ.

Within the local church, the KCAEC teachers contribute and participate in the ongoing work of the church ministry. Dallas Willard believes one of the essential ingredients to maturing in Christ involves studying the Bible. He states that "If one does not try to understand God's dealing with humanity, then that person is in rebellion against the expressed will of God."¹⁵ The primary reason for creating a biblically based discipleship program is to enhance the teacher's awareness of becoming a disciple of Jesus. Developing a biblically based discipleship program for the KCA-Early Childhood staff required a focus on meeting weekly, reading the Bible and, *Kingdom's Disciples: Heaven's Representatives on Earth* book, completing the Bible lessons, and challenging the staff to replicate what is discussed in the group. The study will explore the critical role of leadership in facilitating spiritual transformation to understand the importance of solitude and personal encounters with God in overcoming challenges.

¹³ Hull, *Conversion and Discipleship*, 93.

¹⁴ Ibid., 93-94.

¹⁵ Willard, *Hearing God*, 254.

The emotional adult is the second classification of the KCAEC teachers. This group had fewer individuals scoring in this range. The range of scores are from 16–28, indicating the self-view of the individual as being mature. The chart shows the scores of the emotional adult.

TABLE 4.3 **Emotionally Healthy Discipleship - Adults**

Participant 1	JW	23	19	20	19	20	24	27	E Adult
Participant 12	LM	20	19	19	18	16	22	26	E. Adult
Participant 18	RH	20	17	24	18	17	23	23	E. Adult
Participant 19	MF	23	20	24	20	20	24	28	E. Adult

The emotional healthy adult has characteristics quite different from the emotionally healthy adolescent. Dallas Willard shares “Spiritual formation in Christ is the process of leading to that ideal end, and its result is love of God with all the heart, soul, mind, strength and one’s neighbor as oneself.”¹⁶ Willard defines, “Spiritual formation as obedience or conformity to Christ out of a transformation accomplished through purposive interaction with the grace of God in Christ.”¹⁷ As a mature believer, one understands and models the love of God in every aspect of their lives. The features of an emotionally healthy adult are represented in the following chart.

TABLE 4.4 **Description of an Emotional Adult**

1. Respect and love others without having to change them or becoming judgmental.
2. Individual that values people for who they are, and not for what they can give the person or how they behave.
3. Take responsibility for thoughts, feelings, goals, and actions.
4. Share my beliefs and values to those who disagree without becoming adversarial.
5. Able to self-assess my limits, strengths, and weaknesses.
6. Deeply convinced that I am loved by Christ and do not look to others to tell me.
7. Able to integrate doing for God and being with him.
8. Life in Christ is about loving and communion with him.

Source adapted from: Peter Scazzero, *Emotionally Healthy Discipleship: Moving from shallow Christianity to deep transformation*, Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2021.

¹⁶ Willard, *Renovation of the Heart*, 25.

¹⁷ Ibid., 15.

The emotional healthy adult shares a set of values centered around self-reflection, setting limits, and serving the Lord out of love and devotion. Bobby Harrington and Greg Wiens state “Jesus was clear, that if you are not making disciples, then you are not a mature disciple.”¹⁸ One of the distinct differences between the emotionally healthy adolescent and the emotionally healthy adult is maturity and knowledge in understanding the purpose and plan of Jesus. The plan is for individuals to understand the mission of the kingdom of God. David Young shares, “Jesus came announcing the kingdom and then spent the rest of his life making disciples.”¹⁹ Young believes, “Making disciples is the mission of the church and it should be the mission of every member of the church. Disciples who make disciples is how the kingdom of God spreads.”²⁰ In a Christian school, there are various opportunities to share our faith with each other. Harrington and Wiens emphasize, “The point that making a disciple is not about our personality, position, knowledge, or education. It is communicating Christ’s transformation principles in the context of a relationship.”²¹

From the research, the teachers at KCAEC exhibit many of the traits to become effective disciple makers. The understanding of their purpose in the process will continue to be a personal growth journey. The staff benefits from Bible studies, small groups, journaling, chapel sessions and opportunities to share life on life experiences. Every KCAEC staff member is on a personal journey guided by the Holy Spirit. It is through the Holy Spirit that the EC teachers will continue to growth and thrive in their relationship with Jesus Christ.

¹⁸ Bobby Harrington and Greg Wiens, *Becoming a Disciple Maker: The Pursuit of Level 5 Disciple Making* (Coppell, TX: Renew.org. 2017), 20.

¹⁹ David Young, *King Jesus and the Beauty of Obedience-based Discipleship* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2020), 76.

²⁰ Ibid. 77.

²¹ Harrington and Wiens, *Becoming a Disciple Maker*, 29.

Kingdom Collegiate Academies Worldview Survey

One of the most important features is the EC teacher's worldview on subjects like God, spirits, God's Word, people, death, creation, holiness, and sin. Will Mancini and Cory Hartman share, "One of the most important lessons for disciple-making is teaching doctrine."²² Mancini and Hartman state, "For a disciple, it is important that they understand basic theology, like books of the Bible, moral principles, and Church history."²³

One of the surveys conducted during the initial research period dealt with the worldview of the KCAEC staff. The survey included 10 sections, each dealing with a focus on teacher's beliefs about God, along with the spiritual world and creation. The summary of the teacher's beliefs is in the first section of the survey dealt with Supreme God (see Table 4.5).

Table 4.5 **Worldview – Supreme God**

Worldview Question	Yes	No
1. Do you know about a supreme God?	20	0
2. Do you worship him?	20	0
3. Do you recognize supreme God's sovereignty?	20	0
4. Is he powerful?	20	0
5. Does he have any limitations?	2	18
6. Can you hide from him?	2	18

In the chart (Table 4.5), one observes there is agreement among the 20 participants on their knowledge of a supreme being, how to worship and his power. The differences occurs when if God has any limitations or whether you can hide from him. These views are significant in understanding the prior religious beliefs of the individual staff members. The question arises if some members of the staff believe whether God is Sovereign or omnipresent?

²² Will Mancini and Cory Hartman, *Future Church: Seven Laws of Real Church Growth* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2020), 162.

²³ Ibid.

In this survey, two participants acknowledged that the supreme God has limitations, yet they believe that he is powerful. Another observation includes that this supreme God is Sovereign yet, you can hide from him. These two participants may not have understood that in being a sovereign God means that he has no limitations, and one does not hide from him (Col. 1:16–17, Isa. 25:8, 61:1). Through this observation, the Bible study on Discipleship is valuable for the KCAEC teachers understanding the sovereignty of God. In the second portion of the survey, there are questions about other gods. The responses to these survey questions varied among the participants.

Table 4.6 **Other gods**

Worldview Questions	Yes	No
1. Do you worship other gods?	0	20
2. Are they represented by any images?	4	16
3. Can they be controlled or manipulated?	5	15
4. Can these gods be seen?	4	16

In observing the responses about other gods, leaves the question of their understanding of what gods? In many Christian communities, there is little information about other gods (Buddha, Allah, Shiva, etc.). If this is the case, then the inquiries into other gods may be misguided in the assumption that the participants had knowledge of these other gods. From another perspective, if the teachers understood that this god was not referring to the Christian God, then the participants responses could be misinterpreted as visually seeing other gods or that these gods can be controlled or manipulated. Therefore, to conclude that the participants do not worship other gods, when there is some confusion on the activity of the other gods makes this information incomplete. For this to be considered as accurate, the researcher needs to define other gods with more description for the participants.

One of the significant worldviews deals with the Bible, God's written word. The participants have an understanding that God's Word as the authority that Christians live by daily. There is 100 percent agreement on all questions related to God's Word.

TABLE 4.8 **God's Word**

Worldview Questions	Yes	No
1. Is there some source of religious knowledge or spiritual authority	20	0
2. Is it written in a book?	20	0
3. Do you know about the Bible?	20	0
4. Have you seen a Bible or read from a Bible?	20	0

The journey of becoming a disciple encourages one to read the Bible. Even if the individual participates in a Bible study, understanding the fundamental teachings of the Bible are significant for personal growth and development as a believer in Christ. Since KCA is a Christian school, then the environment is surrounded with biblical resources. Every year, ACSI, the accreditation body for KCA encourages the school to engage in a Bible study. The KCAEC staff are acquainted with participation in Bible studies done throughout every year.

The ministry of KCAEC is part of OCBF Church. One of the important features of the ministry is the Kingdom Agenda. As a prominent Bible church, the kingdom gospel is preached and proclaimed throughout the campus. Bill Hull defines, "The kingdom gospel as the proclamation of the rule and reign of Christ over all of life."²⁶ Hull shares, "The kingdom gospel calls us to discipleship. Being a disciple of Jesus, learning from him and submitting to his leading and his teaching is the norm rather than the exception or the option."²⁷ As a ministry of OCBF Church, the employees are encouraged to understand kingdom principles.

²⁶ Hull, *Conversion and Discipleship*, 38.

²⁷ Ibid., 39.

Genesis 1:1 states, “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.” From this Scripture, individuals understand that God created everything in heaven and on earth. On the sixth day of creation, he created man (Gen 2:4–25). The creation story portrays a state of innocence of the first couple. KCAEC teachers affirm their belief of the first man and women.

TABLE 4:9 **People**

People	Yes	No
1. Was Adam the first man?	20	0
2. Was Eve the first women?	20	0
3. Was women created differently than man?	15	5
4. Are people basically good or evil?	14	6

The third and fourth question of the survey has mixed results. It is apparent that the participants have some familiarity with the creation of Adam and Eve. There is 100 percent agreement from the participants on the first two questions. The belief that a woman is created differently than a man poses a dilemma in how individuals view the biological, physiological, and psychological development of a female. Biblically, Gen 2:21–22 states, “So, the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed its place with flesh. And the rib that the LORD God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man.”

From the beginnings of creation, male and females were to have different roles, yet function under the divine guidance of God. The fourth statement focuses on the behavioral aspects of humans. It is a judgment statement of good and evil apparently based on the behavior of the individual. The KCAEC teachers may believe that one can identify through either observation or behavioral traits whether an individual can be classified as good or evil. There were six individuals that believed differently regarding the role of good or evil.

Genesis 2:15–17 states, “The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it. And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, ‘You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.’” It is through the command given to Adam that man was given the choice of obedience or disobedience. As life was created by God, it was through disobedience that death entered the world. The KCAEC teachers were asked about their worldview on death through the survey questions.

TABLE 4.10 **Death**

Death	Yes	No
1. Is death the future for all people?	18	2
2. Can people put off or prevent death?	2	18
3. Do people go to heaven after they die?	12	6
4. Do all people go to the same place after they die?	2	18

One of the first observations regarding death is the differences of worldviews among the various KCAEC staff members. God gave the command to Adam that the day he eats from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, he shall surely die. Chad Brand shares, “God has fixed an hour of death for each human being (Heb. 9:27). Currently, in the fallen and finite state of humans, individuals are powerless to avert the reality of death (Ps 89:48).”²⁸ Brand further asserts, “The entrance of death came into the Creation through the temptation of Satan (Gen. 3:1–6).”²⁹ In many Christian churches, the reality of death, and resurrection has become more of an Easter story of Jesus Christ and not the individual person final state of being. Death is not a comfortable topic, yet necessary if one wants to know about our eternal destiny.

²⁸ Brand, Draper, and England, ed., *Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary*, 405.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 406.

The holiness of God is a distinct characteristic given to him throughout Scripture. Isaiah refers to God as the “the Holy One of Israel” (Isa. 6:3, 12:6, 17:7, 29:19, 23; 41:14, 16; 47:4; 60:9). As God’s redemptive plan unfolds in history, he selects Israel as his chosen nation. As his chosen people, individuals are called to separate from the world, called to an ethical life in obedience to his Word (Lev.11:44–45; 19:2, 20:26).

TABLE 4:12 **Holiness**

Holiness	Yes	No
1. Is there a concept of holiness among people?	19	1
2. Are gods and spirits considered holy?	4	16
3. Is there a Holy Spirit?	20	0
4. Are there special holy places?	20	0

The KCAEC staff responses express a unanimous belief in the Holy Spirit and holy places. Most of the participants understand that the concept of holiness is apparent among people. Donald Whitney asserts, “Holiness is not an option for those who claim to be children of the Holy One (I Peter 1:15–16).”³² The question becomes if there are beliefs in other gods and spirits? Individuals may not understand the statement and meaning of other gods and spirits. Donald Whitney emphasizes, “Godliness is a result of a biblically disciplined spiritual life. A focus of this discipline life must be how one uses time in a personal relationship with Christ.”³³ Developing an intimate relationship with the Holy Spirit requires a disciplined life of prayer, worship, praise, meditation on Scripture, and spending time being sensitive to the Spirit. The response to the question about the Holy Spirit demonstrates that there is an awareness of the presence of the Holy Spirit in the daily lives of the individuals.

³² Whitney, *Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life*, 114.

³³ Ibid., 159-60.

The last section of the Worldview Survey includes questions about sin. Chad Brand shares, “In Gen 3, since Adam and Eve rebelled against the clear command of God, sin has infected humanity like a dread malignancy.”³⁴ One simple act of disobedience with Adam and Eve have left a legacy of repeated acts of rebellion against God. In Ps 51:5 and Eph 2:3, implies that the sinful nature is inherited. The KCAEC teachers are aware of the influence of sin and its effects on humanity. The chart shows their understanding of sin.

TABLE 4.13 **Sin**

Sin	Yes	No
1. Is sin bad?	20	0
2. Do people sin?	20	0
3. Are you born in sin?	20	0
4. Do we inherit a sin nature?	20	0

In reviewing the final section of the Worldview survey, one of the comparisons of the data includes reviewing the KCAEC teachers’ responses to the Emotional Healthy Discipleship survey along with the various responses of the Worldview survey. The comparison is the following:

1. The Emotionally Healthy Discipleship survey shares indicators of what practices are the individual engaging in to intimately grow in their relationship with the Lord. The Worldview survey questions share the individual’s belief system in developing intimacy with Christ.
2. The Emotionally Healthy Discipleship survey refers to behaviors that shape the character of the maturing behavior. The Worldview survey focus is on some of the inner nature of the individual in developing a relationship with Christ. The Worldview survey implies an understanding of the sin nature of individuals.

³⁴ Brand, Draper, and England, ed., *Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary*, 110.

3. The Emotionally Discipleship survey references Scriptures to support the understanding, and application of biblical principles in the life of the believer. The Worldview survey premise is focused on what the participant's already knows about the Scriptural background for the questions and the individual can respond from his/her background knowledge.
4. The Emotionally Healthy Discipleship survey gives the individual a rating scale along with support to grow in their relationship with Christ. The Worldview survey responses can be vague and does not give the participant any suggestions for growth and maturity.
5. The Emotionally Healthy Discipleship survey encourages the use of a book along with a website and other supportive aids for growth. The Worldview survey poses questions but does not give the individuals the sources for the questions or aids for further study and application.

These observations are to compare in a triangulation format the differences between the Emotionally Healthy Discipleship survey and the Worldview survey. Both surveys gave information, yet the Emotionally Healthy Discipleship survey is more in-depth and provides resources for continued study in spiritual formation. The Worldview survey benefits the individual in understanding some of the questions asked about a variety of spiritual topics. The format did not allow for beneficial analysis of the data to draw specific conclusion about the worldviews of the participants. One of the principles of Emotionally Healthy Discipleship shared by Peter Scazzero is, "Healthy Christian disciples and leaders are those who consistently live from emotional and spiritual fullness, and it impacts every aspect of their lives."³⁵ Scazzero focuses on, "The goal of the Christian life is to abide in Jesus, remaining in communion with him."³⁶

³⁵ Scazzero, *Emotionally Healthy Discipleship*, 41.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 57.

Discipleship is a process that requires submission to the Holy Spirit for guidance. In John 16:13, But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes He will guide you into all the truth, for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak, and He will disclose to you what is to come. The guidance of the Holy Spirit permeates believers in understanding their purpose in disciple making. Kandi Gallaty shares, “If you are doing life without discipleship, you are missing out on one of the most fulfilling things you can experience.”³⁷ The teachers at KCAEC gathered in discipleship groups to share life experiences. Kathy Gallaty states, “Without women to walk with, you also miss out on realizing what your true wealth is in Christ and what the beauty of a walk with Him.”³⁸

The journey of discipleship in a child development environment is different in context from a church environment. The KCAEC individuals are in contact with the children, parents, and community of the school. There are windows of opportunity to share Christ with the educational community. Melissa B. Kruger shares a method of reaching people. She states, “For people to identify two people in your life for whom you will pray for opportunities to share the gospel in the year to come.”³⁹ Being prepared to engage in discipleship practices will include praying for guidance and wisdom. Peter Roennfeldt shares, “The first thing Jesus did in public life included inviting people to become disciples (Matt. 4:18–20).”⁴⁰ Jesus modeled disciple making as he chose his 12 disciples and interacted with other individuals. The disciples observed how Jesus interacted with people. He served as the model of disciple making.

³⁷ Kandi Gallaty, *Disciple Her: Using the Word, Work & Wonder of God to invest in Women* (Nashville: B & H Publishing Group, 2019), 168.

³⁸ Ibid., 169.

³⁹ Melissa B. Kruger, *Growing Together: Taking Mentoring Beyond Small Talk and Prayer Requests* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2020), 77.

⁴⁰ Peter Roennfeldt, *Following Jesus: A Year of Disciple-making and Movement Building in the Gospels* (Colorado Springs: NAVPRESS, 2022), 29.

Data Analysis and Findings

The data collection process provides a perspective into the teacher's growth and development over the past several months. The purpose statement is to create an action research project aimed to teach affirmation and adherence to the SOTM traits to the KCAEC staff. Throughout the process, teachers engaged in a biblically based discipleship program aligned with the SOTM. The Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship's Spirit of the Ministry provides a framework for establishing curriculum topics to equip teachers with a mission-aligned research-based training program. The Early Childhood teachers participated in the research project to gain vital skills in spiritual development and discipleship. Dave Buehring defines disciple-making as "The process that Jesus used to move people from being reconciled and redeemed to making them ready to come alongside others to experience the same is called disciple-making."⁴¹ Buehring emphasizes, "While teaching the multitudes, healing the sick, and doing good in communities. His priority was making disciples of twelve men. It remains His primary way of advancing His kingdom."⁴²

As the KCAEC teachers participated in the Bible study, each chapter provides reflection questions regarding their attitude about work and relationships. Jerry Bridges emphasizes, "We are responsible for our thoughts, attitudes, and actions in developing our relationship with Christ."⁴³ One of the primary objectives for the Bible study is to transform lives and behavior in the work environment. It is through studying Scripture, prayer and trusting God that one grows in their relationship with Christ.

⁴¹ Dave Buehring, *The Great Opportunity: Making Disciples of Jesus in Every Vocation* (Nashville: Morgan James Publishing, 2021), 12.

⁴² Ibid., 12.

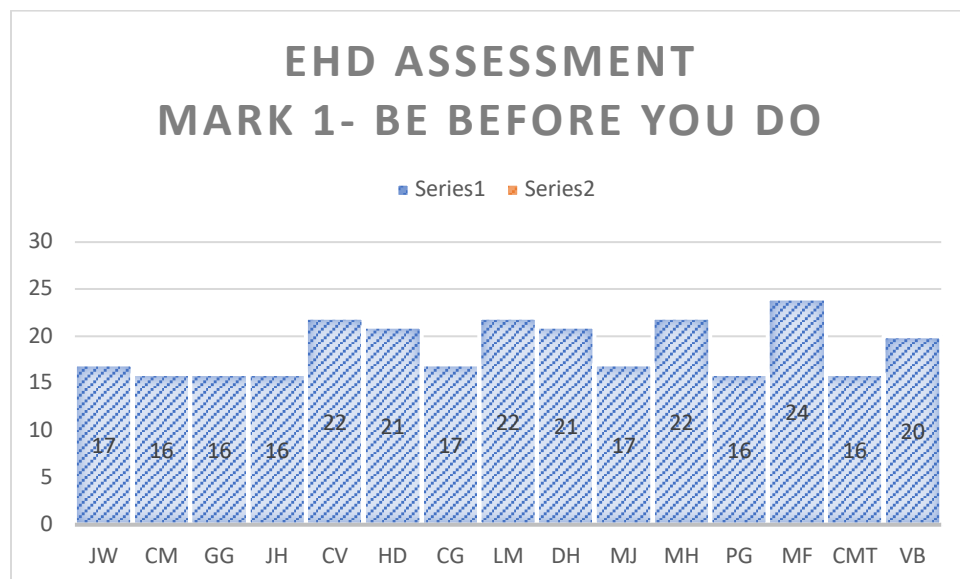
⁴³ Jerry Bridges, *The Pursuit of Holiness* (Colorado Springs: NAVPRESS, 2006), 64.

The post-Emotionally Healthy Discipleship Personal Assessment scores show how the participants viewed themselves after going through the Bible study in small groups along with an emphasis on discipleship. The post scores for everyone will be compared to their pre-scores to determine if there was any growth. Individuals that are no longer part of the KCAEC center due to resignations or retirement is indicated with no scores. The full range of scores are listed below in Table 4.14.

TABLE 4.14

**KCA-Early Childhood Staff
Emotionally Healthy Discipleship Personal Assessment**

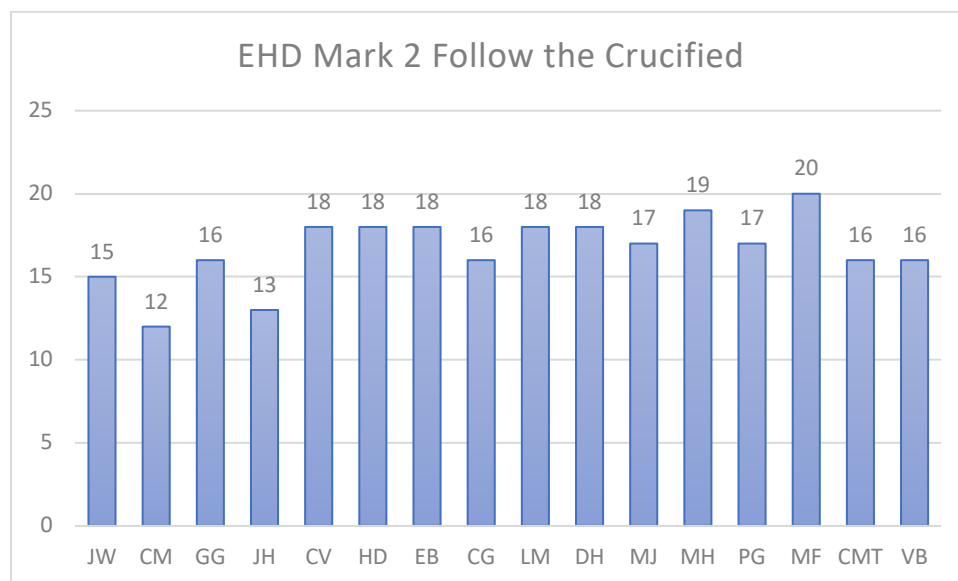
Staff #		M 1	M 2	M 3	M 4	M 5	M 6	M7	
Participant 1	JW	17	15	16	12	17	19	22	
Participant 2	CM	16	12	16	11	12	16	18	
Participant 3	GG	16	16	15	13	15	18	18	
Participant 4	JH	16	13	19	14	14	22	17	
Participant 5	AC								
Participant 6	CV	22	18	22	15	17	23	25	
Participant 7	NR								
Participant 8	HD	21	18	17	14	16	21	23	
Participant 9	EB	18	18	17	13	17	22	22	
Participant 10	CG	17	16	21	12	16	23	20	
Participant 11	AW								
Participant 12	LM	22	18	22	19	16	21	22	
Participant 13	DH	21	18	17	14	16	21	23	
Participant 14	MJ	17	17	23	18	13	23	18	
Participant 15	LR								
Participant 16	MH	22	19	13	15	18	20	20	
Participant 17	PG	16	17	18	13	18	19	19	
Participant 18	RH								
Participant 19	MF	24	20	24	19	20	24	28	
Participant 20	CMT	16	16	22	18	16	24	19	
Participant 21	VB	20	16	18	14	13	20	19	

TABLE 4:15

The distribution of data from the Emotionally Healthy Discipleship Assessment for the statement Mark 1: Be before you do is designed to solicit information about one's relationship with God. It includes questions on how an individual spends time with God, Sabbath-keeping, personality changes, solitude, and silence. In this graph, teachers' scores range from sixteen to twenty-four. Based on the data eight of the participants scored sixteen through seventeen, which would place this group as emotional adolescents. John Mark Comer shares, "Spiritual formation is not just being a follower of Jesus thing. It is a human thing."⁴⁴ Growing in one's relationship with Christ takes time. The seven teachers scoring from twenty to twenty-four indicates that these individuals are classified as emotional adults. Comer conveys that "Spiritual formation is the process by which we are formed from our spirits/inner persons to become like Jesus."⁴⁵ This desire and journey to become more like Christ is essential to discipleship.

⁴⁴ John Mark Comer, *Live No Lies: Recognize and Resist the Three Enemies that Sabotage your Peace* (Colorado Springs: WaterBrook, 2021), 73.

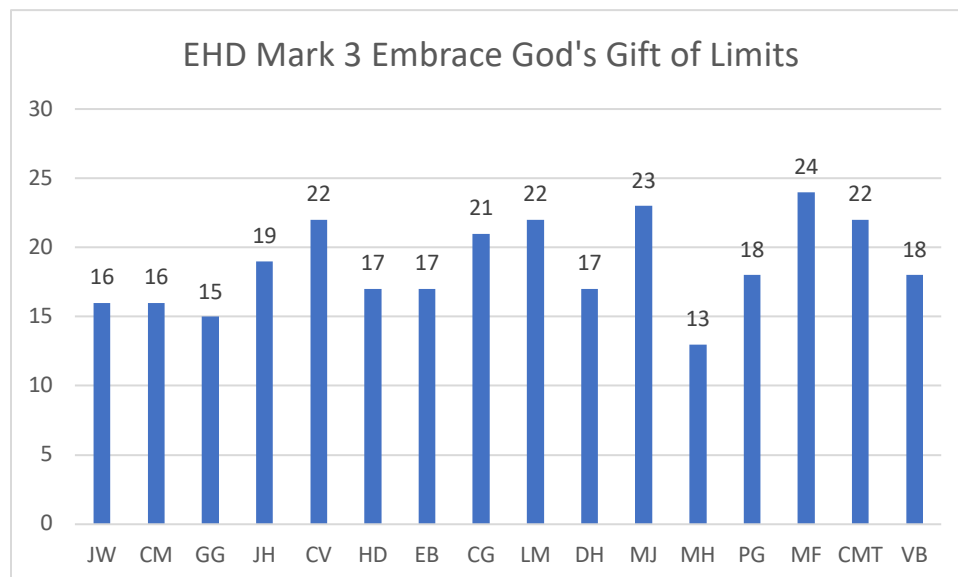
⁴⁵ Ibid. 98.

TABLE 4:16

The next indicator of the Emotionally Healthy Discipleship Assessment is Mark 2: Follow the Crucified, Not the Americanized Jesus. This indicator focus is on the individual's world views, plans, ambitions, listening to Jesus, emotional maturity and surrendering one's will to Jesus Christ. Bill and Kristi Gaultiere offer suggestions to the various stages of growth as believers. They emphasize that "Disciple-makers can recommend key Scriptures, disciplines and ministry activities that fit different stages."⁴⁶ Reviewing the data on this indicator, there are seven teachers that scored from twelve to sixteen, that shows the emotional adolescent stage. There are eight teachers that score within the seventeen to twenty range, which indicate the emotional adult stage. Bill and Kristi Gaultiere share, "Spiritual disciplines are bodily activities to develop habits to rely on Jesus, care for your soul and love God and people well."⁴⁷

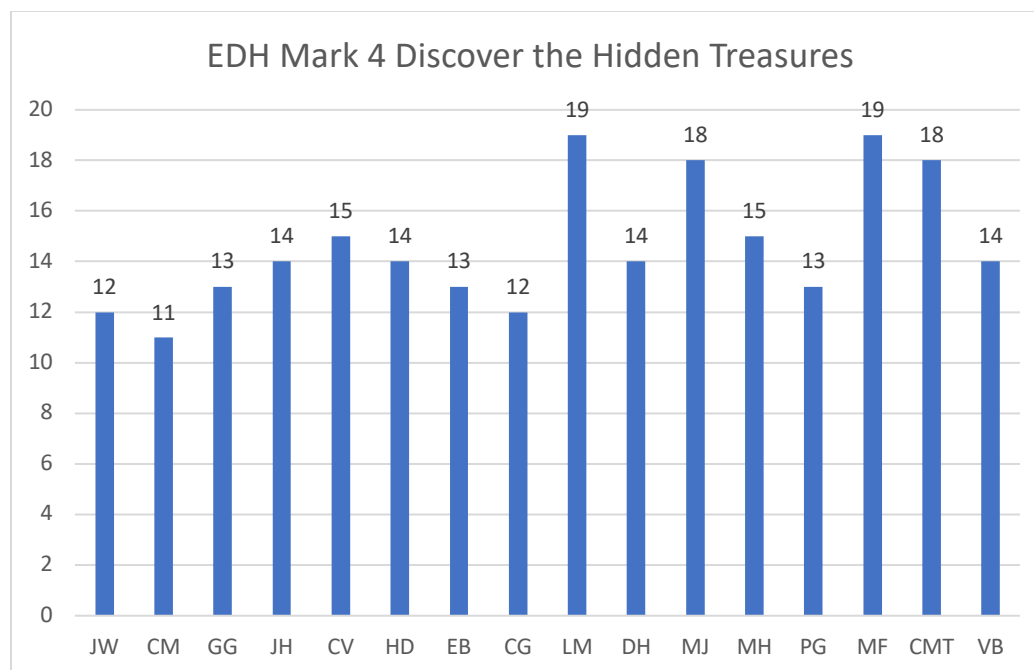
⁴⁶ Bill Gaultiere and Kristi Gaultiere, *Journey of the Soul: A Practical Guide to Emotional and Spiritual Growth* (Grand Rapids: Revell, 2021), 217.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 217.

TABLE 4:17

One of the most significant of the Emotional Healthy Discipleship indicators is learning how to embrace God’s gift of limits in one’s life. The reason why this indicator is a challenge is due to a teacher’s desire to do more for family, friends, and work. The focus of this indicator is an individual trying to do it all, overextending oneself, inability to pull back to rest and replenish. The desire is for each teacher to learn how to balance family, rest, work and play in a biblical way (Exodus 20:8). John Mark Comer shares, “Hurry is the root problem underneath so many of the symptoms of toxicity in our world.”⁴⁷ From viewing the data ten teachers scored between thirteen to nineteen. This score indicates that individuals are classified as emotional adolescent. There are six teachers scoring from twenty-one through twenty-five are considered emotional adult. Comer suggests, “A remedy to hurriedness is solitude by opening oneself to God.”⁴⁸ The EC teachers are encouraged to practice solitude with the Lord daily.

⁴⁸ John Mark Comer, *The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry: How to Stay Emotionally Healthy and Spiritually Alive in the Chaos of the Modern World* (Colorado Springs: Waterbrook, 2019), 19.

Tabl4:18

Life has so many changes in the growth and maturity of disciples. In Mark 4 Discover the treasures buried in grief and loss, dealing with grief and loss of a family member or friend has a significant impact on an individual. The KCAEC teachers experienced grief over a staff member, family, and friends. It takes faith in God to overcome grief and loss. James Moore shares, “Faith is being present with Jesus even in the storms of life.”⁴⁸ During the most difficult times in life, Jesus is the source of our strength. Moore shares, “Faith is noticing the early warning signs of fear and going directly to the shelter, which is Jesus.”⁴⁹ Trusting the Lord in moments of difficulty or challenging circumstances will strengthen the individual (Proverbs 3:5–6). Our spiritual source of comfort and security is in our relationship with Jesus.

⁴⁸ Jamie Moore, *Friendship with God: Discover God’s Relational Presence and Receive Peace, Identity, and Purpose for your Life* (Topeka, KS: Doxazo Press, 2021), 50.

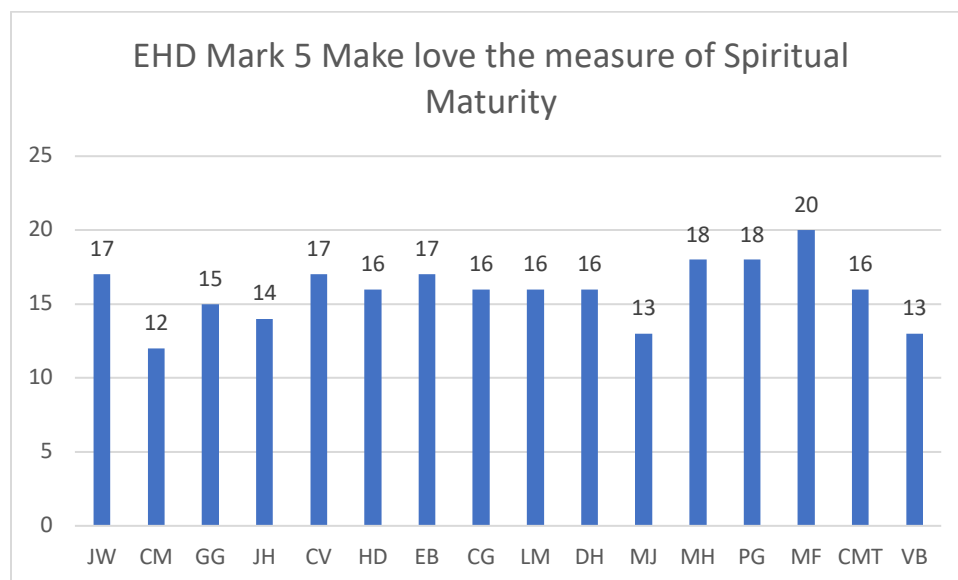
⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 50.

Emotional health is affected when individuals deal with grief in their own lives.

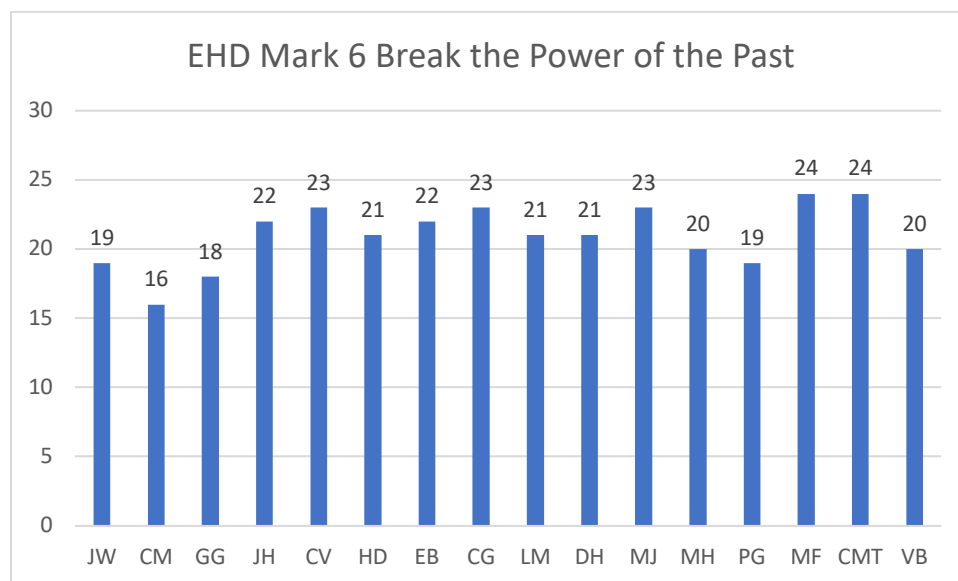
According to the Emotional Healthy Discipleship Mark 4 Discover the treasures buried in grief and loss indicates that six teachers scored fifteen to nineteen, which designates them as emotional adult. Individuals scoring eleven through fourteen are considered emotional adolescents. This analysis shows that most of the staff members continue to experience challenges with grief and loss.

In the following chart, Mark 5 Make love the measure of spiritual maturity show how individuals model their love for one another and respond to hurts and disappointments. Mary T. Lederleitner and associates share, “Discipleship is an identity intervention, as people reorient their lives and how they see themselves through the lens of Christ and God’s kingdom rather than self-centered orientations.”⁵⁰ Lederleitner focuses on identity formation in a person’s lifetime.

TABLE 4:19



⁵⁰ Mary T. Lederleitner, Andrew MacDonald, and Rick Richardson, *Formation for Mission: Discipleship Identity for Emerging Adults* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2022), 21.

TABLE 4:20

People often refer to the past with reflection on how they could have done better in life if given another opportunity. The regret of the past is an opportunity to learn wisdom (James 1:5). Peter Scazzero shares “The great news of the gospel is that your family of origin does not determine your future.”⁵¹ Once an individual has placed faith for salvation in Jesus, Scazzero emphasizes that “The individual is not only forgiven but freed from the power of sin present in our families over generations.”⁵² In Table 1:28 individuals with scores of sixteen through nineteen are identified as emotionally adolescent. In this situation, individuals may continue to deal with wounds of the past in their relationship with the Lord. KCAEC teachers that scored twenty to twenty-four are considered emotional adults. The implications of this status have many variables including how the individual deals with personal pain and unhealthy behaviors. It does not imply that every decision will be in alignment with God’s purpose and plan for one’s life.

⁵¹ Peter Scazzero, *Emotionally Healthy Discipleship*, 167.

⁵² Ibid., 167-68.

Conclusion

The journey to maturity in Christ is central to our development as a disciple. The road to be more Christ-like has daily challenges that require an individual to access, reflect and pursue a deeper relationship with Christ. Throughout this research project, one reviews literature only to find more questions about the best approach to the guidance of creating disciples in such a diverse worldview of individuals. One of the most important aspects of the research supports the belief of trusting in God (Prov 3:5–6) regardless of the personal beliefs of individuals. Peter DeHaan shares, “The biblical importance of the mother of Jabez (1 Chr 4:9-10), who teaches her son how to live an honorable life, follow God, and to pray with effectiveness.”⁵³ Daniel L. Akin shares, “The gospel is to produce godliness in the lives of those within the church, whether old or young, male, or female.”⁵⁴ As the KCAEC teachers have participated in a Bible study, the anecdotal notes in their binders share many aspects of personal growth through prayer, fasting and personal devotions.

One of the discoveries made through this research is that external measurements do not necessarily indicate the complete picture of personal growth in one’s relationship with Christ. It is not until the individual is tested in life to recognize the true change in behavior. The Bible study, daily devotions, and prayer served in a purposeful way of supporting each teacher in their development of a deeper relationship with Christ and sensitivity to the Holy Spirit. As everyone moved through the variety of activities, reflection was significant in the Bible study discussions that encourage change and developed relationships among the KCAEC staff. The various measurements used assisted the EC teachers in becoming more self-aware.

⁵³ Peter DeHaan, *Women of the Bible: The Victorious, the Victims, the Virtuous and the Vicious* (Grand Rapids: Rock Rooster Books, 2020), 77.

⁵⁴ Daniel L. Akin, *Living Doctrine: The Book of Titus* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2017), 27

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

The design of this research project is to support teachers to align with the seven SOTM traits is conducted through a Bible study format. The Early Childhood program has twenty-one teachers. The Toddlers to EC4 grade levels were involved in the research. The design of the research included several assessments, selected Scripture readings, daily devotionals, along with a reflective journal (Appendix T). The teachers were given a Bible study schedule, along with several books to read. A reading schedule was created to maintain consistency of content during discussions (Appendix L). Periodically, teachers would meet at different times to maintain consistency with the reading schedule sessions.

The Bible study format included questions from the researcher along with guidance from the individual interviews of the participants. Each teacher focused on at least one SOTM trait throughout the seven months. During the Bible study, the teachers discussed the progress of each person throughout the seven months. Robby Gallaty emphasizes, “When you bury the treasure of God’s Word in your heart, the Holy Spirit will bring it to mind at critical times in your daily walk.”¹ The teachers were challenged to memorize and use Scriptures daily (Appendix M).

As a result of this research project, the KCAEC staff will become knowledgeable about the SOTM traits and the personal impact of the traits on spiritual formation. Throughout the Bible study, individuals focused on reading Scripture (Appendix L, M). Robby Gallaty shares, “Memorizing Scripture saturates your life with God’s Word.”² Reading and memorizing Scripture can make a significant impact in developing deeper intimacy with the Lord. The EC teachers are encouraged to use and memorize Scripture as a study discipline.

¹ Gallaty, *Growing Up*, 118.

² Ibid. 118.

The Bible Study and Reading Guide (Appendix L) provides guidance, structure, and discipline with God's Word. After learning about each of the SOTM traits, spiritual formation and discipleship, the teachers wanted to continue learning about spiritual learning opportunities offered at OCBF Church. Information and invitations were given to everyone to attend future church services as well as class offerings at Kingdom Bible Institute. One of the significant benefits of this research revealed a gap in what KCAEC teachers know about the various ministries at OCBF Church.

Research Purpose

The purpose of this qualitative study is to develop a pre-training program survey to assess the level of staff alignment with discipleship and the Spirit of the Ministry traits. Secondly, to develop and deliver a biblical based Discipleship and Spirit of the Ministry Program to align the Early Childhood staff with the values of Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship Church. Thirdly, to develop a post-training program survey to assess the level of staff alignment with the Spirit of the Ministry. In developing a pre-training survey documents included the Worldview Survey and Spiritual Life Interview Questionnaire (Appendix H, G). Both instruments are designed to solicit information about the individual's beliefs, church affiliation and spiritual maturity. One of the purposes of the Spiritual Life Interview Questionnaire is to gather information about the EC teachers' spiritual journeys. Jamie Moore explains, "The priority in ministry is to stay connected relationally to the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. From this relational communion with the triune God ministry flows to others."³ Moore asserts, "The kingdom of God has come near through Jesus' disciples."⁴

³Jamie Moore, *Friendship with God: Discover God's Relational Presence and Receive Peace, identity, and Purpose for your Life*, (Topeka, KS: Doxazo Press. 2021), 35.

⁴Ibid., 35-36.

Spiritual Life Interview Questionnaire

One of the most significant questions on the Spiritual Life Questionnaire dealt with church affiliation. The following chart shows the various churches attended by the KCAEC Staff. Many of the teachers are from different denominations and local churches. In reviewing the data with the Spiritual Life Interview Questionnaire focused on several aspects of church involvement of the individual teacher. In Chapter 1, it is estimated that nearly 75 percent of the KCA Early Childhood teachers were affiliated with other local churches is apparent on the above chart. From the data gathered there are only 4 teachers that attend OCBF Church. This evidence supports the premise that creating a mission-aligned Bible study with the focus on the SOTM traits will benefit the teachers in the early childhood program. Robby Gallaty shares, “Exponential spiritual growth does not happen through the introduction of new information or Bible facts, but through repetition and reiteration of deep spiritual truths.”³

One of the most significant indicators in diversity of beliefs is the knowledge of biblical truth. It is apparent that there are various denominations represented by the KCAEC Staff. The primary purpose of this research is to show how the differences in doctrinal beliefs can influence professional behavior in the workplace. Jim Wilder emphasizes, “Discipleship is not for the church; the church is for discipleship and discipleship is for the world. If discipleship is for the world, then the primary place of discipleship is at work because that is where we spend most of our time and that is where the need is the greatest.”⁴ The Bible study provided a tool to immerse oneself in understanding the SOTM along with applying the traits in the workplace.

³ Robby Gallaty, *Bearing Fruit: What Happens when God's People Grow* (Nashville: B & H Publishing Group), 70.

⁴ Jim Wilder, *Renovated: God, Dallas Willard and the Church that Transforms* (Lewisville, TX: Shepherd's House), 101.

Research Conclusions, Implications, and Applications

Discipleship is the focus of ministries in working with Christians to support them in their own growth and maturity in Christ. There are many definitions for discipleship used by various individuals throughout this study. Doug Paul shares, “Willard was an ardent advocate for spiritual formation, believing consistently practiced habits to engage with God changed people from the inside out.”⁵ Chuck Lawless believes, “Disciples live out the Great Commandment and the Great Commission, exhibit the fruit of the Spirit, wear the full armor of God and obey Jesus.”⁶ The point of this emphasis focuses on the importance of the believer growing in grace as a disciple. A. W. Tozer explains “A true disciple does not consider Christianity a part-time commitment. That person has become a Christian in all departments of his or her life. A true disciple has reached the point in Christian experience where there is no turning back.”⁷

The KCA Early Childhood teachers learned the various principles of praying, fasting, studying the Word of God as the foundational elements of discipleship. Each teacher engaged in the Bible study on the Spirit of the Ministry within a small group. The research focused on the thesis statement, If the Kingdom Collegiate Early Childhood Staff practices the seven traits of the Spirit of the Ministry through a spiritual formation discipleship biblical program, then their lives will be transformed. The journey to maturity in Christ for the KCA Early Childhood teachers has yielded significant outcomes in their development as believers in Christ. Another one of the foci of the bible study is to develop a biblical worldview.

⁵ Doug Paul, *Kingdom Innovation for a Brave New World* (Jacksonville, FL: Movements Publishing, 2020), 164.

⁶ Chuck Lawless, *Disciple: How to Create a Community that Develops Passionate and Healthy Followers of Jesus* (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2022), 32.

⁷ A. W. Tozer, *Discipleship: What it Truly Means to be a Christian—Collected insights from A. W. Tozer* (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2018), 20.

Research Conclusion Number One: Develop a Pre-Training program survey to assess the level of staff alignment with discipleship and the Spirit of the Ministry traits.

The problem presented in chapter 1, is the KCAEC staff members are unfamiliar with the seven “Spirit of the Ministry” traits that are foundational to discipleship of the church. There is a lack of a professionally developed mission-aligned training program for Early Childhood Educators serving at Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship Early Childhood Program. To address this problem several pre-training program survey tools were used to assess the staff’s knowledge and spiritual development. The desired goal is to model and teach each SOTM traits systematically to encourage participation, comprehension and retention of the information presented through a Bible study format. Along with the Bible study is a focus on spiritual disciplines to support faith development. Thom S. Rainer shares, “A spiritual discipline is a habit we develop in God’s power to become more like Jesus.”⁸ The KCAEC teachers participated in a variety of spiritual disciplines, such as fasting, prayer, along with daily Bible and devotional study. Rainer emphasizes, “The word discipline and disciple come from the same root word, meaning “the right order” or “the right path.”⁹

The KCAEC teachers began the spiritual journey through a professional development session to introduce the different features of the program. The teachers took the Spiritual Life Questionnaire, World Survey Questionnaire, and Emotionally Healthy Discipleship. The survey tools are designed to solicit from the teacher’s data used to develop the Bible study. The SOTM attributes are Accountability, Joy, Unity, Integrity, Servanthood, Communication, Excellence. As the teachers experienced the different survey tools, it became apparent that the Emotionally Healthy Discipleship tool information was valuable to access future discipleship growth.

⁸ Rainer, *Sharing the Gospel with Ease*, 26.

⁹ Ibid., 142.

The Spiritual Life Questionnaire is designed to gather information about the status of the KCAEC teachers' involvement in the local church, church attendance and faith journey.

This tool provided information on the name of the church, ministry involvement at church, and whether the individual attends once or several times throughout the month. The journey of faith for individual responses were diverse due to the differences in denominations. There were approximately seventeen different faith groups represented with the data. Due to the variety of denominations, there are limitations on drawing conclusions regarding the specific beliefs of the individuals. To determine some parallels regarding the teacher's beliefs would require more in-depth research into their individual church's doctrinal beliefs. This research purpose is not designed to investigate each individual doctrinal belief of the KCAEC Staff.

The problematic view of the Spiritual Life Questionnaire is with the diverse responses to the questions on the questionnaire. However, the survey gave the researcher significant information about the teachers understanding or lack of knowledge regarding the Spirit of the Ministry attributes. The KCAEC teachers confirmed to the researcher the need for an in-depth study of the SOTM attributes and spiritual formation. John Mark Comer shares, "Spiritual formation is the process by which we are formed from our spirits/inner persons to become like Jesus."¹⁰ The challenge with the questionnaire was with the open-ended questions. For example, the statement, "Describe your journey of faith." This question had varied responses. Ben Sternke and Matt Tebbe share, "The process of discipleship is never merely a teaching process. It is never simply the dissemination of information."¹¹

¹⁰ Comer, *Live No Lies*, 98.

¹¹ Ben Sternke and Matt Tebbe, *Having the Mind of Christ: Eight Axioms to Cultivate a Robust Faith* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2022), 113.

Research Conclusion Two: Develop and deliver a biblical based Discipleship and Spirit of the Ministry Training Program to align the Early Childhood staff with the values of Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship.

One of the most significant aspects of addressing the needs of the KCAEC teachers is the creation of a Bible Study that focused on the SOTM attributes. The seven SOTM along with four additional traits composed the twelve traits studied throughout the seven months of the research project. The twelve traits are Accountability, Joy, Unity, Integrity, Communication, Excellence, Servanthood, Faithfulness, Adaptability, Empathy, Confidence and Compassion. The components of the traits contained Scriptures on the trait, Thought for today with a devotional, Women of Faith personality, application of the trait in the workplace and personal life, along with a creative activity in response to the trait. Allowing the KCAEC teachers to participate in a discipleship small group with a leader was significant to their personal growth. Mike Breen shares, “Getting people to a place where they can nourish themselves with the Bible, through prayer, community and other spiritual disciplines does not happen just because we tell people that is how they can nourish themselves spiritually.”¹²

For individuals to grow and mature in Christ requires commitment to the various disciplines, along with relationships to assist in one’s spiritual development. The Bible study served as an instrument to enhance the individual’s desire to grow in one’s relationship with God. Mike Breen emphasized, “Jesus modeled teaching and theology were ways of describing reality and then he showed his disciples how to live in that reality.”¹³ The KCA Early Childhood teachers experienced learning how to work together in a small group with a focus on discipleship. It was through this experience that the teachers created the bond of friendship.

¹² Mike Breen, *Building a Discipling Culture* (Pawleys Island, SC: 3DM Publishing, 2016), 28.

¹³ Breen, *Building a Discipling Culture*, 28.

Research Conclusion Number Three: Develop a Post-Training Program Survey to assess the level of staff alignment with the Spirit of the Ministry. The Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship's Spirit of the Ministry provides a framework for establishing curriculum topics to equip teachers with a mission-align research-based training program.

One of the most valuable aspects of the research involved reviewing the KCAEC teachers' growth on the various surveys. The Emotionally Healthy Discipleship survey yielded growth in the teacher's social and emotional growth. This instrument assisted the researcher to understand some of the individual features for continued support with other Bible studies. As a part of the teachers' spiritual goals the results of the Emotionally Healthy Discipleship will assist in making future discipleship Bible study literature selections. It is apparent that the Spiritual Life Questionnaire has limited usage for practical evaluation and assessment for future research. This instrument needs to be reconstructed in a different format to be useful in the future. Many of the questions gave the researcher valuable information, yet it is difficult to put each item in a manner for gathering comparison data. This instrument did assist with the gathering of information on the SOTM traits and discipleship. Bob Rognlien emphasizes, "Discipleship is not a heavy burden that we must bear by our own strength, it is the light yoke of a death that leads to true life."¹⁴

Discipleship is not a solitary activity. Bob Rognlien shares, "Discipleship is not something we can read from a book and figure out on our own. Biblical discipleship is intrinsically relational because it is an invitation into a mentoring relationship."¹⁵ The EC teachers entered a mentorship relationship in the small groups with a mature Bible teacher. Each leader had participated in Bible studies and lead groups of women through discussions on the various topics in the study guide.

¹⁴ Bob Rognlien, *Empowering Missional Disciples* (Torrance, CA: GX Books, 2016), 183.

¹⁵ Rognlien, *Empowering Missional Disciples*, 143.

The purpose of the Worldview Survey is to attain information regarding the Worldview of the KCAEC teachers. The challenge is some of the questions did not lead to a conclusion that would be easily accessed and evaluated for future usage by the researcher. The information gained did contribute to the overall understanding of the individual's point of view on specific topics. For example, the topic of other gods did not give enough information to reach a concise conclusion for each participant. The value of the Worldview Survey is to solicit a broad range of knowledge on the personal beliefs of the KCAEC teachers. In describing discipleship, Sally Clarkson states, "Discipling others is not about authority, great faith, strong personality, spiritual giftedness, appearance, or deep knowledge. It is about being faithful to serve, available to God and willing to learn right where we are."¹⁶ The KCAEC teachers demonstrated a willingness to learn and grow in the early childhood school environment about how to be more effective in discipleship.

As early childhood teachers, it is significant for the staff to be aware of their own beliefs to influence the children. Sarah Cowan Johnson shares, "Discipling our kids in this cultural moment requires us to accept the reality that if we are successful, our kids will be misunderstood by the world around them."¹⁷ Sally Cowan Johnson further asserts, "For children to walk confidently in this moment as Jesus did, they will need more than a personal relationship with Jesus. The children will need head knowledge of God and heart intimacy with Jesus, to form them into people that are not afraid to live differently."¹⁸

¹⁶ Sally Clarkson, *Teatime Discipleship: Sharing Faith One Cup at a Time* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House Publishers, 2023), 128.

¹⁷ Sarah Cowan Johnson, *Teach your Children Well: A Step by Step Guide for Family Discipleship* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2022), 28.

¹⁸ Johnson, *Teach your Children Well*, 28.

Practical Implications and Application

The problem presented in chapter one, is the KCAEC staff members are unfamiliar with the seven “Spirit of the Ministry” traits that are foundational to discipleship of the church. There is a lack of a professionally developed mission-aligned training program for Early Childhood Educators serving at Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship Early Childhood Program. To address this problem several pre-training program survey tools were used to assess the staff’s knowledge and spiritual development. The desired goal is to model and teach each SOTM traits systematically to encourage participation, comprehension and retention of the information presented through a Bible study format. Along with the Bible study is a focus on spiritual disciplines to support faith development. Throughout the development of the Bible study, there are several implications and applications on how to effectively use this method and materials to enhance discipleship among early childhood educators. Dave Adamson shares, “Everything you do reflects the God, you say you believe in. This is what it means to be a disciple. As apprentices of Jesus, we are to follow his example and reflect his teaching and understanding of Scripture in the world.”¹⁹

Throughout the Bible study, questions and discussions followed varied paths to enhance the KCAEC teachers understanding of discipleship. Dave Adamson emphasizes, “Discipleship requires us to reimagine our role in ministry so that we don’t stop at waiting for people to find us before connecting with them. Discipleship compels us to go find them.”²⁰ The EC teachers discovered ways that they could connect with family, friends, and colleagues through the Bible. During discussions with other colleagues there are features of the Bible study that were important to their personal growth as women and employees of OCBF Church.

¹⁹ Dave Adamson, *MetaChurch: How to Use Digital Ministry to Reach People and Make Disciples* (Cumming, GA: Orange Publishers, 2022), 76–77.

²⁰ Adamson, *MetaChurch*, 76–77.

The implications and applications from this research with the KCA Early Childhood educators implied that even in a structured environment, one can participate in discipleship through a Bible study. The value of the process may never be fully known, yet the effects will be realized in life lessons learned throughout one's journey with Jesus Christ. Some of the implications and applications are as follows:

1. Leadership training of the group leaders is essential to the techniques used to gain trust, establish confidentiality, and guidance of the discussion and Bible study.
2. The effectiveness of small group size is essential to the development of intimate relationships among the early childhood teachers.
3. The intentional organization and structure of the Bible study allows early childhood teachers to comprehend the sequence and flow of the class and how to prepare for the next session.
4. The familiarity of the teaching materials by Dr. Tony Evans because the EC teachers have read some of his resources in previous Bible studies.
5. The EC teachers were able to meet during their workday instead of meeting for Bible study on their own time.
6. The importance of structuring the initial detailed explanation to all staff and answering any questions from the teachers before the beginning of the project.
7. The researcher ability to organize the materials for the participants to study throughout the Bible study.
8. The use of digital discipleship techniques would have enhanced the ability of the staff to move quickly through the materials instead of taking seven months to complete.
9. The usage of the SOTM traits throughout the Bible study to support the acquisition and understanding of discipleship through the traits of Accountability, Joy, Unity, Integrity, Communication, Servanthood,
10. The KCAEC teachers participating in spiritual disciplines (fasting, prayer, etc.) throughout the entire research experience.

Discipleship in an early childhood environment has many features that are like most church-focused discipleship programs. Teachers focus on relationships, Robby Gallaty, shares "Relational knowledge of Christ increases through the study of God's Word."²¹ Robbie Gallaty emphasizes, "As we study the Bible, the Holy Spirit reveals Jesus to us."²²

²¹ Gallaty, *Firmly Planted*, 30.

²² Ibid. 30.

Educational Implications

Discipleship in an educational environment is uncommon in most early childhood settings. Many Christian educational childcare centers do not include Bible study, spiritual disciplines, or a book study. In the KCAEC model of discipleship, the staff is involved in the practices on a daily or weekly basis of studying God's Word. Some of the educational implications are listed below:

1. Curriculum – The development of a curriculum for the teaching staff on discipleship. The focus is on each of the OCBF Church Traits of the ministry (SOTM).
2. Group Covenant – A group covenant provides guidance for the behavior like learning objectives in secular courses. Bible leaders can refer to it throughout the Bible study.
3. Prayer for salvation – Each participant is to read and sign the prayer of salvation. The essential part of this exercise is to assure that everyone has a relationship with Christ.
4. Reading Guide – The reading guide can include the main book and various other resources for the teachers to read throughout the Bible study.
5. Lesson – The elements of the lesson are essential to the spiritual development of the staff. The lesson includes a thought for today, Key point, lesson questions and prayer for today.
6. Spirit of the Ministry focus – One of the SOTM traits (Accountability, Joy, Unity, Integrity, Communication, Excellence and Servanthood) is the focus of each lesson. A woman of faith (Mary, Ruth, etc.) is featured in each lesson modeling the trait.
7. Application of SOTM trait – Each participant is encouraged to answer four questions regarding the SOTM trait. For example: How can you model the trait of accountability personally? How can you model the trait of accountability with your colleagues at work? How can you model the trait of accountability with your supervisor/manager/boss? How can you apply the principle of accountability in your growth and development with your supervisor during your next evaluation conference?

During the Bible study, participants are encouraged to focus on the importance of the trait and how it could influence their behavior and beliefs in their relationships with others. Ben Sternke and Matt Tebbe share, “The process of discipleship is never merely a teaching process. It is never simply the dissemination of information. If it is truly a transformational discipleship process, it must also be a training process, which will always involve imitation and practice.”²³

²³ Sternke and Matt Tebbe, *Having the Mind of Christ*, 113.

Research Limitations

In conducting the research on discipleship, the thesis statement states, If the Kingdom Collegiate Early Childhood Staff practices the seven traits of the Spirit of the Ministry through a spiritual formation discipleship biblical program, then their lives will be transformed. The SOTM traits are designed to become part of the spiritual transformation of individuals working at KCAEC. Throughout this research, there were several limitations that influenced the outcome of the research. Some of the limitations are as follows:

1. The frequent turnover of staffing was a challenge due to individuals leaving the center and acquiring new employment.
2. The meeting dates and time changes due to a disruptive schedule at the elementary school for a variety of school activities and functions.
3. The absence of staff on their meeting dates became a challenge and prohibited them to keep up with their assignments.
4. The changes in leadership with the among the early childhood teachers influenced the outcome of the research.
5. The preparation of the Bible study materials took longer to write and prepare for the KCAEC teachers.

Developing discipleship practices and creating a culture of change in one's behavior and attitude can be one of the greatest opportunities in a Christian childcare facility. Dave Buehring shares, "Vocational disciple making is developing disciples of Jesus who reflect his character; walk in his ways, and participate in his mission, in and through their vocation."²⁴ Dave Buehring emphasizes, "To raise up a godly generation, educators must find ways to disciple kids. They can teach them to meet the needs of those around them in developing their character and gifts, help them cultivate healthy relationships, and encourage them to fulfill God's unique purposes."²⁵ As the EC teachers continue on their journey in discipleship, it will translate into God's fulfillment

²⁴ Buehring, *The Great Opportunity*, 13.

²⁵ Ibid., 55.

Further Research

The purpose of this DMIN action research project aims to teach affirmation and adherence of the SOTM traits to the KCAEC staff. The seven Spirit of the Ministry traits are Accountability, Joy, Unity, Integrity, Communication, Excellence, and Servanthood. These attributes form the foundation of the OCBF ministry and discipleship. Throughout the research of this project, questions arose regarding the extended research on the effectiveness of the project to new staff members that had not gone through the project. It became apparent when new personnel arrived at KCA Early Childhood department that there were a variety of lifestyles and cultural differences. This observation encouraged the further review of creating an initial Bible study designed to teach the seven SOTM traits to every new employee. The following recommendations are for further research.

1. The researcher is encouraged to create an on-boarding discipleship curriculum for new employees hired at KCA Early Childhood.
2. The researcher can provide more information to the staff regarding the need for further research in certain areas of the surveys used in the research.
3. Reviewing the post-data and planning a continued discipleship program for the staff that has continued employment at the center.
4. Training and professional development of employees that would like to be Bible study leaders in discipleship.
5. To continue research on the effectiveness of the outcome discipleship project on individuals and families within the KCAEC staff.

The purpose of the research is to influence behavioral and spiritual change in the KCAEC employees. Further research can include the family and personal relationships with others. Matt Chandler and Adam Griffin share, “Family discipleship time is about cultivating spiritual maturity in your household through loving, gospel-centered relationships.”²⁶

²⁶ Matt Chandler and Adam Griffin, *Family Discipleship: Leading your Home Through Time, Moments, and Milestones* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2020), 91.

Conclusion

The purpose of this DMIN action research project aims to teach affirmation and adherence of the SOTM traits to the KCAEC staff. The seven Spirit of the Ministry traits are Accountability, Joy, Unity, Integrity, Communication, Excellence, and Servanthood. These attributes form the foundation of the OCBF ministry and discipleship. The alignment of the SOTM traits with a discipleship approach in small groups will enhance their spiritual growth. The purpose statement gave direction to the discipleship program embraced by the KCAEC staff. Throughout the challenges of the discipleship program, several effective strategies were developed through the process. Some of those techniques are as follows:

1. Discipleship in early childhood programs can occur during the workday on a scheduled basis with specific times for weekly meetings.
2. Spiritual disciplines in a Christian context can be taught and utilized throughout the early childhood program with effective participation from the group
3. Leadership training of early childhood teachers is effective in getting individuals to use their gifts and talents for the Kingdom of God.
4. Selection of literature resources is essential to the growth and personal development of the KCAEC staff.
5. Small groups and selection of teachers from various pre-school age groups is essential in gathering a diverse discussion among teachers.

This action research project can be used in various Christian educational environments. The challenges of scheduling may not be evident in the Christian elementary or high school settings. The selection of Christian leadership is important to the success of the program. Maturity in the leader's faith will bring a sense of security and confidence to the staff.

The problem is the KCAEC many staff members are unfamiliar with the seven "Spirit of the Ministry" traits that are foundational to discipleship of the church. There is a lack of a professionally developed mission-aligned training program for Early Childhood Educators serving at Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship Early Childhood Program.

To address the problem, the researcher developed a mission-align professional biblical based training program to increase staff effectiveness and alignment with the vision of Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship in the following ways.

The researcher developed a mission-align professional biblical based training program to increase the staff effectiveness through reading the Bible, memorizing Scripture, spiritual disciplines, working through a Bible study that focused on the Spirit of the Ministry traits. The teachers were able to gain an understanding of the spiritual mission, vision, and values of OCBF Church. Discipleship curriculum for teachers in the educational setting is essential to the spiritual growth and maturity of the staff. This project can be used to incorporate discipleship practices throughout OCBF Church. The essential ingredients in the discipleship process is biblical instruction and professional development that will assist all educators working in the KCA school environment within OCBF Church.

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Appendix A

LIBERTY UNIVERSITY

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

December 28, 2021

Ella Brown
Seth Bible

Re: IRB Application - IRB-FY21-22-358 Discipleship: A Biblical Approach and Alignment to the Spirit of the Ministry at Kingdom Collegiate Academy Early Childhood Program

Dear Ella Brown and Seth Bible,

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

Decision: No Human Subjects Research

Explanation: Your study is not considered human subjects research for the following reason:

(2) Your project will consist of quality improvement activities, which are not "designed to develop or contribute to generalizable knowledge" according to 45 CFR 46. 102(1).

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

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

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

Sincerely,

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

Appendix B

Consent form for Participants

Title of the Project: Discipleship: A Biblical Approach and Alignment to the Spirit of the Ministry at Kingdom Collegiate Academies Early Childhood Program

Principal Investigator: Ella Brown, DMIN Candidate, Liberty University

Invitation to be Part of a Research Study

You are invited to participate in a research study. To participate, you must be 20 – 70 years, Early Childhood employee. Each participant must work at KCA-Early Childhood and teach on the KCA-Dallas campus. Taking part in this research project is voluntary.

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

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

The purpose of the study is to conduct research on spiritual formation, discipleship and the seven Spirit of the Ministry traits with the Early Childhood teachers. The project is being done to demonstrate the effectiveness of personal disciplines, seven traits of the ministry, and Bible studies on the early childhood staff at Kingdom Collegiate Academy.

In two to three sentences and in plain language, please list the purpose of your study. Do not include details about your procedures as they will be discussed below.

What will happen if you take part in this study?

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

1. Attend a seminar to learn about the research project. This will take about 30-45 minutes.
2. You will be asked to participate in a Bible study on the Spirit of the Ministry, Spiritual formation and Discipleship. This will take about one hour each week.
3. Participation in small groups is required in order to fulfill the requirements.
4. Participants will be assigned randomly into small groups of 4-6 people. Individual will read and follow the assignment chart to be prepared for the small group meetings.

Please **do not list reading/signing the consent form as a procedure**. If you are using control and experimental groups, you must notify your participants of how groups will be assigned (randomly or otherwise) and that participants may or may not receive the intervention as part of their participation. If you choose to withhold information about study groups and group assignments, your study will involve deception, and you will need to note this on your IRB application and submit a debriefing statement.

How could you or others benefit from this study?

The direct benefits participants should expect to receive from taking part in this study are develop a deeper relationship with the Lord through spiritual formation and discipleship.

Benefits to society include being a more effective teacher to the children at KCAEC. The teachers will benefit from participating in a Bible study, and discussion with peers about spiritual formation and discipleship. There is no monetary benefits from participating in this study.

Select the appropriate option above. Participants should not expect to receive a direct benefit simply from taking a survey or participating in an interview; however, they may receive a direct benefit if the study procedures involve a teaching method, therapy technique, etc.

What risks might you experience from being in this study?

The risks involved in this study include being away from students for periods of time. There are no physical risks to this study. The researcher is a mandatory reporter for child abuse, child neglect, or intent to harm self or others. Individuals will be terminated from the study if there is a report of child abuse, child neglect or harm to oneself.

Depending on the type of research you are conducting, you may become privy to information that triggers the mandatory reporting requirements for child abuse, child neglect, elder abuse, or intent to harm self or others. If you are a mandatory reporter, this must be disclosed as a risk to participants. If there are significant psychological risks to participation, participants should be told under what conditions you will terminate their participation.

How will personal information be protected?

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

- Participant responses will be anonymous. Participant responses will be kept confidential through the use of pseudonyms/codes. Interviews will be conducted in a location where others will not easily overhear the conversation.
- Data will be stored on a password-locked computer and may be used in future presentations. After three years, all electronic records will be deleted. Data should be retained for three years upon completion of the study.
- Interviews/focus groups will be recorded and transcribed. Recordings will be stored on a password locked computer for three years and then erased. Only the researcher will have access to these recordings.
- 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.

How will you be compensated for being part of the study?

Participants will not be compensated for participating in this study. There will be no monetary benefit for participating in this study. The Bible study will be part of the ACSI (Association of Christian Schools International) membership requirements for a Christian school. The participants will receive a certificate and professional development recognition.

What are the costs to you to be part of the study?

To participate in the research, all the materials (books, devotional, notebooks, pens, etc.) will be purchased for the participants at KCAEC. There will be no monetary cost to the participants.

Does the researcher have any conflicts of interest?

[Option 1: Professional/Grading Authority] The researcher serves as the Early Childhood Director at Kingdom Collegiate Academy. To limit potential or perceived conflicts the researcher will have Team Leaders to conduct the Bible studies. Each teacher will have an assigned number for data collection. This disclosure is made so participants can decide if this relationship will affect their 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.

[Option 2: Financial Interests] The researcher does not receive any financial compensation in this study. This study is funded through personal and Early Childhood funds from OCBF Church. KCA-Early Childhood is providing all the books, materials and equipment for the study. This disclosure is made so that one can decide if this relationship will affect the participants willingness to participate or not participate in this study.

Is study participation voluntary?

Participation in this study is voluntary. The individual's decision whether to participate will not affect their current or future relations with Liberty University or Kingdom Collegiate Academy. If an individual decides to participate, the person is free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time, without affecting those relationships.

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

If you choose to withdraw from the study, please inform the researcher that you wish to discontinue your participation, and do not submit your study materials. Your responses will not be recorded or included in the study.

If you choose to withdraw from the study, please contact the researcher at the email address/phone number included in the next paragraph. Should you choose to withdraw, data collected from you will be destroyed immediately and will not be included in this study. Focus group data will not be destroyed, but your contributions to the focus group will not be included in the study, if you choose to withdraw.

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

The researcher conducting this study is Ella Brown. You may ask any questions about the research project. If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact Ella Brown at [REDACTED] You may also contact the researcher's faculty sponsor, Dr. Seth Bible, at [REDACTED]

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

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

Disclaimer: The Institutional Review Board (IRB) is tasked with ensuring that human subjects research will be conducted in an ethical manner as defined and required by federal regulations. The topics covered and viewpoints expressed or alluded to by student and faculty researchers are those of the researchers and do not necessarily reflect the official policies or positions of Liberty University.

Your Consent

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

By signing this document, you are agreeing to be in this study. Make sure you understand what the study is about before you sign. You will be given a copy of this document for your records. The researcher will keep a copy with the study records. If you have any questions about the study after you sign this document, you can contact the study team using the information provided above.

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

☐ The researcher has my permission to audio-record/video-record/photograph me as part of my participation in this study.

Printed Subject Name

Signature & Date

APPENDIX C

Recruitment Letter

September 7, 2021

Mrs. Jane Doe
Early Childhood Lead Teacher
KCA-Early Childhood Program
Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship Church
1821 W. Camp Wisdom Road
Dallas, TX 75232

Dear Mrs. Jane Doe:

As a DMIN graduate student in the Liberty University School of Divinity at Liberty University, I am conducting research as part of the requirements for a DMIN degree. I am conducting research to better understand spiritual formation and discipleship. The purpose of my research is to find out whether the seven Spirit of the Ministry traits, if practiced will deepen one's spiritual growth and increase discipleship with the Early Childhood teachers, and I am writing to invite eligible participants to join my study.

Participants must be 18 years of age or older and work at KCA-Early Childhood. Participants, if willing, will be asked to participate in:

- | | |
|---|-------------------|
| 1. Emotional Discipleship Survey | 20 minutes |
| 2. Spiritual Life Interview Questionnaire | 45 minutes |
| 3. Bible study | 60 minutes weekly |
| 4. Spiritual disciplines (prayer, devotional, etc.) | 20 minutes weekly |
| 5. Practice Spirit of the Ministry traits | Every day |

Everyone will participate in a Bible study group on spiritual formation and discipleship along with developing spiritual disciplines. Each group will have a team leader to guide discussions. The Bible study should last for 8–12 weeks. Each week the participants will meet and discuss the biblical materials for the week. Participants will learn Scripture, books of the Bible and practice spiritual disciplines. Attendance will be required for participants. It should take approximately one hour to complete the Bible study each week.

Participation will be completely anonymous, and no personal, identifying information will be collected. The names and other identifying information will be requested as part of this study, but the information will remain confidential.

To participate, please complete the attached survey and return it by/handing it to Ella Brown placing it in the provided envelope, or contact me at [REDACTED] for more information/to schedule an interview/etc. or to sign and return the attached parental consent document.

The consent document contains additional information about my research. If you choose to participate, you will need to sign the consent document and return it to me at the time of the interview. Doing so will indicate that you have read the consent information and would like to take part in the research.

Sincerely,

Ella Brown

KCA-Early Childhood Director
[REDACTED]

APPENDIX D

Permission Request

September 7, 2021


Dr. Larry A. Mercer
Executive Administrator OCBF/KCA
Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship Church
Kingdom Collegiate Academy (KCA)
1821 W. Camp Wisdom Road
Dallas, TX 75232

Dear Dr. Mercer,

As a graduate student in the Rawlings School of Divinity at Liberty University. I am conducting research as part of the requirements for a DMIN degree. The title of my research project is Kingdom Agenda: A Biblical Approach to the Spirit of the Ministry at Kingdom Collegiate Academy. The purpose of this DMIN action research project aims to teach affirmation and adherence of the SOTM traits to the KCAEC staff. The seven Spirit of the Ministry traits are Accountability, Joy, Unity, Integrity, Communication, Excellence, and Servanthood.

I am writing to request your permission to conduct my research in/at Kingdom Collegiate Academies Early Childhood program. I would like to contact members of your Early Childhood staff/church/organization to invite them to participate in my research study.

Early Childhood participants will be asked to complete the attached survey/contact me to schedule an interview/etc. The data will be used to measure the staff affirmation and adherence to the Spirit of the Ministry traits. In order to enhance spiritual growth and discipleship, spiritual disciplines (prayer, Bible study, devotions, scripture memorization, etc.) will be used to encourage spiritual growth. Participants will be presented with informed consent information prior to participating. Taking part in this study is completely voluntary, and participants are welcome to discontinue participation at any time.

Thank you for considering my request. If you choose to grant permission, please provide a signed statement on official letterhead indicating your approval or respond by email to:  A permission letter document is attached for your convenience.

Sincerely,
Ella Brown
Early Childhood Director

APPENDIX E
Permission Response

September 7, 2021

Dr. Larry A. Mercer
Executive Administrator of KCA
Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship Church
1821 W. Camp Wisdom Drive
Dallas, TX 75232

Dear Ella,

After careful review of your research proposal entitled Kingdom Agenda: A Biblical Approach to the Spirit of the Ministry at Kingdom Collegiate Academy. I have decided to grant you permission to conduct your study at KCA-Early Childhood, Dallas campus for your research study.

Check the following boxes, as applicable:

☐ I will provide our Early Childhood list to you, and it may be used to contact our members to invite them to participate in your research study.

☐ I grant permission for Ella Brown to contact all early childhood teachers to invite them to participate in your research study.

☐ The requested data WILL BE STRIPPED of identifying information before it is provided to the researcher.

☐ I am requesting a copy of the results upon study completion and/or publication.

Sincerely,

Dr. Larry A. Mercer
Executive Administrator OCBF/KCA

APPENDIX F

Recruitment Follow-up Letter

Dear Early Childhood Staff:

As a graduate student in the Rawlings School of Divinity at Liberty University. I am conducting research as part of the requirements for a DMIN degree. I am conducting research to better understand spiritual formation and discipleship with the Early Childhood staff. Last week an email/letter was sent to you inviting you to participate in a research study. This follow-up email/letter is being sent to remind you to respond/complete the survey, if you would like to participate and have not already done so. The deadline for participation is September 30th.

Participants, if willing, will be asked to participate in the following activities:

- | | |
|---|-------------------|
| 1. Emotional Discipleship Survey | 20 minutes |
| 2. Spiritual Life Interview Questionnaire | 45 minutes |
| 3. Worldview Survey | 30 minutes |
| 4. Bible study | 60 minutes weekly |
| 5. Spiritual disciplines (prayer, devotional, etc.) | 20 minutes weekly |
| 6. Practice Spirit of the Ministry traits | Every day |

Participation will be completely anonymous, and no personal, identifying information will be collected. Names and other identifying information will be requested as part of this study, but the information will remain confidential.

To participate, please complete the attached survey and return it by handing it to Ella Brown or placing it in the provided envelope/etc., contact me at [REDACTED] [REDACTED] for more information/to schedule an interview/etc.

A consent document is provided as the first page of the survey and is attached to this letter/email. It will be given to you at the time of or one week before, the interview. The consent document contains additional information about my research. If you choose to participate, you will need to sign the consent document and return it to me at the time of the [interview/focus group/etc. at KCA-Dallas campus. After you have read the consent form, please click the to proceed to the survey. Doing so will indicate that you have read the consent information and would like to take part in the survey.

Sincerely,

Ella Brown
KCA-Early Childhood Director

APPENDIX G

Spiritual Life Interview Questionnaire

Kingdom Collegiate Academies
Early Childhood Program
Spiritual Life Interview Questionnaire

Name: _____ Number Code: _____

Name of Church: _____

Ministry Involvement at church: _____

Church attendance (once, twice a month, etc.): _____

Age: _____ Number of years in education: _____

1. Describe your journey of faith.
2. How do you participate in the spiritual life within your community?
3. In what ways are you active in ministry?
4. How do you view your work? Is it a call from God?
5. Explain how you bring your faith in the classroom on a daily basis?
6. How can you promote spiritual formation in the lives of your young students?
7. Describe what is meant by OCBF Church's Spirit of the Ministry? Can you name them?
8. What changes in your life that you would have to make in order to grow more spiritually?
9. What do you understand as the core of the Christian/gospel message?
10. What spiritual disciplines do you practice? (Ex. Prayer, Fasting, Scripture reading, etc.)
11. Define discipleship.

APPENDIX H – Worldview Survey

**Kingdom Collegiate Academy
Early Childhood Program
Worldview Survey**

Category	Worldview Questions	YES	NO
Supreme God			
	Do you know about a supreme God?		
	Do they worship him?		
	Do they recognize supreme God's sovereignty?		
	Is he powerful?		
	Does he have any limitations?		
	Can you hide from him?		
Other gods	Do you worship other gods?		
	Are they represented by any images?		
	Can they be controlled or manipulated?		
	Can these gods be seen?		
Spirits	Are there good spirits?		
	Do people worship these spirits?		
	Do people fear or respect these spirits?		
	Can only certain people see them?		
Supreme Evil Spirit	Is there a supreme evil spirit?		
	Is there a supreme evil spirit who rules over other evil spirits?		
	Is the Supreme God more powerful than this evil spirit?		
	Does this evil spirit have a name?		
God's Word	Is there some source of religious knowledge or spiritual authority?		
	Is it written in a book?		
	Do people know about the Bible?		
	Have people seen a Bible or read from a Bible?		
People	Was Adam the first man?		
	Was Eve the first women?		
	Was woman created differently than man?		
	Are people basically good or evil?		

Death	Is this the future for all people?		
	Can people put off or prevent death?		
	Do people go to heaven after they die?		
	Do all people go to the same place after they die?		
Creation	Are all people created equal?		
	Is there some understanding of a soul or inner being apart from the body?		
	Were people a special creation?		
Holiness	Is there a concept of holiness among people?		
	Are gods and spirits considered holy?		
	Is there a Holy Spirit?		
	Are there special holy places?		
Sin	Is sin bad?		
	Do people sin?		
	Are you born in sin?		
	Do we inherit a sin nature?		

Total number of responses:		
----------------------------	--	--

Notes and Observation on survey responses:

APPENDIX I

Emotionally Healthy Discipleship Personal Assessment

EMOTIONALLY HEALTHY DISCIPLESHIP
PERSONAL ASSESSMENT

How Emotionally Healthy Are You?

Next to each statement below circle the number that best describes your response.

Mark 1: Be Before You Do

- | | Not very true | Sometimes true | Mostly true | Very true |
|--|---------------|----------------|-------------|-----------|
| 1. I spend sufficient time alone with God to sustain my work for God so that I live out of a cup that overflows (<i>Mark 1:35; Luke 6:12</i>). | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 2. It is easy for me to identify what I am feeling inside (<i>Luke 19:41-44; John 11:33-35</i>). | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 3. When I become anxious or feel like I have too much to do in too little time, I stop and slow down to be with God and myself as a way to recenter (<i>Luke 4:42; Luke 10:38-42</i>). | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 4. I set apart a twenty-four-hour period each week for Sabbath-keeping — to stop, to rest, to delight, and to contemplate God (<i>Exodus 20:8-11</i>). | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 5. People close to me would describe me as content, non-defensive, and free from the approval or disapproval of others (<i>Philippians 4:11-12; John 5:44</i>). | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 6. I regularly spend time in solitude and silence. This enables me to be still and undistracted in God's presence (<i>Habakkuk 2:1-4; Psalm 46:10</i>). | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

Mark 1 Total: _____

Mark 2: Follow the Crucified, Not the Americanized, Jesus

- | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. I have rejected the world's definition of success (e.g., bigger is better, be popular, attain earthly security) to become the person God has called me to become and to do what God has called me to do (<i>John 4:34; Mark 14:35-39</i>). | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 2. I rarely change the way I act so others will think highly of me or to assure a particular outcome (<i>Matthew 6:1-2; Galatians 1:10</i>). | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 3. I take a lot of time to carefully discern when my plans and ambitions are legitimately for the glory of God and when they cross the line into my own desire for greatness (<i>Jeremiah 45:5; Mark 10:42-45</i>). | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 4. Listening to Jesus and surrendering my will to his will is more important than any other project, program, or cause (<i>Matthew 17:5; John 16:13</i>). | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 5. People close to me would describe me as patient and calm during failures, disappointments, and setbacks (<i>Isaiah 30:15; John 18:10-11</i>). | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

Mark 2 Total: _____

Mark 3: Embrace God's Gift of Limits

- | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. I've never been accused of "trying to do it all" or of biting off more than I could chew (<i>Matthew 4:1-11</i>). | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 2. I am regularly able to say no to requests and opportunities rather than risk overextending myself (<i>Mark 6:30-32</i>). | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 3. I recognize the different situations where my unique, God-given personality can be either a help or a hindrance in responding appropriately (<i>Psalm 139; Romans 12:3</i>). | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

APPENDIX J

Kingdom Collegiate Academies Early Childhood Program Thesis Project Checklist

Week 1	Prepare and duplicate permissions, surveys, and permission documents for staff. Distribute books, supplies to staff for project.	Get permission from senior pastor and executive administrator to conduct thesis project at KCA-Dallas campus
Week 2	Schedule interviews and time slots sheet for staff. Begin scheduling teacher interviews.	Distribute surveys, questionnaires, Bible study lesson materials. Assemble groups of teachers for meetings.
Week 3	Schedule groups to meet to discuss Bible study lesson. Conduct interviews with staff.	Begin coding and analysis of completed surveys, questionnaires, and interviews.
Week 4	SOTM Bible Study lesson one with small groups. Discuss and reflect in journals.	Continue coding and analysis of surveys, questionnaires, and interviews.
Week 5	SOTM Bible Study lesson 2 and journal reflections, share with teammates.	Record data on spreadsheet for analysis.
Week 6	SOTM Bible Study lesson 3 with journal reflections, share with teammates	Write up notes from electronic journal on progress of thesis.
Week 7	SOTM Bible Study lesson 4 with journal reflections, share with teammates.	Follow-up on any missing data collection with staff. Record notes in electronic journal.

APPENDIX K

Spiritual Disciplines

Spiritual Disciplines

Spiritual Discipline	Description of Spiritual Discipline	Scriptures relating to the Spiritual Discipline
1. Hearing the Word of God	It is the practice of hearing the Word of God preached.	Luke 11:28, Romans 10:17, Proverbs 22:17–19
2. Reading the Word of God	It is the practice of looking and understanding Scriptures.	I Timothy 4:13, Matthew 4:4, Revelation 1:3
3. Studying the Word of God	It is the practice of reading and reviewing Scriptures.	2 Timothy 3:16, 4:13, Ezra 7:10,
4. Memorizing God's Word	It is the practice of repeating Scriptures in our minds.	Psalm 119:11, Colossians 3:2
5. Prayer	It is the practice of communicating with God.	Matthew 6:5–9, Colossians 4:2, I Thessalonians 5:17
6. Worship	It is the act of responding and focusing on God.	Matthew 4:10, 15:8–9, Psalm 95:6, Hebrews 12:28
7. Fasting	It is the practice of withholding from food for spiritual purposes.	Matthew 4:2, 6:16–18, Luke 4:2, Daniel 1:12, Esther 4:16, Acts 27:33–34.
8. Serving	The opportunity to offer ourselves to God.	Joshua 24:15, Psalm 100:2, Luke 22:27,
9. Evangelism	It is communicating the gospel about Jesus Christ.	Matthew 28:19–20, Acts 1:8, Mark 16:15, Luke 24:46–47
10. Stewardship	It is the practice of giving to God.	Philippians 4:18, Luke 16:10–13, 2 Corinthians 9:7

APPENDIX L

Bible Study and Reading Guide

KCA-EC Bible Study and Reading Guide

Date	Kingdom Disciples book	Ultimate Bible Guidebook	Quiet Times with God devotional	Bible Scripture Reading
Week 1	The Missing Key, pg. 15–35	Genesis pg. 1–8	Faith instead of Fear, pg. 5	Genesis Chapters 1–3
Week 2	The Primary Concern, pg. 36–54	Exodus Pg. 9–14	Knowing who you are, pg. 7	Exodus Chapters 1–5
Week 3	The Bold Confession, pg. 55–76	Leviticus Pg. 15–22	Discipline leads to Joy, pg. 13	Leviticus Chapters 1–4
Week 4	The Cost of Commitment, pg. 77–94	Numbers Pg. 23–28	Great things to say, pg. 46	Numbers Chapters 1–4
Week 5	Our True Identity, pg. 95–116	Deuteronomy Pg. 29–34	Unconditional Love, pg. 8	Deuteronomy Chapters 1–4
Week 6	A Deep Intimacy, pg. 117–132.	Joshua Pg. 35–42	Strength in Perseverance, pg. 21	Joshua Chapters 1–3
Week 7	A Steady Increase, pg. 133–146	Judges Pg. 43–48	Moving beyond pain, pg. 17	Judges Chapters 1–3
Week 8	The Heavenly Incentive, pg. 147–162	Ruth Pg. 49–54	God’s Perfect Timing, pg. 6	Ruth Chapters 1–4
Week 9	The Individual, pg. 163–178	1 Samuel Pg. 55–60	Embracing Hope, pg. 27	1 Samuel Chapters 1–4
Week 10	The Family, 179–196	2 Samuel Pg. 61–66	Fellowship with God, 31	2 Samuel Chapters 1–4
Week 11	The Church, pg. 197–216	1 Kings Pg. 67–72	The Armor of God, pg. 23	1 Kings Chapters 1–4
Week 12	The Community, pg. 217–239	2 Kings Pg. 73–78	Don’t get ahead of God, pg. 37	2 Kings Chapters 1–4
Week 13/Action Plan	Action Steps, Pg. 243	1 Chronicles Pg. 79–84	Spending time with God, pg. 51	1 Chronicles Chapters 1–4

Source: Data adapted from Tony Evans, *Kingdom Disciples: Heaven’s Representatives on Earth*, (Chicago, IL: Moody, 2017).

Kendell H. Easley, *Ultimate Bible Guide*, (Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 2018)

Joyce Meyer, *Quiet times with God devotional*, (New York, NY: Hachette Book Group, Inc., 2021).

Appendix M

Bible Study Resources for KCA Early Childhood Staff

Discipleship materials for KCAEC teachers



Appendix N



**KCA-Early Childhood Staff
Spiritual Life Interview Questionnaire**

Staff #		Name of church	Ministry Involvement	Church attendance
Participant 1	JW	New Life Christian Outreach Church	Admin. Assistant, Children's Church teacher, Bookkeeping, Tithes & Offering	Every Sunday
Participant 2	CM	Concord Church	Women's Ministry	Twice a week, Wed. & Sun.
Participant 3	GG	Saint Phillip Catholic Church	CCDA	Sundays
Participant 4	JH	Pilgrim Rest Missionary Baptist Church	Children's Ministry	Three times a month
Participant 5	AC	Crusade for Christ CGIC	None	Weekly
Participant 6	CV	New Morning Star Baptist Church	None	Sundays
Participant 7	NR	Portal Temple	None	Twice a month
Participant 8	HD	OCBF Church	Children's Ministry	Every Week
Participant 9	EB	St. John Church Unleashed	None	Weekly
Participant 10	CG	OCBF Church	Choir, Resale Store, Education	Once
Participant 11	AW	Deliverance Revival Tabernacle	Youth ministry, leadership	Weekly
Participant 12	LM	OCBF Church	None	Every week
Participant 13	DH	Centro Church	Youth group	Weekly
Participant 14	MJ	Disciple Central Community Church	Outreach/Birthday	Every Sunday/Tuesdays
Participant 15	LR	OCBF Church	None	3-4 times a month
Participant 16	MH	Potter's House-Dallas	Bereavement	All month
Participant 17	PG	Community Missionary Baptist Church	None	Weekly
Participant 18	RH	Metro Fellowship Church	Visitor' Ministry, Singles Ministry	Weekly
Participant 19	MF	Santa Clara Catholic Church	Catechism	Twice a month
Participant 20	CM	NCFC	Youth ministry	Weekly

APPENDIX O

KCA-Early Childhood Bible Study Schedule

Group	Time	Day of the Week	Instructor	Participants
Group A	2:00–3:00PM	Tuesdays	Instructor 1	Participant 17
Room 1012				Participant 9
				Participant 7
Group B	9:30–10:30AM	Wednesdays	Instructor 2	Participant 20
Room 1012				Participant 4
				Participant 12
Group C	2:30–3:30PM	Thursdays	Instructor 3	Participant 10
Room 1012				Participant 22
				Participant 3
Group D	2:30–3:30PM	Mondays	Instructor 4	Participant 2
Room 1012				Participant 19
				Participant 15
Group E	9:30–10:30AM	Thursdays	Instructor 5	Participant 1
Room 1012				Participant 5
				Participant 13
				Participant 6
				Participant 21

APPENDIX P

Spirit of the Ministry Traits (SOTM)

Spirit of the Ministry

The following core values reflect the essential elements and priorities that ought to characterize the leadership, staff, and membership of OCBF. It is through these values that we make known the Spirit of the Ministry. It is also how we demonstrate love, which is the primary proof of discipleship, where we passionately and righteously pursue the wellbeing of others.

1. **The Spirit of Unity** – To work in harmony toward a shared purpose and vision.
Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. Eph. 4:3
2. **The Spirit of Integrity** – To possess a commitment to biblical truth and honesty, refusing to allow our character to be corrupted or compromised.
May integrity and uprightness protect me because my hope is in you. Psalms 25:21
3. **The Spirit of Excellence** – To work as unto the Lord with the highest degree of professionalism, productivity, and skill.
And every willing man skilled in any craft will help you in all the work. I Chr. 28:21
4. **The Spirit of Servanthood** – To demonstrate true humility by seeking, serving, and protecting the wellbeing of others.
Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms. I Peter 4:10
5. **The Spirit of Communication** – To interact with each other on matters of the ministry in a respectful and timely fashion.
Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. Eph. 4:29
6. **The Spirit of Accountability** – To love, encourage and correct each other as we do the work of the ministry, each taking responsibility for decisions and actions that impact the ministry.
So, in Christ we who are many form one body and each member belongs to all the others. Rom. 12:5
7. **The Spirit of Joy** – To have a positive, infectious and cheerful attitude while performing assigned tasks and responsibilities.
Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again – Rejoice! Philippians 4:4

Source: Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship Employee Handbook, 11.

Table 1.4 Spirit of the Ministry Traits II (Used in the SOTM Bible Study)**Additional SOTM traits in the Christian Workplace Environment:**

1. Faithfulness
2. Adaptability
3. Compassion
4. Confidence
5. Empathy

Appendix Q

Kingdom Disciples Alignment with Spirit of the Ministry Traits

Kingdom Disciples: Heaven's Representatives on Earth book	Spirit of the Ministry Traits	Women in the Bible Modeling SOTM Trait
Chapter 1: The Missing Key	Accountability	Mary, Mother of Jesus
Chapter 2: The Primary Concern	Joy	Hannah, Mother of Samuel
Chapter 3: The Bold Confession	Unity	Esther
Chapter 4: the Cost of Commitment	Integrity	Ruth
Chapter 5: Our True Identity	Communication	Deborah
Chapter 6: A Deep Intimacy	Excellence	Priscilla
Chapter 7: A Steady Increase	Servanthood	Tabitha/Dorcas
Chapter 8: The Heavenly Incentive	Faithfulness	Anna, Prophetess
Chapter 9: The Individual	Adaptability	Rachel & Leah
Chapter 10: The Family	Compassion	Mary Magdalene
Chapter 11: The Church	Confidence	Mary & Martha
Chapter 12: The Community	Empathy	Sarah: Mother of Isaac

Source: Tony Evans, *Kingdom: Heaven's Representatives on Earth*, (Chicago, IL: Moody, 2017)
Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship Handbook

APPENDIX R

Educational Discipleship and Intentional Relational Discipleship

Educational Discipleship	Intentional Relational Discipleship
Requires attention to Scripture	A personal relationship pointed to Jesus
Scripture and the Holy Spirit	Scripture, the Holy Spirit, and relationships
Head	Head, heart, and hands
Academic	Teaching, Modeling and Coaching
Emphasizes factual knowledge	Emphasizes life application
Information	Transformation
Content	Supportive relationship
No breaking of bread, Start and stop time/quick	Breaking of bread Meet in homes daily/takes time
Teacher has all the answers	Let's figure it out together
Large group	Small group
Building/campus	Home
Lesson is the agenda	Doing life together
Setting is formal	Setting is casual

APPENDIX S

Emotionally Healthy Discipleship Personal Assessment



KCA-Early Childhood Staff Emotionally Healthy Discipleship Personal Assessment

Staff #		M 1	M 2	M 3	M 4	M 5	M 6	M7	Results
Participant 1	JW	23	19	20	19	20	24	27	E Adult
Participant 2	CM	19	13	18	16	16	21	23	E. Adol.
Participant 3	GG	19	13	15	9	14	20	20	E. Adol.
Participant 4	JH	19	18	20	20	17	24	15	E. Adol.
Participant 5	AC	22	19	19	20	17	19	25	E. Adol.
Participant 6	CV	22	19	18	15	15	20	25	E. Adol.
Participant 7	NR	14	11	19	17	16	20	19	E. Adol.
Participant 8	HD	18	18	19	17	17	20	24	E. Adol.
Participant 9	EB	10	10	12	13	11	15	15	E. Adol.
Participant 10	CG	18	12	19	14	14	17	20	E. Adol.
Participant 11	AW	17	15	20	15	16	23	16	E. Adol.
Participant 12	LM	20	19	19	18	16	22	26	E. Adult
Participant 13	DH	11	10	13	10	15	17	17	E. Adol.
Participant 14	MJ	14	12	13	13	9	19	13	E. Adol.
Participant 15	LR	14	15	14	16	18	17	16	E. Adol.
Participant 16	MH	21	18	10	14	15	23	21	E. Adol.
Participant 17	PG	17	18	15	15	16	20	19	E. Adol.
Participant 18	RH	20	17	24	18	17	23	23	E. Adult
Participant 19	MF	23	20	24	20	20	24	28	E. Adult
Participant 20	CM	15	15	14	13	16	14	17	E. Adol.

APPENDIX T

**Kingdom Disciples: Heaven's Representatives on Earth
Bible Study**

**Kingdom Collegiate Academies Early Childhood Program
A Ministry of
Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship Church
Dallas, Texas**

Welcome to Kingdom Disciples Bible Study!

Dear KCA-Early Childhood Teachers,

Our Bible study for this season will cover how to experience spiritual growth and become a Kingdom Disciple. Throughout the study, our group will go deeper into spiritual formation and discipleship. The ultimate desire of this Bible study is to be transformed into the image of Christ. Yes, that sounds impossible. Let's look at what the Apostle Paul declared in Phil 4:13 "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." So, we will rely on Jesus' strength through us to accomplish his good works in us.

Dr. Tony Evans has written a book, *Kingdom Disciples: Heaven's Representatives on Earth*, which will serve as our resource throughout this season of discovery. Each week, our team will cover a chapter in the book. Our purpose will be the following:

- *To know God intimately in discovering our purpose in life.
- *To grow into mature disciples by allowing the Holy Spirit to equip us for service to our communities through a spiritual formation process.
- *To learn how to teach and train others to become disciples of Christ.
- *To search through the Kingdom Disciples book to find guidance for growing in Christ.
- *To study and memorize Scripture to support our knowledge of God.

The second resource will fulfill the quest to search the Scriptures by reading the *Ultimate Bible Guide: A Book-by-Book Overview*. It contains 66 Biblical reviews of each book in the Bible. During this time with the Lord, read the devotional, *Quiet Times with God Devotional*. Each resource is designed to equip an individual in the desire to know the Bible and God. Review the reading schedule and get ready to soar!

May God bless you as you seek to know Him in your daily walk!

Ella Brown

KCA-Early Childhood Director
OCBF Church

Early Childhood Bible Study Covenant

Throughout the Bible, one finds, “covenant” used as an oath-bound promise or agreement by one or both parties to bless or serve one another. The promise or blessing can mean meeting certain conditions by the party to whom the promise is made. Sometimes the promise is unilateral and unconditional.^{1s}The Early Childhood Bible Study Covenant is designed to encourage one another by being prepared and participating in the Bible Study sessions. These guidelines are covered throughout the course.

A – Accept the opportunity to learn and grow in Christ during this season.

C – Come prepared for the lesson each week.

C – Communicate with the Bible study leader regarding personal situations.

O – Optimize this time with the Lord through prayer, fasting and, quiet time.

U – Unite with the other participants in learning Scripture and praying for one another.

N – Notice the difference in one’s faith and commitment to the Lord throughout this study.

T – Talk to the team members throughout the Bible study so they will know how to pray.

A – Always allow the Holy Spirit to use the individuals in sharing with the group.

B – Build confidence in oneself through prayer, fasting, daily Bible reading and memorization.

I – Invite the Holy Spirit to transform one’s life through the Bible Study.

L – Learn how to let things in the past go and invite Jesus to heal old wounds of the past

I – Initiate opportunities to share what the Lord is doing in one’s life with others in the group.

T – Take the time to read the Bible daily.

Y – Yielding to the Holy Spirit is amazing in what God will do if one gives him the opportunity.

It will take ACCOUNTABILITY to be sensitive to the Holy Spirit to reveal Christ in a personal and intimate manner throughout the Bible study.

¹Brand, Chad, Charles Draper, Archie England, *Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary*, (Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 2003), 355.

Prayer for Salvation

Lord Jesus,

I want to acknowledge you Lord, as I begin this Bible study. I've kept you out of my life for too long. I know that I am a sinner and do not have the ability to save myself. When I hear the whisper of the Holy Spirit, no longer will I close the door of my heart. By faith, I gratefully receive your gift of salvation. I am ready to trust you as my Lord and Savior. Thank you, Lord Jesus, for coming to earth. I believe you are the Son of God, born of the virgin Mary, walked, and preached on earth and went to the cross to die for my sins. You died on the cross for my sins and rose from the dead on the third day. I am grateful and thank you for bearing my sins and giving me the gift of eternal life. I believe your words and the Bible are true. Now, accept my confession, come into my heart, Lord Jesus, and be my Savior.

Amen.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Scriptures about salvation: John 3:16, Ephesians 2:8–9, Titus 3:5, Romans 10:9, Acts 4:12, John 14:6, Acts 16:30–33.

KCA-EC Bible Study and Reading Guide

Date	Kingdom Disciples book	Ultimate Bible Guidebook	Quiet Times with God devotional	Bible Scripture Reading
Week 1	The Missing Key, pg. 15–35	Genesis pg. 1–8	Faith instead of Fear, pg. 5	Genesis Chapters 1–3
Week 2	The Primary Concern, pg. 36–54	Exodus Pg. 9–14	Knowing who you are, pg. 7	Exodus Chapters 1–5
Week 3	The Bold Confession, pg. 55–76	Leviticus Pg. 15–22	Discipline leads to Joy, pg. 13	Leviticus Chapters 1–4
Week 4	The Cost of Commitment, pg. 77–94	Numbers Pg. 23–28	Great things to say, pg. 46	Numbers Chapters 1–4
Week 5	Our True Identity, pg. 95–116	Deuteronomy Pg. 29–34	Unconditional Love, pg. 8	Deuteronomy Chapters 1–4
Week 6	A Deep Intimacy, pg. 117–132.	Joshua Pg. 35–42	Strength in Perseverance, pg. 21	Joshua Chapters 1–3
Week 7	A Steady Increase, pg. 133–146	Judges Pg. 43–48	Moving beyond pain, pg. 17	Judges Chapters 1–3
Week 8	The Heavenly Incentive, pg. 147–162	Ruth Pg. 49–54	God’s Perfect Timing, pg. 6	Ruth Chapters 1–4
Week 9	The Individual, pg. 163–178	I Samuel Pg. 55–60	Embracing Hope, pg. 27	I Samuel Chapters 1–4
Week 10	The Family, 179–196	2 Samuel Pg. 61–66	Fellowship with God, 31	2 Samuel Chapters 1–4
Week 11	The Church, pg. 197–216	I Kings Pg. 67–72	The Armor of God, pg. 23	I Kings Chapters 1–4
Week 12	The Community, pg. 217–239	2 Kings Pg. 73–78	Don’t get ahead of God, pg. 37	2 Kings Chapters 1–4
Week 13/Action Plan	Action Steps, Pg. 243	1 Chronicles Pg. 79–84	Spending time with God, pg. 51	1 Chronicles Chapters 1–4

²Tony Evans, *Kingdom Disciples: Heaven’s Representatives on Earth*, (Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 2017), 15–243.

³Kendell H. Easley, *Ultimate Bible Guide: A Book-by-Book overview*, (Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 2018), 1–84.

⁴Joyce Meyer, *Quiet Times with God Devotional*, (New York, NY: Faith Works, 2020), 1–51.

Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship Employee Handbook

Spirit of the Ministry

The following core values reflect the essential elements and priorities that ought to characterize the leadership, staff, and membership of OCBF. It is through these values that we make known the Spirit of the Ministry. It is also how we demonstrate love, which is the primary proof of discipleship, where we passionately and righteously pursue the wellbeing of others.

1. **The Spirit of Unity** – To work in harmony toward a shared purpose and vision.
Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. Eph. 4:3
2. **The Spirit of Integrity** – To possess a commitment to biblical truth and honesty, refusing to allow our character to be corrupted or compromised.
May integrity and uprightness protect me because my hope is in you. Psalms 25:21
3. **The Spirit of Excellence** – To work as unto the Lord with the highest degree of professionalism, productivity, and skill.
And every willing man skilled in any craft will help you in all the work. 1 Chr. 28:21
4. **The Spirit of Servanthood** – To demonstrate true humility by seeking, serving, and protecting the wellbeing of others.
Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms. 1 Peter 4:10
5. **The Spirit of Communication** – To interact with each other on matters of the ministry in a respectful and timely fashion.
Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. Eph. 4:29
6. **The Spirit of Accountability** – To love, encourage and correct each other as we do the work of the ministry, each taking responsibility for decisions and actions that impact the ministry.
So, in Christ we who are many form one body and each member belongs to all the others. Rom. 12:5
7. **The Spirit of Joy** – To have a positive, infectious and cheerful attitude while performing assigned tasks and responsibilities.
Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again – Rejoice! Philippians 4:4

Twenty-five Scriptures on Accountability

Romans 14:12

So then, each of us will give an account of ourselves to God.

2 Corinthians 5:10

For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each of us may receive what is due us for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad.

Galatians 5:25–26

Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit. **26** Let us not become conceited, provoking and envying each other.

Hebrews 4:13

And no creature is hidden from his sight, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must give account.

1 Corinthians 12:26–27

If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it. **27** Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.

Hebrews 13:16–17

And do not forget to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased. **17** Have confidence in your leaders and submit to their authority, because they keep watch over you as those who must give an account. Do this so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no benefit to you.

Romans 1:20

For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse.

Proverbs 27:17

As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another.

James 5:16

Therefore, confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.

Romans 2:12

All who sin apart from the law will also perish apart from the law, and all who sin under the law will be judged by the law.

Luke 12:47–48

“The servant who knows the master’s will and does not get ready or does not do what the master wants will be beaten with many blows. **48** But the one who does not know and does things deserving punishment will be beaten with few blows. From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded; and from the one who has been entrusted with much, much more will be asked.

James 4:17

If anyone, then, knows the good they ought to do and doesn’t do it, it is sin for them.

Matthew 12:36

But I tell you that everyone will have to give account on the day of judgment for every empty word they have spoken.

Ezekiel 18:20

The one who sins is the one who will die. The child will not share the guilt of the parent, nor will the parent share the guilt of the child. The righteousness of the righteous will be credited to them, and the wickedness of the wicked will be charged against them.

Ephesians 5:21

Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.

Matthew 12:36–37

But I tell you that everyone will have to give account on the day of judgment for every empty word they have spoken. **37** For by your words you will be acquitted, and by your words you will be condemned.”

Galatians 6:1–2

Brothers and sisters, if someone is caught in a sin, you who live by the Spirit should restore that person gently. But watch yourselves, or you also may be tempted. **2** Carry each other’s burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.

Ephesians 4:25

Therefore, each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to your neighbor, for we are all members of one body.

I Corinthians 1:10

I appeal to you, brothers and sisters, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree with one another in what you say and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly united in mind and thought.

Luke 17:3

Pay attention to yourselves! If your brother sins, rebuke him, and if he repents, forgive him

Jeremiah 17:10

"I the Lord search the heart and test the mind, to give every man according to his ways, according to the fruit of his deeds.

Matthew 7:3-5

Why do you see the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' when there is the log in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye.

I John 2:2

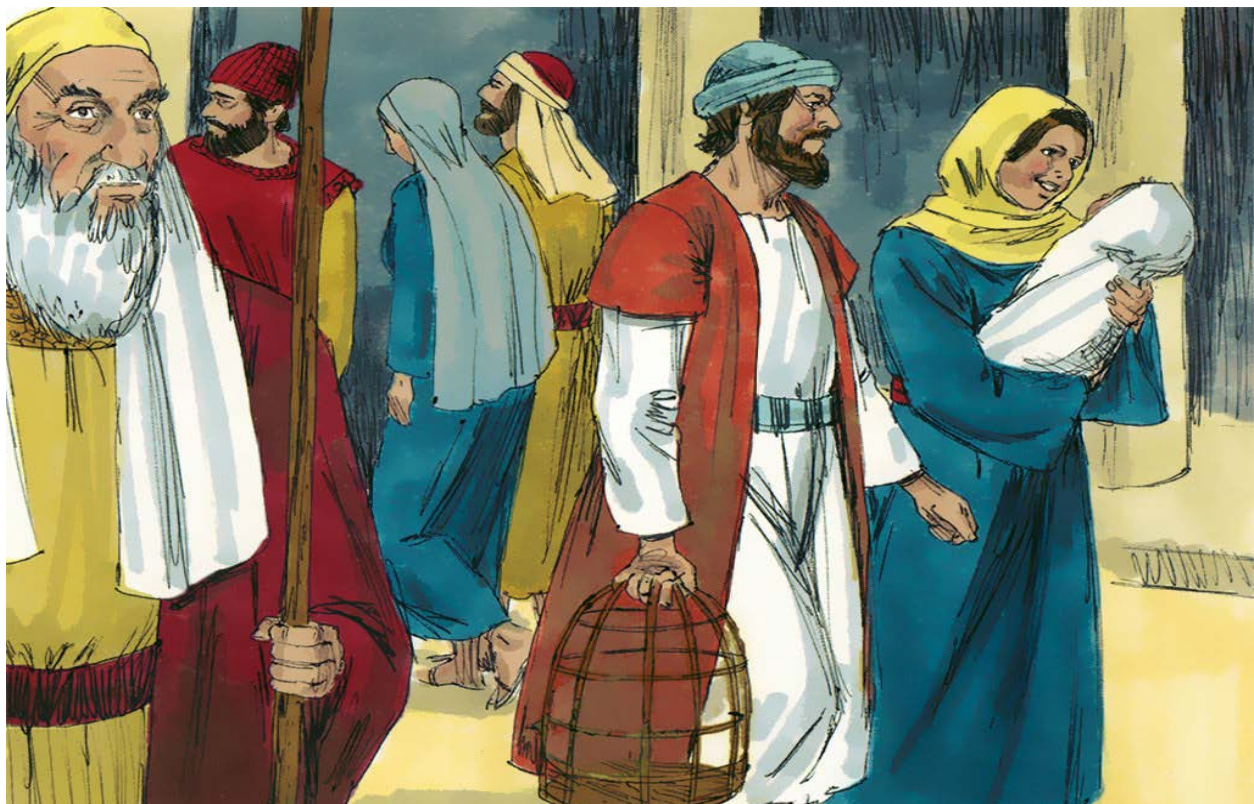
He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.

Acts 4:12

And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.

Matthew 28:19-20

Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."



The Foundation of Kingdom Discipleship

Week 1, Lesson 1: The Missing Key

Thought for Today: Winning Souls to Christ is the ultimate defeat of the Enemy.

Each day brings new experiences and challenges. Once a man went fishing near a lake close to his house. Since he had not caught any fish after fishing all day, he moved to another lake. He cast out his line, something tugged at his line. Within a few minutes, he was reeling in a large rainbow trout. Smiling and delighted with his fishing ability, he cast out his line again. This time, the line caught something hard to reel in. The more he tugged at his line, the more difficult it became until finally, the line broke. Sadden by his inability to catch more fish, he packed up his fishing gear and headed home. He arrived home, prepared the fish for dinner, and as he was praying over his meal, he thanked God for the day and his one fish. He believed that tomorrow would bring another opportunity to catch more fish.

Key Point: Always look for God-inspired opportunities to bring more individuals into the Kingdom of God.

1. Kingdom disciples are in short supply throughout the world of evangelism. Define a kingdom disciple:

2. What has Jesus asked us to do in Matthew 28:18–19, “And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and earth. “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age. What authority has Jesus given us?

3. According to Dr. Tony Evans, “Making disciples is a process of spiritual development. The goal of biblical teaching is to combine information and knowledge with skill in applying the truth to daily life.”

How are you applying the truth of Matthew 28:18–19 to your life?

Prayer for today: Thank you, Father, for giving me an opportunity to learn how to serve you in becoming a disciple-maker for Jesus Christ.

⁵Tony Evans, *Kingdom Disciples: Heaven's Representatives on Earth*, (Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 2017), 32–33.

Women of Faith: Accountability
Mary, Mother of Jesus
Luke 1:1–56

As a young teenager, Mary received the notice that would change her life forever. She is engaged to marry Joseph, son of Jacob (Matt. 1:16). In the preparations for her wedding, she did not expect a visitation from an angel (Luke 1:26–33). Yet, the angel Gabriel appeared announcing that God had chosen her to give birth to a son. Of course, Mary is puzzled by this announcement. However, Gabriel assured her that there was nothing for her to fear. Mary wanted to know if she could have a baby since she was a virgin (Luke 1:34). The angel, Gabriel, shared with her that this baby would come from the Holy Spirit, not a man (Luke 1:35). Mary accepted the responsibility of being chosen to be the mother of the Son of God (Luke 1:35). Mary demonstrated maturity by her obedience to humble herself and accept the assignment to be the mother of God's Son. Even as a teenager, she allowed God to control her life. She didn't question why she was chosen. Mary believed the angel Gabriel and understood that God favored her to care for his Son. She was willing to accept the ridicule, embarrassment, and gossip to accomplish the will and purpose of God for her life. Mary is an example of what can happen when an individual accepts the responsibility of allowing God to have control over one's life. Mary is a model of Accountability.

1. Read Luke 1:46–55. What is the meaning of Mary's praise?

2. Mary allowed God to accomplish his plans through her. Have you allowed God to accomplish his plans through you?

Application of Accountability

Dear Participant,

Now, having read and studied chapter one of Kingdom Disciples. One of the fundamental traits is accountability. Throughout the Bible study, one will be introduced to the Seven Traits of the Ministry of OCBF Church. The traits are: Accountability, Joy, Unity, Integrity, Communication, Excellence, and Servanthood. The participants are asked to model these traits in one's daily journey at home, work, and throughout the community. Apply the meaning of the word, accountability to the following situations.

1. How can you model the trait of accountability in your personal life?

2. How can you model the trait of accountability with your colleagues/supervisor at work?

3. What can you do to apply the principles from this lesson to improve your professional practices as you care for children and/or service their families at KCA-Early Childhood?

4. How can you apply the principles of accountability in your growth and development with your supervisor during your next evaluation conference?

Kingdom Disciples: Heaven's Representatives on Earth

Bible Study – Lesson Two



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Chapter 2: The Primary Concern
Spirit of the Ministry trait: Joy
Kingdom Collegiate Academies Early Childhood Program
Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship Church
Dallas, Texas

Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship Employee Handbook

Spirit of the Ministry

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So, in Christ we who are many form one body and each member belongs to all the others. Rom. 12:5

7. **The Spirit of Joy** – To have a positive, infectious and cheerful attitude while performing assigned tasks and responsibilities.
Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again – Rejoice! Philippians 4:4

Eleven Scriptures on Joy

James 1:2–3

Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, **3** because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance.

Psalms 47:1

Clap your hands, all you nations; shout to God with cries of joy.

Isaiah 9:3

You have enlarged the nation and increased their joy; they rejoice before you as people rejoice at the harvest, as warriors rejoice when dividing the plunder.

Proverbs 10:28

The prospect of the righteous is joy, but the hopes of the wicked come to nothing.

1 Peter 1:8–9

Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy, **9** for you are receiving the end result of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

Romans 15:13

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

2 John 1:12

I have much to write to you, but I do not want to use paper and ink. Instead, I hope to visit you and talk with you face to face, so that our joy may be complete.

Luke 15:7

I tell you that in the same way there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent.

Isaiah 12:6

Shout aloud and sing for joy, people of Zion, for great is the Holy One of Israel among you.”

Philemon 1:7

Your love has given me great joy and encouragement, because you, brother, have refreshed the hearts of the Lord’s people.

Psalms 27:6

Then my head will be exalted above the enemies who surround me; at his sacred tent I will sacrifice with shouts of joy; I will sing and make music to the LORD.

The Foundation of Kingdom Discipleship

Week 2, Lesson 2: The Primary Concern

Thought for Today: Joy is the expression of worship.

A young man is a talented athlete from a local high school team. Each week, he would score at least one to two touchdowns. College scouts were recruiting him to play for their teams. He had at least 6–10 football scholarship offers. Along with his talent, he is a gifted musician that played in church every Sunday with the choir. The music he performed, and songs written by him inspired the choir and pastor of the church. During this time that as he prayed, the Holy Spirit leads him to consider full-time ministry instead of football. His heart was devoted to football with all the popularity from the crowds. He did not share with his parents what was happening during his prayer time. As time went on, it was next to his last football game, when as he went up to catch the football, he flipped back on his head. The coaches rushed towards him as he lay still on the green turf. They finally took him to the hospital, only to discover that he was paralyzed and would never walk again. As weeks and months went by, he became depressed. His mother suggested that he play one of his favorite songs on the piano. As he played and sang, a special feeling rushed over him. He knew that the joy of being alive is a gift from God.

Key Point: Joy is not an emotion, it's an expression of strength. (Nehemiah 8:10)

1. The primary concern of disciples of Jesus Christ must be the prioritization of God's kingdom. State why the prioritization of God's kingdom is important?

2. In Matthew 6:33, what does Jesus mean when he says, "But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness and all these things will be added to you". How can one apply this verse?

3. According to Dr. Evans, "Righteousness is the standard God requires for people to be rightly related to him. It includes abiding by the governing guides he has set as the King". What does righteousness mean?

Prayer for today: Lord, allow me to seek your kingdom and righteousness every day as I become a kingdom disciple.

⁶Tony Evans, *Kingdom Disciples: Heaven's Representatives on Earth*, (Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 2017), 45.

Women of Faith: Joy
Hannah, Mother of Samuel
I Samuel 1:1–2:11

The joy and thrill of having a child are beyond any imaginable thing a women could experience. As a young woman, Hannah was married to Elkanah. He loved her and, she loved him, yet she remained childless. Elkanah had another wife, Penin'nah. She was jealous of her husband's attention to Hannah and teased her. Hannah was upset because she was barren. Being barren was a mark of fruitlessness. The pain and agony felt by Hannah were unimaginable. Hannah prayed for children even though her husband, Elkanah tried to comfort in her sorrow. Hannah's distress was so disturbing that she stopped eating and drinking. Her husband, Elkanah was worried and expressed his concerns about her mental health in desiring a child. Eventually, Hannah ate and decided to go to the temple of the Lord (I Sam. 1:9). As she was praying the priest, Eli thought that she was drunk. Hannah quickly shared that she was not drunk but praying to God. Eli acknowledged her and asked that the God of Israel grant her petition. Hannah left in peace, and, in time, she bore a son and named him Samuel. Since Hannah had vowed to give this child back to the Lord, she kept her vow. After Samuel was weaned, Hannah took him back to Eli for service to the Lord. Hannah experienced the joy of childbirth. Hannah is a model of Joy in the Lord.

1. Read 1 Samuel 2:1–10. What is the significance of Hannah's prayer? Share your thoughts.

2. Hannah vowed to give her first-born son to God. Her prayer was honored, what are some things you are waiting on from God?

Application of Joy

Dear Participant,

After reading and studying chapter two of Kingdom Disciples. One of the fundamental traits is Joy. Throughout the Bible study, one will understand the Seven Traits of the Ministry of OCBF Church. The traits are: Accountability, Joy, Unity, Integrity, Communication, Excellence, and Servanthood. The participants are asked to model these traits in one's daily journey at home, work, and throughout the community. Apply the meaning of the word, joy to the following situations.

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4. How can you apply the principles of joy in your growth and development with your supervisor during your next evaluation conference?

PRAYING FOR YOUR TOP TEN NEEDS

Write the top ten personal prayer needs.

Scripture: Matthew 6:9–13

1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	
9.	
10.	

Matthew 6:6 When you pray, go into your room, and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

Prayer Journaling Guide

This practice will help participants to develop a closer relationship with the Lord through prayer. An essential element in the maturity of Christians is to develop a natural, flow and rhythm to one's personal prayer life. Using a journal will enhance one's focus on the Lord for recording the prayer request and the answered prayers. Keeping a journal will assist the believer in understanding the importance of daily prayer. The following guidelines are designed to help in the modeling of maintaining a prayer journal.

- **Acknowledgement, Praise and Adoration** – At the beginning of the journal, start by writing several sentences of acknowledgement, praise, and adoration. Tell God how wonderful he is and your love for him. Ask forgiveness of any sins and invite the Holy Spirit into your time with the Lord.
- **Thanksgiving** – Thank God for the specific blessings that you have asked. Acknowledge and thank God for the answered prayers in your life. Spend time mentioning other individuals and thank God for their Christian influence in your life.
- **Sharing your needs** – In an attempt to be completely transparent with the Lord, honestly share your thoughts, dreams, regrets, and requests. Each opportunity will yield results. List the requests and needs of your heart.
- **Request for God's Will** – One of the central importance of journaling is to request God's will in your life. Ask for specific guidance in decisions, desires, and purpose for your existence. You can request, wise counsel to assist in the Holy Spirit guidance.
- **Asking for Forgiveness and Restoration**– The daily request for forgiveness of sins is an integral part of becoming intimate with the Lord. Acknowledgment of sin, whether aware or unaware is essential to the growth and development of a believer.
- **Specific prayers for others** – Acknowledgement of the needs for family, friends and colleagues is important to create a sensitive heart of the believer. Taking the time to know the prayer requests of others, helps in the process of discipleship.

Praying using Scriptures:

Learning and memorizing Scripture is one of the most effective ways to fight against spiritual warfare. Some Scriptures to use are the following:

- I will give thanks to the LORD with my whole heart; I will recount all of your wonderful deeds.” (Psalm 9:1)
- Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.” (Philippians 4:6–7)
- “Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.” (Proverbs 3:5–6)
- I am the way and the truth and the life. (John 14:6)
- For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plan for your well-being and not disaster, to give you a future and a hope. (Jeremiah 29:11)

Prayer Journal Prompts:

Many individuals struggle with what to pray while using the prayer journal. There may be times when you will experience periods of avoidance of the prayer journal. During these times, a writing prompt serves as a motivation to continue the process. A prayer journal is not meant to be a labor-intensive activity, yet there are instances when your thoughts may be drawn to other

things. A prayer prompt will keep the mind focused and support learning how to flow with the Holy Spirit.

- Name some ways that God has used you to minister to someone throughout the week.
- Write down several ways to thank God for providing for you.
- Ask God for salvation.
- Tell God the goals for your life and ask for his guidance.
- Ask God to forgive you for a specific sin.
- What sin are you struggling with now? Ask God for his guidance and help.
- Express your fears and ask God to heal you.
- Ask God for peace.
- Think about sins in your past and ask God to forgive you.
- Ask God for wisdom for family, work, and other decisions.
- Tell God about your marriage or personal relationship and ask for guidance.
- Give God control of your future and pray for guidance.
- Ask God to help you keep your children on the right path in their relationship with him.
- Ask God to bless your parents, protect and provide for them.
- Tell God about your child's school and ask for protection.
- Thank God for your health and ask him to guide your health decisions.
- Ask God to provide the finances you need to provide for your family.
- Express to God your desire to be more patient with other people.
- Tell God about your sports teams or children's sports teams.
- Ask God to bless your pastor, ministry, elders, church leaders and congregation.
- Thank God for community leaders and ask for him to guide them with wisdom.
- Tell God to bless your boss or supervisor in making business/leadership decisions.
- Ask God to bless the coaches over the athletes of your child's school.
- Ask God to help the teachers, principals, and leadership at your child's school.
- Thank God for the weather and pray for safety and security during inclement weather.
- Tell God about your concerns for the United States and ask him to bless our country.
- Ask God to avert world wars, catastrophes, around the world.
- Name the various animals that are in danger and ask for God's help.
- Ask God to protect the forests and natural beauty of the earth.
- State the various personal financial needs and ask for God's help.
- Thank God for the President of the United States and pray for wisdom.
- Ask God's protection on elderly citizens over the world.
- Names the various diseases and ask God to heal them.
- Ask God to take away stress and worry from your life.
- Ask God to bless the homeless community and provide for them.
- Thank God for providing his vision to individuals, leaders, and nation

Kingdom Disciples: Heaven's Representatives on Earth

Bible Study – Lesson Three



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Chapter 3: The Bold Confession
Kingdom Collegiate Academies Early Childhood Program
Spirit of the Ministry trait: Unity
Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship Church
Dallas, Texas

Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship Employee Handbook

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May integrity and uprightness protect me because my hope is in you. Psalms 25:21

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Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again – Rejoice! Philippians 4:4

Ten Scriptures on Unity

Psalm 133:1

How good and pleasant it is when God's people live together in unity!

2 Corinthians 13:11

Finally, brothers and sisters, rejoice! Strive for full restoration, encourage one another, be of one mind, live in peace. And the God of love and peace will be with you.

Galatians 3:28

There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

Colossians 3:14

And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.

Romans 12:4–5

For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, **5** so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others.

Romans 12:16

Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited.

1 Peter 3:8

Finally, all of you, be like-minded, be sympathetic, love one another, be compassionate and humble.

Ephesians 4:13

until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

1 Corinthians 1:10

I appeal to you, brothers and sisters, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree with one another in what you say and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly united in mind and thought.

2 Corinthians 13:11

Finally, brothers and sisters, rejoice! Strive for full restoration, encourage one another, be of one mind, live in peace. And the God of love and peace will be with you.

The Foundation of Kingdom Discipleship

Week 3, Lesson 3: The Bold Confession

Thought for Today: All things are possible with Unity.

Several teachers were planning a wedding celebration for a colleague. As the wedding date came closer, the bride noticed that she had not made provisions for the transportation of her parents and grandparents to the wedding. Since she was on a tight budget with all the wedding preparations, she asked several individuals to help. Each person had a different excuse for not being able to bring her parents and grandparents to the wedding. As she cried out for help from the Lord, her phone rang. A friend called to see what she could do to help her during the wedding. Telling her friend about all the problems she was having with transportation and all the other concerns; she asked her friend to pray for her. Listening to her friend and knowing that the teachers on staff would be willing to help. She organized a group of teachers to pick up the parents and the grandparents for the wedding. They united at the entrance of the parents and grandparents' home to offer rides to and from the wedding. The bride was appreciative, and her wedding was a marvelous celebration of unity and joy.

Key Point: It is good when people dwell together in Unity.

Read Chapter 3 and answer the following questions.

1. What does authority mean?

2. According to Dr. Evans, "Authority means the right to use the power that you possess." What does this statement mean to you on your job?

3. God rescued us from the authority of darkness. By rescuing us, what does that mean to you?

4. To understand the Christian life for kingdom disciples, what must the believer do and why?

⁶Tony Evans, *Kingdom Disciples*, 55–76.

Women of Faith: Unity
Queen Esther (Esther 1:1–9:28)

Life as a Jewish citizen in the country of Persia (Iran) had special challenges for Esther (Hadassah) and her family. This young Jewish woman, orphaned by her parents, lived with a relative, Mordecai. She had no idea of the events occurring at the palace of King Ahasuerus (King Xerxes) that would change her life forever. During a royal dinner hosted by the king, he requested for Queen Vashti to appear before his guests. She refused to appear before them. This action shocked the king and embarrassed him before his guests. His banishment of Queen Vashti was immediate along with his search for a new queen. This turn of events would affect the destiny of Esther. She was taken along with other young women to the palace (Esther 2:1–16). Esther won the favor of Hegai, who gave her special attention. When she was presented to the king, he found her to be the most beautiful of all the young women. King Ahasuerus placed the crown on Esther, and she became the new queen. She had kept the secret of her Jewish ancestry, as her cousin Mordecai had asked her to do. As time went on, it was Mordecai, who heard about a plot to kill the king. He informed Esther, who told the king and was able to stop the attack. Even though King Ahasuerus' life was spared, his associate Haman still hated Mordecai and desired to harm him along with the Jewish people. Haman concocts a plan to kill all the Jews through an order of the king. Mordecai learns of the plan and shares it with Esther. She had not been in to see the king in a while. In Esther 4:16 - "Go, gather together all the Jews who are in Susa, and fast for me. Do not eat or drink for three days, night or day. I and my attendants will fast as you do. When this is done, I will go to the king, even though it is against the law. And if I perish, I perish." This took courage and bravery for Esther to risk everything for her people. The Jewish people were saved due to their unity as a nation through prayer and fasting.

1. What is one of the main purposes for the book of Esther?

2. What can you learn from Esther today about fasting and prayer?

3. Since God's name is not mentioned in the book of Esther, what evidence is there to show that he is working?



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Prayer:

Father, thank you for the opportunity to grow deep in my understanding and intimacy with you. Give me strength and courage to seek you through prayer and fasting as I grow in my relationship with you. Amen.

Application of Unity

Dear Participant,

Throughout this Bible study, you will understand the Seven Traits of the Ministry of OCBF Church. The traits are: Accountability, Joy, Unity, Integrity, Communication, Excellence, and Servanthood. Our teachers and staff are asked to model these traits in their daily journey at home, work, and throughout the community. Apply the meaning of unity to the following situations.

1. How can you model the trait of unity in your personal life?

2. What are some ways you can promote the trait of unity with your colleagues/supervisor at work?

3. What are some specific steps you can take in your professional practices to cultivate unity as you care for children and/or service their families at KCA-Early Childhood?

4. List some concrete ways you hope to demonstrate your commitment to unity in the workplace with your supervisor by your next evaluation conference?

Fasting and Prayer

Fasting is one of the most powerful disciplines in the Bible. Esther's request that the Jewish people fast for her during a challenging time, allows us to understand the significant effects of fasting and our relationship with God. Fasting is the voluntary action of giving up something to focus on prayer. It is a spiritual discipline that requires the sacrifice of something to focus on God through prayer. The act of fasting is throughout Scripture. For example, Jesus fasted for 40 days and nights, as part of his preparation for ministry (Matthew 4:2). Daniel fasted for three weeks (Daniel 10:3). The ways to fast are as varied as the purposes for fasting. One purpose of fasting is to lead an individual into a closer relationship with God. Fasting and prayer can have a transformational effect on the individual. Some of the additional benefits of fasting and prayer are illustrated in the following passages of Scripture:

1. Fasting will strengthen our prayer life (Ezra 8:23).
2. Fasting is to seek God's guidance (Judges 20:26).
3. Fasting encourages intimacy, love, and worship for God (Luke 2:37).
4. Fasting can occur to seek deliverance or protection (2 Chronicles 20:3–4).
5. Fasting can be used to express repentance with a return to God (Samuel 7:6).
6. Fasting permits humility before God (I Kings 21:27–29).
7. Fasting can be used to express concern for the work of God (Nehemiah 1:3–4).
8. Fasting allows us to minister to the needs of others (Isaiah 58:3–7).
9. Fasting encourages confession of sins (Psalm 35:13, I Samuel 7:6).
10. Fasting is to be done in secret (Matthew 6:16–18).



Fasting Calendar

January 2022

Directions: Use the calendar to mark your Fast Days throughout the month. During your fast, write in answers to prayers.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

Kingdom Disciples: Heaven's Representatives on Earth

Bible Study – Lesson Four



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Chapter 4: The Cost of Commitment
Spirit of the Ministry trait: Integrity
Kingdom Collegiate Academies Early Childhood Program
Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship Church
Dallas, Texas

Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship Employee Handbook

Spirit of the Ministry

The following core values reflect the essential elements and priorities that ought to characterize the leadership, staff, and membership of OCBF. It is through these values that we make known the Spirit of the Ministry. It is also how we demonstrate love, which is the primary proof of discipleship, where we passionately and righteously pursue the wellbeing of others.

1. **The Spirit of Unity** – To work in harmony toward a shared purpose and vision.

Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. Eph. 4:3

2. **The Spirit of Integrity** – To possess a commitment to biblical truth and honesty, refusing to allow our character to be corrupted or compromised.

May integrity and uprightness protect me because my hope is in you. Psalms 25:21

3. **The Spirit of Excellence** – To work as unto the Lord with the highest degree of professionalism, productivity, and skill.

And every willing man skilled in any craft will help you in all the work. I Chr. 28:21

4. **The Spirit of Servanthood** – To demonstrate true humility by seeking, serving, and protecting the wellbeing of others.

Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms. I Peter 4:10

5. **The Spirit of Communication** – To interact with each other on matters of the ministry in a respectful and timely fashion.

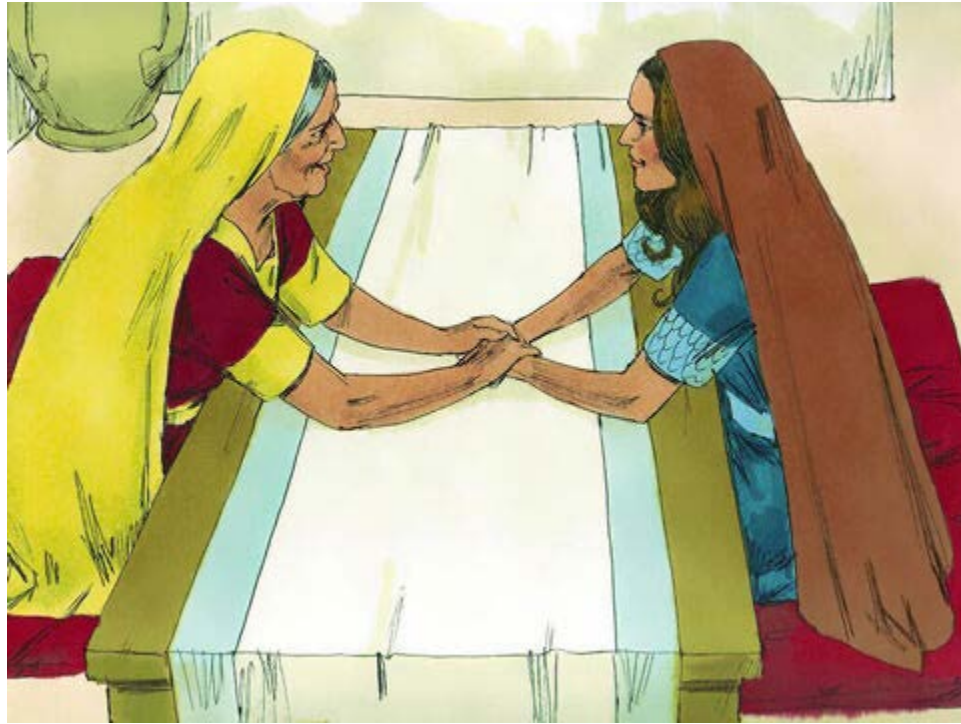
Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. Eph. 4:29

6. **The Spirit of Accountability** – To love, encourage and correct each other as we do the work of the ministry, each taking responsibility for decisions and actions that impact the ministry.

So, in Christ we who are many form one body and each member belongs to all the others. Rom. 12:5

7. **The Spirit of Joy** – To have a positive, infectious and cheerful attitude while performing assigned tasks and responsibilities.

Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again – Rejoice! Philippians 4:4



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⁷*Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship Employee Handbook: Working together to advance the Kingdom of God*, OCBF Human Resources: Dallas, TX, 2021, 4.

Twelve Bible Scriptures on Integrity

* Proverbs 11:3 The integrity of the upright guides them, but the crookedness of the treacherous destroys them.

* Colossians 3:9 Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old self with its practices.

* Proverbs 19:1 Better is a poor person who walks in his integrity than one who is crooked in speech and is a fool.

* Proverbs 10:9 Whoever walks in integrity walks securely, but he who makes his ways crooked will be found out

* 2 Corinthians 8:21 For we aim at what is honorable not only in the Lord's sight but also in the sight of man.

* Proverbs 11:1–31 A false balance is an abomination to the Lord, but a just weight is his delight. When pride comes, then comes disgrace, but with the humble is wisdom. The integrity of the upright guides them, but the crookedness of the treacherous destroys them. Riches do not profit in the day of wrath, but righteousness delivers from death. The righteousness of the blameless keeps his way straight, but the wicked falls by his own wickedness. ...

* Proverbs 28:18 Whoever walks in integrity will be delivered, but he who is crooked in his ways will suddenly fall

* Psalm 25:21 May integrity and uprightness preserve me, for I wait for you.

* Proverbs 20:7 The righteous who walks in his integrity— blessed are his children after him!

* Psalm 101:2 I will ponder the way that is blameless. Oh, when will you come to me? I will walk with integrity of heart within my house.

Job 2:3 And the Lord said to Satan, “Have you considered my servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, who fears God and turns away from evil? He still holds fast his integrity, although you incited me against him to destroy him without reason.”

Matthew 5:8 “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

⁸Stephen Smith, ed. *Crossway Bibles*, ESV, 2001, Open Bible, 2001,
https://www.openbible.info/topics/honesty_and_integrit (Accessed February 6, 2022)

The Foundation of Kingdom Discipleship

Week 4, Lesson 4: The Cost of Commitment

Thought for Today: The Integrity of an individual is far more valuable than gold.

As the music concert was getting ready for promotion and the start of ticket sales, Mary got her first job. The concert venue was near the local shops of downtown in the city. There were so many people buying tickets on-line and in person. It was difficult to keep up with the sales. One gentleman came to buy seven tickets. He and Mary struck up a conversation when they realized that they attended the same high school. As Mary was making the purchases, they were so caught up in their conversation that the young man forgot to pick up his credit card. Mary did not even notice until the end of her shift. As she held on to the credit card, she thought of buying some items for herself. She reasoned that the young man is wealthy and would never notice a few hundred dollars missing. Mary clutched the credit card in her hand, moving her fingers over the numbers. Each racing thought was about the new clothes, jewelry, and purse she wanted from a local store. Then she remembered, would Jesus take something that was not his? She knew the answer, contacted the young man, and waited until he came and got the credit card. The new clothes would have been wonderful but not at the cost of her integrity as a Christian.

Key Point: Selling your soul for temporary value is not worth the gain.

Read Chapter 4 in Kingdom Disciples and answer the following questions.

1. What does it mean to you if discipleship means a willingness to put God first?

2. According to Dr. Tony Evans, “A kingdom disciple of Jesus Christ means to be out on public display, to be identified with Jesus Christ in every area of your life.” What does that mean to you?

3. Denying yourself means saying no to your desires and plans for your life. Rank the importance of saying no to self or no to God?

4. A kingdom disciple who abides in the light imitates Christ’s love through his or her own life. State the value of abiding in Christ.

Women of Faith: Integrity Ruth (Ruth 1:1–4:22)

One of the most endearing stories in the entire Bible is about Ruth. She was a citizen of Moab. It was during a famine in Bethlehem, Judah that Elimelech along with his wife, Naomi and two sons, Mahlon and Chilion went to live in Moab. After the death of Elimelech, his sons married Orpah and Ruth. Later, Naomi experienced the death of her two sons. Naomi along with her two daughters in laws were without companions to support them. In her grief, Naomi decided to return to Bethlehem. She expressed her concern for them and requested that they return to their families. Orpah left them and returned home. Ruth clung to Naomi, saying “Don’t urge me to leave you or to turn back from you. Where you go, I will go, and where you stay, I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God. (Ruth 1:16).

Due to her persistence, Ruth and Naomi returned to Bethlehem. All the people were excited to see Naomi. She asked them to call her “Mara” which means bitter, because God has dealt very bitterly with her. It was during the barley season, so Ruth asked Naomi if she could go into the fields and glean heads of grain after the reapers. Boaz, a man of great wealth and family member of Elimelech, advised Ruth to glean only in his fields. Ruth bowed at his feet in humility and appreciation for allowing her to get grain for her and Naomi. As Ruth brought home the grain, Naomi realized that Ruth was gleaning a Boaz’s field. After her conversation with Ruth, Naomi gave her instructions regarding her relationship with Boaz. Naomi instructed Ruth, “Wash, put on perfume, and get dressed in your best clothes. Then go down to the threshing floor, but don’t let him know you are there until he has finished eating and drinking. When he lies down, note the place where he is lying. Then go and uncover his feet and lie down. He will tell you what to do.” (Ruth 3:3–4). Ruth did as Naomi had instructed. As the evening was winding down, Boaz found a place to lay near a heap of barley. In obedience to her mother-in-law, Ruth lied down near the feet of Boaz. He was startled in his sleep to find Ruth at his feet.

“Who are you?” he asked. “I am your servant Ruth,” she said. “Spread the corner of your garment over me, since you are a guardian-redeemer of our family.” Boaz said, “The LORD bless you, my daughter,” he replied. “This kindness is greater than that which you showed earlier: You have not run after the younger men, whether rich or poor. And now, my daughter, don’t be afraid. I will do for you all you ask. All the people of my town know that you are a woman of noble character”. (Ruth 3:8–11).

Boaz met with the closest relative among the elders of the town. The relative was unable to redeem the inheritance, so he asked Boaz to redeem the land of Elimelech’s and all that was Chilion’s and Mahlon’s from Naomi, and the widow Ruth as his wife. In Ruth 4:13, So Boaz took Ruth, and she became his wife. When he made love to her, the LORD enabled her to conceive, and she gave birth to a son. This was a celebration of joy with the birth of Obed. In Ruth 4:18–23, This, then, is the family line of Perez: Perez was the father of Hezron, Hezron the father of Ram, Ram the father of Amminadab, Amminadab the father of Nahshon, Nahshon the father of Salmon, Salmon the father of Boaz, Boaz the father of Obed, Obed the father of Jesse, and Jesse the father of David. It is through the integrity of Ruth, that continues the genealogy of Obed to David and eventually to Jesus Christ. Ruth, the Moabites child, is in the lineage of Jesus.

1. How did Ruth model the Spirit of Integrity?

2. What are the rewards/benefits from God for modeling integrity before people?

Application of Integrity

Dear Participant,

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2. What are some ways you can promote the trait of integrity with your colleagues/supervisor at work?

3. What are some specific steps you can take in your professional practices to cultivate integrity as you care for children and/or service their families at KCA-Early Childhood?

4. How would you generate a plan to demonstrate your commitment to integrity in the workplace with your supervisor by your next evaluation conference?

Performing Good Works

As Ruth assimilated into the Hebrew culture, she went about doing good works for her mother-in-law, Naomi. She worked and brought home food to sustain them during a difficult time. Matthew 5:16 In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven. (ESV)

Directions: On the chart, record the things that you are doing at work to model integrity through performing good works for yourself, colleagues/team, and supervisor.

Works for Self	Works for Colleagues/Team	Works for Supervisor
1.	1.	1.
2.	2.	2.
3.	3.	3.
4.	4.	4.
5.	5.	5.

⁹Stephen Smith, ed. *Crossway Bibles*, ESV, 2001, Open Bible, 2001, https://www.openbible.info/topics/honesty_and_integrit (Accessed February 6, 2022)

Kingdom Disciples: Heaven's Representatives on Earth

Bible Study – Lesson Five



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Chapter 5: Our True Identity
Spirit of the Ministry trait: Communication
Kingdom Collegiate Academies Early Childhood Program
Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship Church
Dallas, Texas

Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship Employee Handbook

Spirit of the Ministry

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Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. Eph. 4:3
2. **The Spirit of Integrity** – To possess a commitment to biblical truth and honesty, refusing to allow our character to be corrupted or compromised.
May integrity and uprightness protect me because my hope is in you. Psalms 25:21
3. **The Spirit of Excellence** – To work as unto the Lord with the highest degree of professionalism, productivity, and skill.
And every willing man skilled in any craft will help you in all the work. 1 Chr. 28:21
4. **The Spirit of Servanthood** – To demonstrate true humility by seeking, serving, and protecting the wellbeing of others.
Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms. 1 Peter 4:10
5. **The Spirit of Communication** – To interact with each other on matters of the ministry in a respectful and timely fashion.
Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. Eph. 4:29
6. **The Spirit of Accountability** – To love, encourage and correct each other as we do the work of the ministry, each taking responsibility for decisions and actions that impact the ministry.
So, in Christ we who are many form one body and each member belongs to all the others. Rom. 12:5
7. **The Spirit of Joy** – To have a positive, infectious and cheerful attitude while performing assigned tasks and responsibilities.
Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again – Rejoice! Philippians 4:4

Twenty Scriptures on Communication

Colossians 4:6

Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person.

2 Timothy 3:16

All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness.

Ephesians 4:29

Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear.

Amos 3:7

For the Lord God does nothing without revealing his secret to his servants the prophets.

Colossians 3:8

But now you must put them all away: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and obscene talk from your mouth.

Ephesians 4:15

Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ.

Ephesians 4:25

Therefore, having put away falsehood, let each one of you speak the truth with his neighbor, for we are members one of another.

Hebrews 4:12

For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

Matthew 12:34

“You brood of vipers! How can you speak good when you are evil? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.”

Proverbs 10:19

When words are many, transgression is not lacking, but whoever restrains his lips is prudent.

Proverbs 12:18

There is one whose rash words are like sword thrusts, but the tongue of the wise brings healing.

Proverbs 15:2

The tongue of the wise commends knowledge, but the mouths of fools pour out folly.

Proverbs 15:28

The heart of the righteous ponders how to answer, but the mouth of the wicked pours out evil things.

Proverbs 16:23

The heart of the wise makes his speech judicious and adds persuasiveness to his lips.

Matthew 5:37

Let what you say be simply 'Yes' or 'No'; anything more than this comes from evil."

Proverbs 19:27

Cease to hear instruction, my son, and you will stray from the words of knowledge."

Matthew 12:36

"I tell you, on the day of judgment people will give account for every careless word they speak."

Proverbs 15:4

A gentle tongue is a tree of life, but perverseness in it breaks the spirit."

Luke 6:45

The good person out of the good treasure of his heart produces good, and the evil person out of his evil treasure produces evil, for out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks

Proverbs 18:21

Death and life are in the power of the tongue, and those who love it will eat its fruits."



The Foundation of Kingdom Discipleship

Week 5, Lesson 5 Our True Identity

Thought for Today: To speak in truth is the best form of communication.

Amy is a newspaper reporter for one of the largest newspaper companies in the city. She has been on a variety of special assignments throughout the world. Amy and her friend, Kathy have worked together for many years each wanting to be the editor of the newspaper. As the retirement of the senior editor of the newspaper approached, Amy and Kathy talked about applying for the position. As Amy was preparing her portfolio for the interview, Kathy asked if she was applying for the job. Amy had always been honest in her communication with Kathy. As Kathy stared at Amy, she began to look away, feeling uncomfortable before answering her question. She really wanted to say, “No, I’m not interested in the job”. However, she remembered what her Bible study class lesson was about speaking truth (Matt. 5:37). Amy turned and said, “Yes, I am applying for the job of senior editor”. Kathy smiled and let her know that she was not applying for the position but wanted to support her efforts in getting the job. Amy was delighted with Kathy’s response. Telling the truth has benefits far beyond simple communication.

Key Point: Communication should be applying truth in love.

Read Chapter 5 in Kingdom Disciples and answer the following questions.

1. How would you explain the statement, “A key step in kingdom discipleship and our identity with Christ is recognizing our death to sin and the old life”?

2. Write in your own words the meaning of the following statement: A kingdom disciple must discover the art of operating from his or her spiritual transformed soul rather than merely responding to his or her body.

3. What expectations are there in this statement: Change your mindset from earth’s values to heaven’s and you’ll start living as a kingdom disciple.

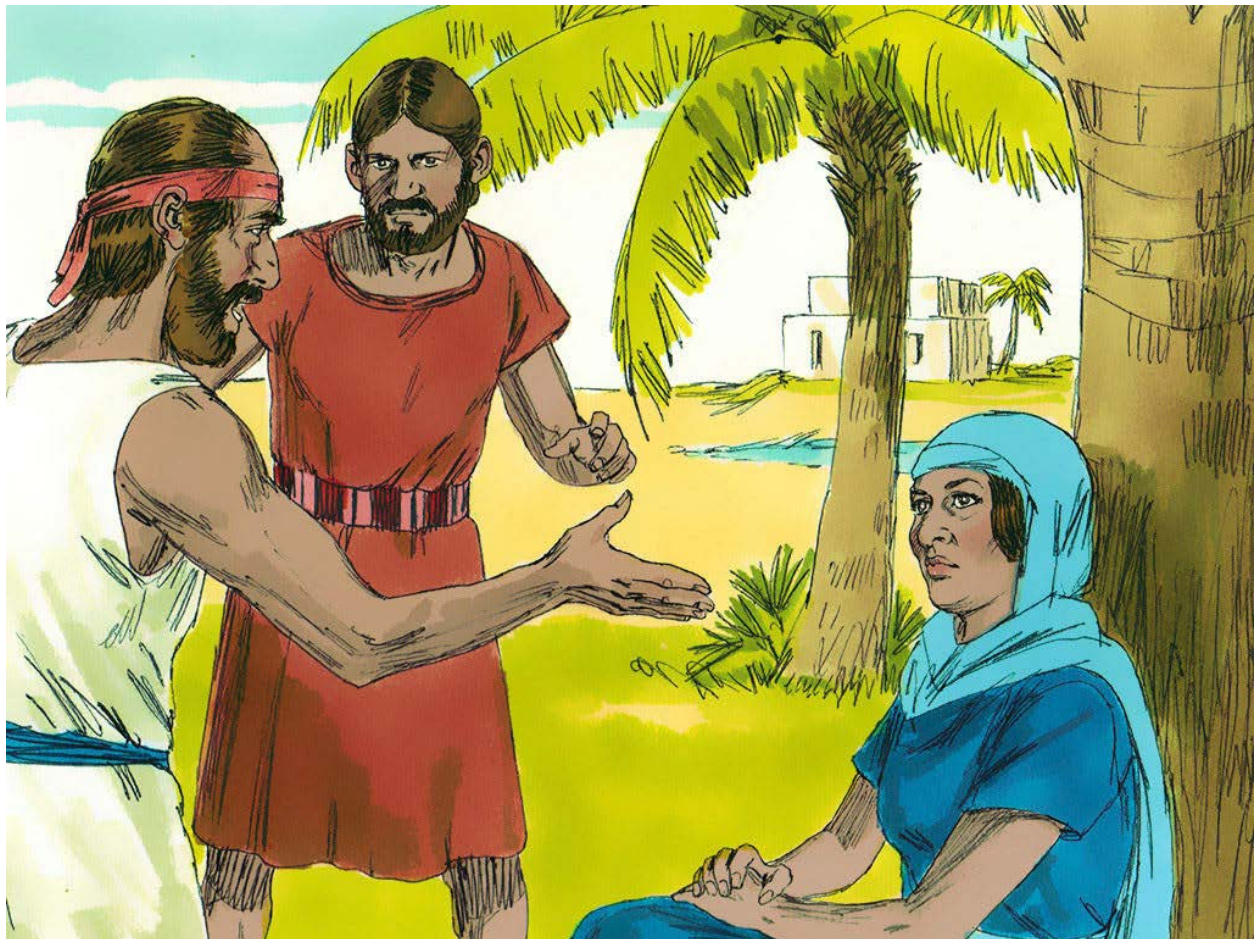
Women of Faith: Communication
Deborah, Judge and Prophetess
Judges 4, 5

Deborah was one of the most courageous women in the Bible. She served as a prophetess, judge of Israel and the wife of Lappidoth (Judges 4:4). As a judge in Israel, she rendered judgements sitting under the Palm tree of Deborah between Ramah in Benjamin and Bethel in the land of Ephraim. She was a leader called by God to support her people in keeping the covenant. Deborah's faith, wisdom and obedience to the Lord gave her, the recognition of a trustworthy judge. By being a prophetess, Deborah was sensitive to listening to God and following his directives. Israel experienced oppression from the Canaanite king for twenty years, then cried out to God. She called for Barak, son of Abinoam from Kedesh in Naphtali to let him know that the Lord, God of Israel commanded that he take ten thousand men from the tribes of Naphtali and Zebulun. Barak was to lead them to Mount Tabor, where God will lead Sisera, commander of King Jabin's army. God will lead his troops to the Kishon River and give him into Barak's hands. With this news, Barak was not certain and asked Deborah to go with him. She addressed his lack of confidence and faith by saying, "If she goes with him, then the honor of taking Sisera's army would be given to a woman (Judges 4:9). Barak gathered ten thousand men and travelled to Kedesh along with Deborah.

As the clamor of metal clung through the battle, Deborah and Barak continued until all the soldiers were dead. The commander, Sisera thought that he had escaped only to be invited to his death. Jael, Heber's wife invited him into her tent. As Sisera slept, she drove a peg through his temple and killed him. When Barak arrived, Jael showed him Sisera, dead in the tent. Barak and Deborah conquered the enemy by listening to God's direction. Deborah had the ability to hear, communicate the will of God that brought success to Israel. She is praised as a woman of communication.

1. How did Deborah demonstrate the Spirit of Integrity?

2. Tell what could have happened if Deborah did not listen and communicate with God?



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Application of Communication

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4. How would you generate a plan to demonstrate your commitment to communication in the workplace with your supervisor by your next evaluation conference?

WHAT DO YOU LOOK FOR IN COMMUNICATION?

Create a personalized acrostic poem for the word **COMMUNICATION**. Use words that begin with each capitalized letter to create a list of thirteen qualities that you believe are essential in communicating with others. Use a complete sentence to create your poem.

EXAMPLE: **C** – Communication means to express yourself.
A – Answering questions clearly is effective in communication.
T – Talking over concerns assists in clearly communicating with others.

C _____

O _____

M _____

M _____

U _____

N _____

I _____

C _____

A _____

T _____

I _____

O _____

N _____

Kingdom Disciples: Heaven's Representatives on Earth

Bible Study – Lesson Six



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Chapter 6: A Deep Intimacy
Spirit of the Ministry trait: Excellence
Kingdom Collegiate Academies Early Childhood Program
Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship Church
Dallas, Texas

Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship Employee Handbook

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May integrity and uprightness protect me because my hope is in you. Psalms 25:21

3. **The Spirit of Excellence** – To work as unto the Lord with the highest degree of professionalism, productivity, and skill.
And every willing man skilled in any craft will help you in all the work. 1 Chr. 28:21

4. **The Spirit of Servanthood** – To demonstrate true humility by seeking, serving, and protecting the wellbeing of others.
Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms. 1 Peter 4:10

5. **The Spirit of Communication** – To interact with each other on matters of the ministry in a respectful and timely fashion.
Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. Eph. 4:29

6. **The Spirit of Accountability** – To love, encourage and correct each other as we do the work of the ministry, each taking responsibility for decisions and actions that impact the ministry.
So, in Christ we who are many form one body and each member belongs to all the others. Rom. 12:5

7. **The Spirit of Joy** – To have a positive, infectious and cheerful attitude while performing assigned tasks and responsibilities.
Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again – Rejoice! Philippians 4:4

Seventeen Scriptures about Excellence

Daniel 6:3

Then this Daniel became distinguished above all the other presidents and satraps, because an excellent spirit was in him. And the king planned to set him over the whole kingdom.

Philippians 4:8

Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything

2 Corinthians 8:7

But as you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in all earnestness, and in our love for you—see that you excel in this act of grace also.

Philippians 1:9–10

And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment, so that you may approve what is excellent, and so be pure and blameless for the day of Christ,

Daniel 5:12

Because an excellent spirit, knowledge, and understanding to interpret dreams, explain riddles, and solve problems were found in this Daniel, whom the king named Belteshazzar. Now let Daniel be called, and he will show the interpretation.”

2 Peter 1:3–4

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, by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire.

1 Peter 2:9

But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.

1 Corinthians 12:31

But earnestly desire the higher gifts. And I will show you a still more excellent way.

Proverbs 17:27

Whoever restrains his words has knowledge, and he who has a cool spirit is a man of understanding

Romans 12:2

Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

Matthew 22:37

And he said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.

2 Peter 1:3

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,

Daniel 5:14

I have heard of you that the spirit of the gods is in you, and that light and understanding and excellent wisdom are found in you.

Proverbs 12:4

An excellent wife is the crown of her husband, but she who brings shame is like rottenness in his bones.

Proverbs 31:10

An excellent wife who can find? She is far more precious than jewels.

Philippians 1:10

So that you may approve what is excellent, and so be pure and blameless for the day of Christ,

Hebrews 8:6

But as it is, Christ has obtained a ministry that is as much more excellent than the old as the covenant he mediates is better, since it is enacted on better promises.

The Foundation of Kingdom Discipleship

Week 6, Lesson 6 A Deep Intimacy

Thought for Today: Excellence is not perfectionism, yet it makes you exceptional.

During the holidays, Erin wanted to use her funds to help other children that had personal injuries due to accidents or illness. She only had forty-five dollars. How would she get money to help people? Erin discussed her plans with her mother. They talked about ways to volunteer, raise funds through bake sales, on-line donations, and working around the house. Erin decided her goal is to raise \$400.00. She prayed about what organizations to give the money. The next morning, on the news was a story about young children's complications from COVID 19. As Erin watched the news, she knew what to do with the money. She would donate it to the local hospital. The excitement of raising money for children at the local hospital spurred Erin's imagination and energy to start her project right away. She created a go-fund me account, sold baked goods at school, raked the yard, and completed chores around the house. After five weeks, of work Erin not only raised the \$400.00 for the hospital, but she also raised \$600.00 over the amount she had planned for a total of \$1000.00. Erin's excellent work allowed her to raise more money for the children at the hospital. Determination and hard work produce excellence.

Key Point: Excellence is motivated from the heart.

Read Chapter 6 in Kingdom Disciples and answer the following questions.

1. Describe the deep intimacy of a relationship with God.

2. From Philippians 3:10, kingdom disciples pursue knowing Christ intimately, what does this statement mean?

3. Dr. Tony Evans states, "When you abide in God's Word and depend on the Holy Spirit, spiritual transformation is inevitable (2 Cor. 3:17-18). Share how you have experienced spiritual transformation in your own life.

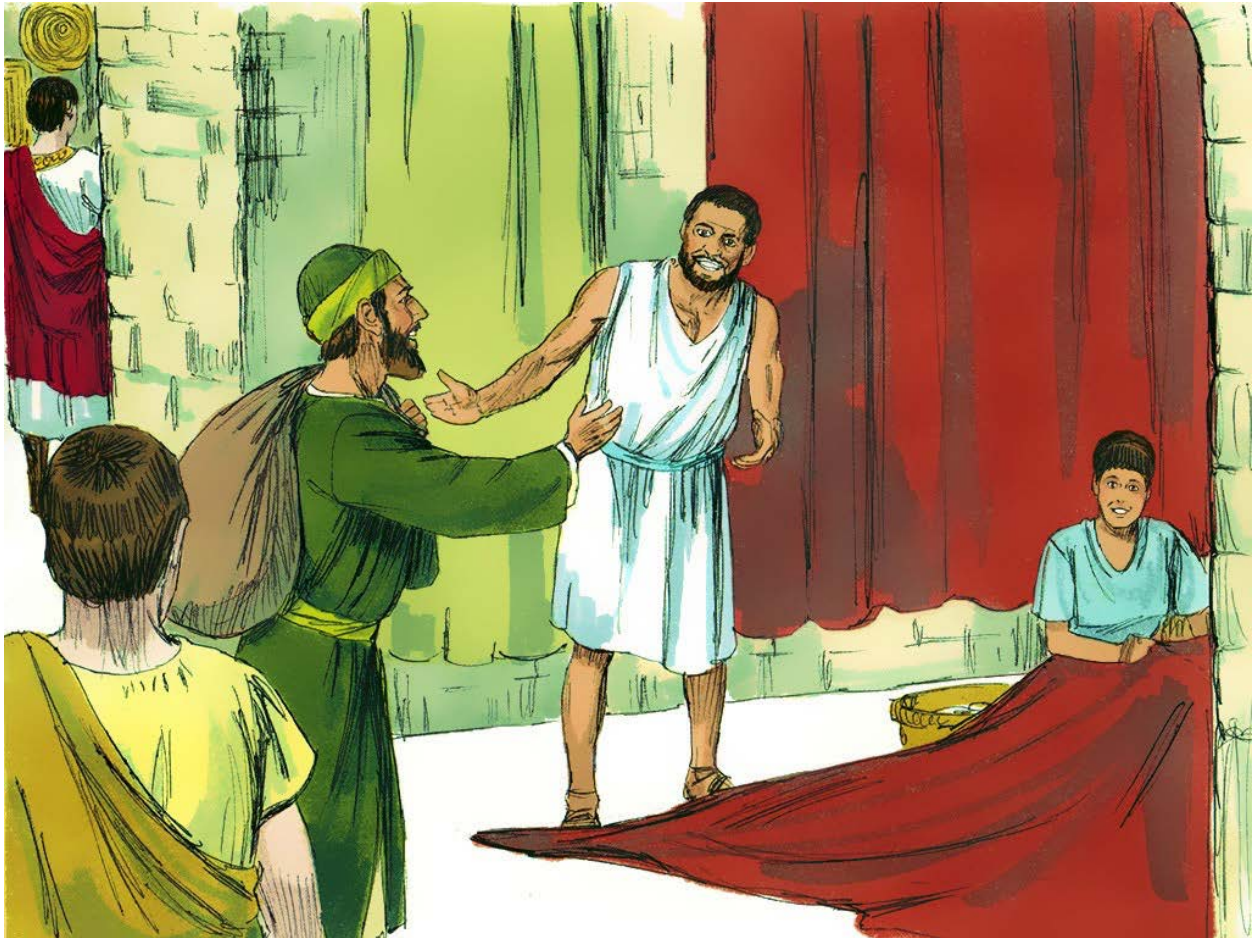
Women of Faith: Excellence
Priscilla
I Corinthians 16:19–20

Priscilla is a remarkable woman of excellence because of her example of partnership with her husband, Aquila. In Scripture, they are noted as having equal importance serving God and the local church. Priscilla was a Jewish woman from Rome who converted to Christianity. She and her husband, Aquila were tentmakers like the Apostle Paul. In one of Paul's farewell greetings (I Corinthians 16:19–20), he mentions that Aquila and Priscilla had established a church in their house. Team ministry between a husband and wife can offer unique perspectives to the structure of the church. In their relationship, it is obvious that they shared the strengths of their giftings. Priscilla is confident in her knowledge of Scriptures. It was in Ephesus (Acts 18:18–28), that Priscilla and Aquila meet Apollos. He was an eloquent man with great knowledge of the Scriptures, yet he had only known of the baptism of John. The couple took Apollos aside and explained to him the way of God more accurately. They possibly shared with him the importance of Christ's death and resurrection, the indwelling ministry of the Holy Spirit and the kingdom of God for both Jew and Gentile. Priscilla and Aquila were teachers with Paul and had grown in their understanding of spiritual things. They had a close relationship with Paul and even endangered their own lives for him (Romans 16:3–4).

The importance of Priscilla and Aquila serving as a couple is significant to the kingdom of God. Their relationship is a model of how married couples can faithfully serve the Lord. It is not by coincidence that the New Testament shares parts of their story in Acts, Romans, 2 Corinthians and 2 Timothy. This couple were significant in supporting and building the first century church. In today's church, Priscilla serves as an example of ministering along with her husband in faithful and humble serve to the Lord.

1. Write in your own words the significance of the example of Priscilla and Aquila in modern day couples ministry?

2. State your point of view about women in ministry today?



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Application of Excellence

Dear Participant,

Throughout this Bible study, you will understand the Seven Traits of the Ministry of OCBF Church. The traits are Accountability, Joy, Unity, Integrity, Communication, Excellence, and Servanthood. Our teachers and staff are asked to model these traits in their daily journey at home, work, and throughout the community. Apply the meaning of excellence to the following situations.

1. How can you explain the value of excellence in your personal life?

2. What are some ways you can promote the trait of excellence with your colleagues/supervisor at work?

3. What are some specific steps you can take in your professional practices to cultivate excellence as you care for children and/or service their families at KCA-Early Childhood?

4. How would you generate a plan to demonstrate your commitment to excellence in the workplace with your supervisor by your next evaluation conference?

YOUR BELIEFS OR A MORE EXCELLENT WAY

Directions: Christians debate about a variety of situations and beliefs. Label the statements below that most accurately resemble your own beliefs.

A. Unchangeable Belief

B. Changeable Belief

C. It doesn't matter Belief.

D. Wrong Belief

1. _____ Jesus was born of a virgin.
2. _____ Everyone needs to get saved and know Jesus.
3. _____ Salvation is a gift from God.
4. _____ People should not attend denominational churches.
5. _____ The Catholic Church is wrong to have a Pope.
6. _____ Christians should work and be active in church.
7. _____ Jesus is the Truth and only way to get to heaven.
8. _____ Muhammad and Buddha have some truth.
9. _____ Communion should be done the 1st Sunday of each month.
10. _____ Reading the Bible is important to every believer.
11. _____ Speaking in tongues is for everyone.
12. _____ The Bible is inerrant.
13. _____ All truth comes from God.s
14. _____ Jesus will return for his church.
15. _____ God is Sovereign.
16. _____ Jesus is the only way to get to heaven.
17. _____ Baptism is essential for all believers.
18. _____ Jesus will establish a 1,000-year kingdom.

Kingdom Disciples: Heaven's Representatives on Earth

Bible Study – Lesson Seven



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Chapter 7: A Steady Increase
Spirit of the Ministry trait: Servanthood
Kingdom Collegiate Academies Early Childhood Program
Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship Church
Dallas, Texas

Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship Employee Handbook

Spirit of the Ministry

The following core values reflect the essential elements and priorities that ought to characterize the leadership, staff, and membership of OCBF. It is through these values that we make known the Spirit of the Ministry. It is also how we demonstrate love, which is the primary proof of discipleship, where we passionately and righteously pursue the wellbeing of others.

1. **The Spirit of Unity** – To work in harmony toward a shared purpose and vision.
Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. Eph. 4:3

2. **The Spirit of Integrity** – To possess a commitment to biblical truth and honesty, refusing to allow our character to be corrupted or compromised.
May integrity and uprightness protect me because my hope is in you. Psalms 25:21

3. **The Spirit of Excellence** – To work as unto the Lord with the highest degree of professionalism, productivity, and skill.
And every willing man skilled in any craft will help you in all the work. 1 Chr. 28:21

4. **The Spirit of Servanthood** – To demonstrate true humility by seeking, serving, and protecting the wellbeing of others.
Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms. 1 Peter 4:10

5. **The Spirit of Communication** – To interact with each other on matters of the ministry in a respectful and timely fashion.
Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. Eph. 4:29

6. **The Spirit of Accountability** – To love, encourage and correct each other as we do the work of the ministry, each taking responsibility for decisions and actions that impact the ministry.
So, in Christ we who are many form one body and each member belongs to all the others. Rom. 12:5

7. **The Spirit of Joy** – To have a positive, infectious and cheerful attitude while performing assigned tasks and responsibilities.
Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again – Rejoice! Philippians 4:4

Twenty-five Scriptures about Servanthood

1 Corinthians 9:19

For though I am free from all, I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win more of them.

1 Samuel 12:24

Only fear the Lord and serve him faithfully with all your heart. For consider what great things he has done for you.

2 Corinthians 4:5

For what we proclaim is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, with ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake.

Galatians 5:13–14

For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. For the whole law is fulfilled in one word: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."

Galatians 4:7

Therefore, you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God.

Hebrews 9:14

How much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify our conscience from dead works to serve the living God.

John 12:26

If anyone serves me, he must follow me; and where I am, there will my servant be also. If anyone serves me, the father will honor him.

Luke 22:27

For who is the greater, one who reclines at table or one who serves? Is it not the one who reclines at table? But I am among you as the one who serves.

Mark 10:44–45

And whoever would be first among you must be slave of all. For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.

Mark 9:35

And he sat down and called the twelve. And he said to them, "If anyone would be first, he must be last of all and servant of all."

Matthew 20:28

Even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.

Matthew 23:11

The greatest among you shall be your servant.

Matthew 25:21

His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter the joy of your master.’

Matthew 6:24

No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money.

Philippians 2:7

But made himself nothing, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men.

Romans 12:11

Do not be slothful in zeal, be fervent in spirit, serve the Lord.

Romans 7:6

But now we are released from the law, having died to that which held us captive, so that we serve in the new way of the Spirit and not in the old way of the written code.

Romans 14:4

Who are you to judge the servant of another? To his own master he stands or falls; and he will stand, for the Lord is able to make him stand.

Philippians 2:7

...but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bondservant, and being made in the likeness of men.

Romans 1:1

Paul, a bondservant of Christ Jesus, called as an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God,

Psalms 123:2

Behold, as the eyes of servants look to the hand of their master,
As the eyes of a maid to the hand of her mistress,
So, our eyes look to the Lord our God, Until He is gracious to us.

2 Timothy 2:24

The Lord’s bondservant must not be quarrelsome, but be kind to all, able to teach, patient when wronged,

Job 1:8

The Lord said to Satan, “Have you considered My servant Job? For there is no one like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, fearing God and turning away from evil.”

1 Kings 8:28

Yet have regard to the prayer of Your servant and to his supplication, O Lord my God, to listen to the cry and to the prayer which Your servant prays before You today.

Hebrews 3:5

Now Moses was faithful in all His house as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken later.

Source: <https://bible.knowing-jesus.com/topics/Servanthood>



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The Foundation of Kingdom Discipleship

Week 7, Lesson 7, A Steady Increase

Thought for Today: Being a servant changes your attitude towards people.

In rural America, there are several monuments, symbols, and traditions of a life from long ago. Catherine had been raised in southern Georgia. She knew about slavery and the lingering effects in her hometown. People had definite opinions regarding politics, school board decisions and community events. The small town seemed unaffected by the big city lights over 50 miles away. However, things were about to change. Catherine and her friend, Lisa were walking home from school, when they witness the brutal beating of an African American young man. In fact, they knew him as the basketball star at their high school. They ran over and call the police on their cell phone. The perpetrators were gone by the time the police arrived. Jonathan was severely beaten with head trauma, and one broken leg. As a basketball player, he could hardly manage to lose the ability to walk. Catherine and Lisa visited him in the hospital. Jonathan thanked them as he told the story of his attack. As the story unraveled, the girls wanted to help. Catherine's family was wealthy and well-known throughout the city. Quickly, she got her parents involved to help solve the problem. Not only did her parents help with the arrest of the individuals that hurt Jonathan, but they also paid his medical bills, and paid for his rehabilitation. As he gained strength, Jonathan wanted to thank them for their kindness. Catherine's parents simply said to Jonathan, "This is what Jesus would have done to serve you in your moment of need".

Key Point: Being a servant means love and kindness in action.

Read Chapter 7 in Kingdom's Disciples and answer the following questions.

1. Define Spiritual maturity.

2. Spiritual meat refers to the ability to transfer what has been learned into the decision-making process of life, so that a person operates from a spiritual rather than earthly perspective. What does this statement mean to you?

3. Kingdom discipleship gives you the ability to see beyond the obvious and access God's point of view on the matter. What life situations to you need God's perspective?

Women of Faith – Servanthood
Tabitha/Dorcas
Acts 9:36–42

Serving the Lord, by serving people is exemplified in Tabitha or Dorcas. She is a disciple with two names, Dorcas (Greek name) and Tabitha (Hebrew name). Her name means gazelle. In Scripture, Luke refers to her as a disciple. In Greek, the word disciple (mathetria), is the feminine form of the word disciple. This distinction is to emphasize that women were of equal potential in the eyes of God (Acts 9:1–2, 36, 18:24–26). Dorcas had financial resources. She lived in a two-story home, without the mention of a husband or family. She modeled kindness to people by sewing clothes for the poor (Acts 9:36). She lived in the city of Joppa. It is a seaport city, near modern day, Tel Aviv, Israel. Dorcas was a believer. Her ministry was well known throughout the city. Joppa was the city that Jonah traveled to escape doing the will of God (Jonah 1:3). This city had many widows and orphans, perhaps due to the death of the husbands who had died at sea.

Without a lot of information about her, Dorcas became sick and died. Her friends gathered, washed her body, and laid her body in a room on the second floor. Some friends heard that Peter was in the city of Lydda near Joppa and sent for him. As Peter arrived, the women in the community were grieving for their friend. They showed Peter the garments that she had made for them. Each widow understood the pain of loss. Peter sensed their loss and asked everyone to leave the room. He knelt and prayed. Peter turned to her body and said, “Tabitha, get up!” She opened her eyes and looked at Peter. She sat up and took Peter’s hand (Acts 9:36–42). He called for the women, men, and neighbors to come. Peter’s prayer was heard by God. The women, Dorcas, who was dead, now is alive. The news of her resurrection traveled throughout the region. Knowing that God raised her from the dead was a miracle. Many people came to know the Lord through this miracle. Dorcas lived in the approval of God for her life of giving and kindness. The

yielded value of little things, by being a servant of God was the incredible story of Dorcas in the Bible.

1. In the Bible (Acts 9:1–42), read the story of Dorcas/Tabitha and explain what would you change in the story of Dorcas?

2. Why is the life of Dorcas/Tabitha important to women in ministry?



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Application of Servanthood

Dear Participant,

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1. How can you explain the value of servanthood in your personal life?

2. What are some ways you can promote the trait of servanthood with your colleagues/supervisor at work?

3. What are some specific steps you can take in your professional practices to cultivate servanthood as you care for children and/or service their families at KCA-Early Childhood?

4. How would you generate a plan to demonstrate your commitment to servanthood in the workplace with your supervisor by your next evaluation conference?

THREE THINGS THAT CHANGED YOUR LIFE

Directions: Throughout your life and experiences, think of the people and events that changed your life and record them.

Example: 1. Completing my college degree in early childhood education

2. Miss Kathy Lee influenced me to become a teacher.

3. Traveling across the United States and visiting 37 states and state capitals.

1. People

List three people that have influenced or impacted your life.

2. Places

List three places that have influenced or created significant memories in your life.

3. Experiences

List three significant experiences that have changed your life and set you on a different path.

4. Books, Bible, or Written materials

List the title of three books, or stories from the Bible that have impacted your life.

5. The “Valleys” of Life

List three “valleys” of disappointment that have motivated you to change.

6. The “Joys” of life

List three of the most “Joyous” experiences and their impact on your life.

Kingdom Disciples: Heaven's Representatives on Earth

Bible Study – Lesson Eight



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Chapter 8: The Heavenly Incentive
Spirit of the Ministry trait: Faithfulness
Kingdom Collegiate Academies Early Childhood Program
Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship Church
Dallas, Texas

Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship Employee Handbook

Spirit of the Ministry

The following core values reflect the essential elements and priorities that ought to characterize the leadership, staff, and membership of OCBF. It is through these values that we make known the Spirit of the Ministry. It is also how we demonstrate love, which is the primary proof of discipleship, where we passionately and righteously pursue the wellbeing of others.

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Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. Eph. 4:3

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May integrity and uprightness protect me because my hope is in you. Psalms 25:21

3. **The Spirit of Excellence** – To work as unto the Lord with the highest degree of professionalism, productivity, and skill.
And every willing man skilled in any craft will help you in all the work. 1 Chr. 28:21

4. **The Spirit of Servanthood** – To demonstrate true humility by seeking, serving, and protecting the wellbeing of others.
Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms. 1 Peter 4:10

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So, in Christ we who are many form one body and each member belongs to all the others. Rom. 12:5

7. **The Spirit of Joy** – To have a positive, infectious and cheerful attitude while performing assigned tasks and responsibilities.
Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again – Rejoice! Philippians 4:4

Additional Spirit of the Ministry traits in the Christian Workplace Environment:

1. Faithfulness
2. Adaptability
3. Empathy
4. Confidence
5. Compassion



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Nineteen Scriptures on Faithfulness

1 Corinthians 1:9

God is faithful, through whom you were called into fellowship with His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

1 Thessalonians 5:24

Faithful is He who calls you, and He also will bring it to pass.

Deuteronomy 7:9

Know therefore that the Lord your God, He is God, the faithful God, who keeps His covenant and His lovingkindness to a thousandth generation with those who love Him and keep His commandments.

Lamentations 3:23

They are new every morning.
Great is Your faithfulness.

2 Timothy 2:13

If we are faithless, He remains faithful, for He cannot deny Himself.

Psalms 33:4

For the word of the Lord is upright,
And all His work is done in faithfulness.

Psalms 119:90

Your faithfulness continues throughout all generations.
You established the earth, and it stands.

Matthew 25:23

His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful slave. You were faithful with a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.'

Luke 16:10

"He who is faithful in a very little thing is faithful also in much; and he who is unrighteous in a very little thing is unrighteous also in much

Psalms 92:2

To declare Your lovingkindness in the morning
And Your faithfulness by night,

Revelation 19:11

And I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse, and He who sat on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and wages war.

1 Corinthians 1:9

God is faithful, through whom you were called into fellowship with His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Revelation 17:14

These will wage war against the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, because He is Lord of lords and King of kings, and those who are with Him are the called and chosen and faithful.”

Hebrews 2:17

Therefore, He had to be made like His brethren in all things, so that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people.

2 Thessalonians 3:3

But the Lord is faithful, and He will strengthen and protect you from the evil one.

1 Thessalonians 5:24

Faithful is He who calls you, and He also will bring it to pass.

Proverbs 28:20

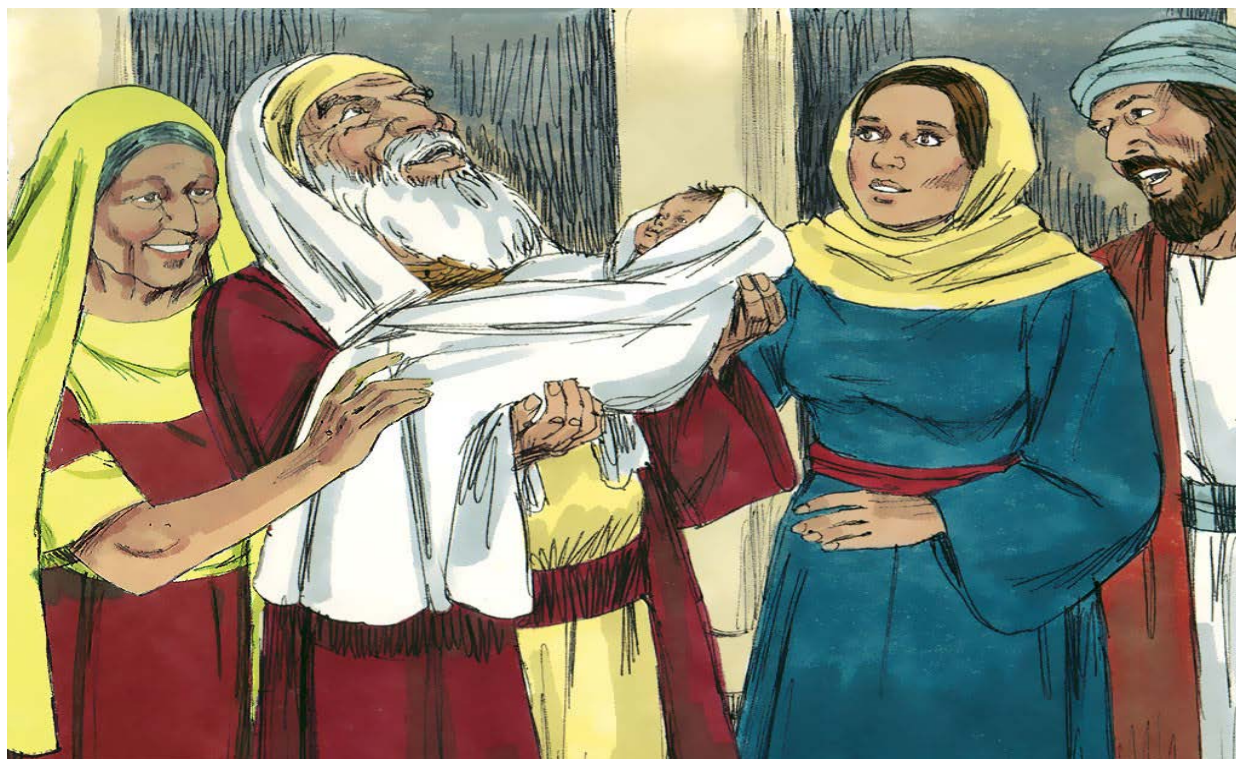
A faithful man will abound with blessings,
But he who makes haste to be rich will not go unpunished.

Proverbs 27:6

Faithful are the wounds of a friend,
But deceitful are the kisses of an enemy.

Galatians 5:22

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,



Part 2: The Formation of Kingdom Discipleship

Week 8, Lesson 8, The Heavenly Incentive

Thought for Today: Faithfulness shows your commitment to the will of God.

Derek had worked for the Manchester Heights School District for 15 years. He taught algebra and higher mathematics to tenth through twelfth graders. The thought of engaging with his students always gave him a sense of accomplishment. He won Teacher of the Year honors the previous year. His parents and students appreciated him and showered him with gifts throughout the year. Derek was satisfied with his job, family, and church life. During the summer, he was asked to work at a technology company to fill in for some full-time workers. The supervisor was so impressed with Derek's work that he offered him a job. This opportunity was exciting until Derek thought about his family and school. He decided to go see his pastor for counseling. Their meetings were always warm and cordial. Derek shared with the pastor his concerns for the students, parents, and family. The pastor asked questions and prayed with him regarding the decision. As Derek took time to pray and reflect about the two jobs, he asked God to show him his will for his life? During the week, Derek was at a coffee shop when a former student came up to him. He spoke about the challenges of going to college and how he had just landed his first job. The young man would be a high school math teacher next school term. Before leaving, he turned and said to Derek that because of his commitment and high standards in teaching, he became a math teacher. As the student smiled and walked away, Derek knew his decision. Even though, there was more money in the technology job, however in teaching there is more satisfaction and completion of God's will for his life.

Key Thought: Money is temporary, but God's will is eternal.

Read Chapter 8 of Kingdom's Disciples and answer the following questions.

1. What does the author believe by this statement, "Living as a disciple means living entirely by faith that the Christ you follow will make good on His Word."

2. What is relevant about the following statement? The eternal kingdom will be a government, which will operate in perfect righteousness.

3. Do you believe that "Rewards are important, and they provide us with an additional motivating factor to do excellently at all we do."

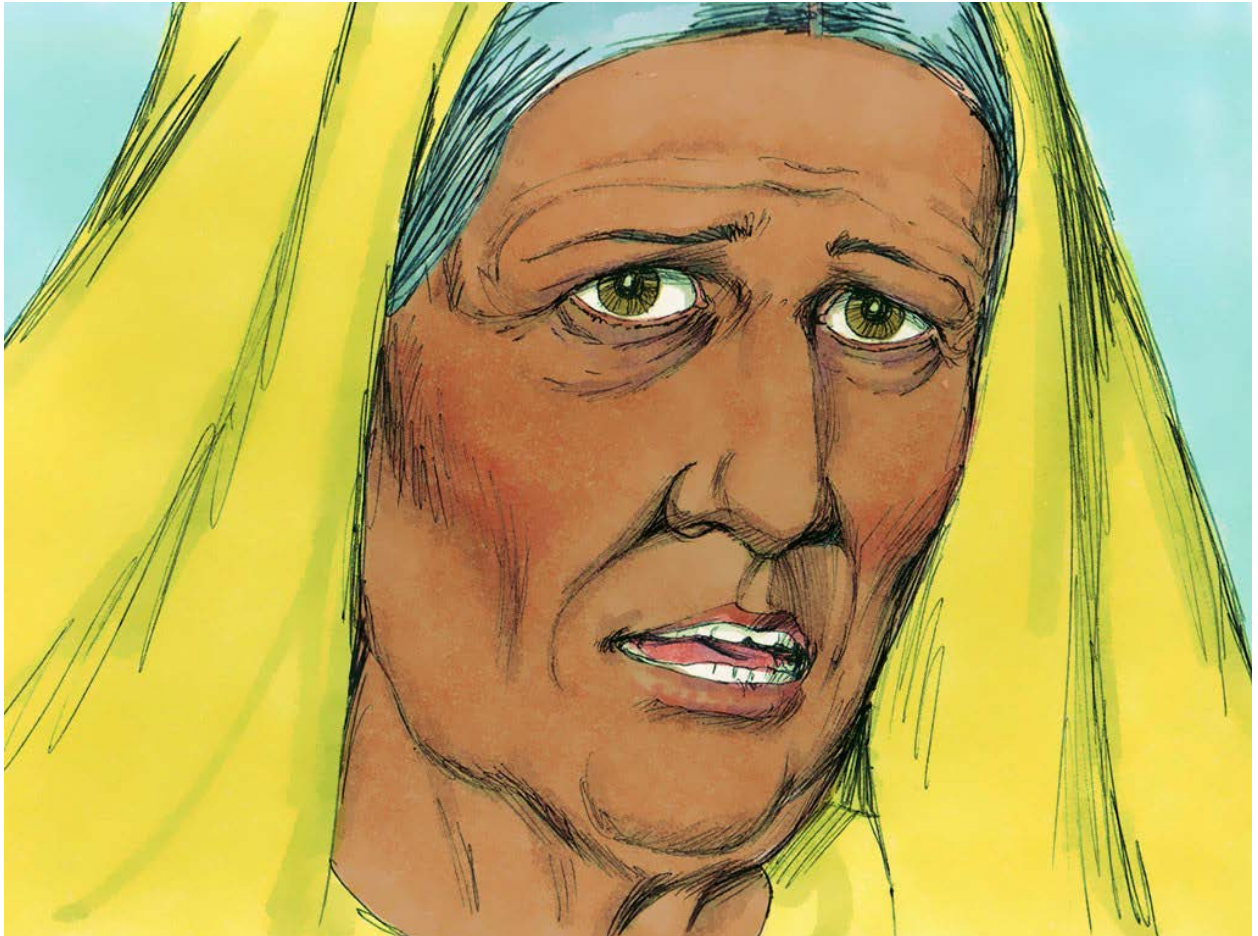
Women of Faith: Faithfulness
Anna, Prophetess
Luke 2:36–40

Faithfulness is being loyal and reliable to others. In biblical times, faith was shown by honoring God, living a moral life along with worshipping and praising him. In Luke 2:36–40, Anna, one of the most unique women in the Bible is a model of faithfulness. She is a widow, married to her husband for seven years before his death. Anna was the daughter of Phanuel, from the tribe of Asher. She was an elderly female, who had been widowed for eighty-four years. Rarely, did Anna leave the temple. Her desire was to serve God, day and night with fasting and prayer. Similar, to Simeon they desired to see the announcement of the Lord. Simeon was guided by the Holy Spirit to the temple. The Holy Spirit assured him that he would not die, until he saw the Lord's Messiah (Luke 2:25–35). As Simeon walked into the temple, he saw the young couple with a baby. Mary and Joseph had come to the temple with a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons. According to the law of Moses, the first-born male must be dedicated to the Lord (Lev. 12:3).

When Simeon saw baby Jesus, he took him in his arms and begin to praise God. Jesus' parents were amazed at what was spoken about their son. Simeon prophesied to them regarding the future of their son. Both Anna and Simeon had seen the Promised Messiah! Anna praised God and spoke to everyone about the child. Mary and Joseph left the temple and returned to Nazareth. This is where Jesus would grow up to be strong, filled with wisdom and God's favor with men (Luke 2:39–40).

1. What is the significance of Simeon and Anna's praise of Jesus.

2. Why were Mary and Joseph amazed at the praise of Jesus?



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Application of Faithfulness

Dear Participant,

Throughout this Bible study, you will understand the Seven Traits of the Ministry of OCBF Church. The traits are Accountability, Joy, Unity, Integrity, Communication, Excellence, and Servanthood. Some additional traits in the workplace can include Faithfulness, Adaptability, Empathy, Confidence and Compassion. Our teachers and staff are asked to model these traits in their daily journey at home, work, and throughout the community. Apply the meaning of Faithfulness to the following situations.

1. How can you explain the value of faithfulness in your personal life?

2. What are some ways you can promote the trait of faithfulness with your colleagues/supervisor at work?

3. What are some specific steps you can take in your professional practices to cultivate faithfulness as you care for children and/or service their families at KCA-Early Childhood?

4. How would you generate a plan to demonstrate your commitment to faithfulness in the workplace with your supervisor by your next evaluation conference?

Mark Your Path: To Obey or Disobey

Directions: Read the following questions and mark your answer to obey or disobey to demonstrate your understanding of being faithful.

- | | | |
|--|------|---------|
| 1. Christians should attend church. | OBEY | DISOBEY |
| 2. Believers should read the Bible. | OBEY | DISOBEY |
| 3. Christians should not drink alcohol. | OBEY | DISOBEY |
| 4. Pastors should visit the sick. | OBEY | DISOBEY |
| 5. Pray for ten minutes daily. | OBEY | DISOBEY |
| 6. Christians should not respect the traffic laws. | OBEY | DISOBEY |
| 7. Christians should be obedient to God. | OBEY | DISOBEY |
| 8. Believers should be hospitable to others. | OBEY | DISOBEY |
| 9. If you are eighteen, then you can smoke cigarettes. | OBEY | DISOBEY |
| 10. Driving laws are for people that aren't brave. | OBEY | DISOBEY |
| 11. You can have another boyfriend/girlfriend, even if you are married. | OBEY | DISOBEY |
| 12. Being a part of a gossip group that criticizes the leadership of the school does not harm anything. | OBEY | DISOBEY |
| 13. Christians should not listen to police officers, they are dangerous to African American people. | OBEY | DISOBEY |
| 14. Christians can participate in illegal gambling and casinos, just to have fun. | OBEY | DISOBEY |
| 15. Participating in sports betting or a sports betting pool at work is no harm if it doesn't include money. | OBEY | DISOBEY |
| 16. Confession of sins is not a sure sign of forgiveness. | OBEY | DISOBEY |
| 17. Choosing to take office items for your home is not stealing. | OBEY | DISOBEY |

Kingdom Disciples: Heaven's Representatives on Earth

Bible Study – Lesson Nine



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Chapter 9: The Individual
Spirit of the Ministry trait: Adaptability
Kingdom Collegiate Academies Early Childhood Program
Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship Church
Dallas, Texas

Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship Employee Handbook

Spirit of the Ministry

The following core values reflect the essential elements and priorities that ought to characterize the leadership, staff, and membership of OCBF. It is through these values that we make known the Spirit of the Ministry. It is also how we demonstrate love, which is the primary proof of discipleship, where we passionately and righteously pursue the wellbeing of others.

1. **The Spirit of Unity** – To work in harmony toward a shared purpose and vision.
Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. Eph. 4:3

2. **The Spirit of Integrity** – To possess a commitment to biblical truth and honesty, refusing to allow our character to be corrupted or compromised.
May integrity and uprightness protect me because my hope is in you. Psalms 25:21

3. **The Spirit of Excellence** – To work as unto the Lord with the highest degree of professionalism, productivity, and skill.
And every willing man skilled in any craft will help you in all the work. 1 Chr. 28:21

4. **The Spirit of Servanthood** – To demonstrate true humility by seeking, serving, and protecting the wellbeing of others.
Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms. 1 Peter 4:10

5. **The Spirit of Communication** – To interact with each other on matters of the ministry in a respectful and timely fashion.
Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. Eph. 4:29

6. **The Spirit of Accountability** – To love, encourage and correct each other as we do the work of the ministry, each taking responsibility for decisions and actions that impact the ministry.
So, in Christ we who are many form one body and each member belongs to all the others. Rom. 12:5

7. **The Spirit of Joy** – To have a positive, infectious and cheerful attitude while performing assigned tasks and responsibilities.
Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again – Rejoice! Philippians 4:4

Additional Spirit of the Ministry traits in the Christian Workplace Environment:

1. Faithfulness
2. Adaptability
3. Empathy
4. Confidence
5. Compassion



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Eleven Scriptures about Adaptability

Philippians 4:11–13

Not that I am speaking of being in need, for I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content. 12 I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need. 13 I can do all things through him who strengthens me.

Romans 12:2

Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

2 Peter 3:9

The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.

Hebrews 4:12

For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

2 Corinthians 3:18

And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.

2 Peter 1:21

For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

1 Thessalonians 2:13

And we also thank God constantly for this, that when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men but as what it really is, the word of God, which is at work in you believers.

Colossians 3:16

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.

Romans 8:28

And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.

Philippians 2:5–8

Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: 6 Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: 7 But made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: 8 And being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

Jeremiah 29:11

For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.



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Part 3: The Function of Kingdom Discipleship

Week 9, Lesson 9, The Individual

Thought for Today: Adaptability is the motivation and ability to change according to God's will for your life.

Rebecca was getting ready to start her first year of college at a large university. She was in the final week of preparations. Her mom, Kathy tried to have several conversations with Rebecca about the transitions in college. Rebecca was so excited about getting away from the house rules of her home that she simply did not listen. On the drive to the university, Rebecca wanted to listen to music and ignored her mom. After unloading her luggage and checking out the dorm, Rebecca's mom wanted to take her to lunch after such a long drive. Three young women introduced themselves to Rebecca and quickly made an engagement to go to the Delta house on campus to meet people. Kathy hardly had a chance to say goodbye before Rebecca was whisked away with her new friends. Rebecca had difficulty adjusting to the new schedule for classes, studying for tests and organizing her life around new friends. In four weeks, Rebecca had a boyfriend and quickly began an intimate relationship. She really had a hard time adjusting to this new life. It was during her trip home for Thanksgiving, she discovered that she was pregnant. The young man was no longer in her life and didn't want anything to do with her. He suggested that she get an abortion. What was Rebecca to do? Her mother, Kathy noticed the changes in Rebecca. She sat down at the kitchen table and asked Rebecca was she pregnant? Rebecca burst into tears. She asked her mom if she could get an abortion. Being wise in her response said, "What would God want you to do?" Rebecca knew the answer. She could not destroy this new life. Today, Rebecca's daughter Rachel is 10 years old. Rebecca went back to a local college to become a nurse and taught classes, to assist young girls with the decisions regarding dating, intimacy, and pregnancy.

Key Thought: God can take the worse of circumstances and create change that will bring him glory.

Read Chapter 9 of Kingdom's Disciples and answer the following questions.

1. What does this statement mean, "Rest means to put the processes and outcomes ultimately in the hands of God?"

2. State the point of view of "Our trash is anything contrary to the truth of God that holds you back from completely living out your personal destiny."

Women of Faith: Adaptability
Rachel & Leah
Genesis 28:1–35:1–29

The love and bond of sisters is a special relationship. In the case of Leah and Rachel, apparently there is evidence of competition, jealousy, and pain (Genesis 30:1–2). These sisters are not the typical model of family togetherness, yet they portray a different standard of family dynamics. In the biblical context, Jacob, son of Isaac and Rebekah had tricked his brother Esau out of his birthright as the first-born son (Genesis 27:1–40). Jacob left his home to go to be with Rebekah's brother Laban in Haran. Jacob had no idea what was to occur during his journey and ultimately life in this new place. Laban had two daughters. Leah was described as “dull eyes” (Genesis 29:17). Perhaps a hint of low self-esteem. Rachel, the youngest daughter was described as “beautiful of form and appearance”. There is no indication that there was a rival between the two sisters, until Jacob enters the picture. Jacob was attracted to the younger sister and desired to marry her. Laban, a clever individual, bargained with Jacob to work for seven years to marry Rachel (Genesis 29:18–20). For Jacob, the time passed quickly because of his love for Rachel.

On the wedding night, Laban switched the sisters and Jacob did not know that he had married the older sister, Leah. With rage and anger, he opposed the switch. Laban let him know that it was the tradition in his country that the older daughter marries first (Genesis 29:21–30). What a familiar trick on Jacob since he deceived Isaac to get the birthright from Esau. God has a way of showing us our sins in the simplest ways. Jacob did not like being tricked. Now, he knew Esau's feelings towards him for being tricked out his birthright. Laban bargained again with Jacob for seven more years for him to receive Rachel as his wife. Due to his deep love for Rachel, he agreed to work for the seven years. The journey of having two wives compete for his love begins with Leah having her first child, Reuben (Genesis 29:31–32).

It was a challenge for Rachel to adapt to her sister's fruitfulness in giving Jacob children (Genesis 30:1–2). Over the years, God blessed Leah with six sons (Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah,

Issachar, Zebulun) and one daughter Dinah (Genesis 29:31–35, 30:17–21). The heartbreak of being barren was like a curse to a woman in biblical times. Rachel and Leah both had difficulty adjusting to this new life. They wanted the singular relationship of having the love of one man. Jacob had the challenge of a divided heart with both women. Leah knew that she was rejected by Jacob, but not by God. The Lord is always sensitive to our human condition and will respond in kindness and love.



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Application of Adaptability

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1. How can you explain the value of Adaptability in your personal life?

2. What are some ways you can promote the trait of Adaptability with your colleagues/supervisor at work?

3. What are some specific steps you can take in your professional practices to cultivate Adaptability as you care for children and/or service their families at KCA-Early Childhood?

4. How would you generate a plan to demonstrate your commitment to Adaptability in the workplace with your supervisor by your next evaluation conference?

WHAT LUGGAGE ARE YOU CARRYING AROUND?

Directions: Match the Scripture reference to the behavior. Several of the Scriptures will overlap, choose the best description for the behavior.

- | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Deceit | _____ Mark 7:21 |
| 2. Hatred | _____ Galatians 5:19 |
| 3. Perversion | _____ I Corinthians 6:9 |
| 4. Adultery | _____ 2 Timothy 3:2 |
| 5. Lying | _____ Matthew 5:28 |
| 6. Murder | _____ Revelation 21:8 |
| 7. Theft | _____ 1 Timothy 1:8 |
| 8. Pride | _____ Romans 1:29 |
| 9. Envy | _____ Galatians 5:21 |
| 10. Slander | _____ Romans 1:24–27 |
| 11. Sexual Immorality | _____ Leviticus 18:23 |
| 12. Coveting | _____ Colossians 3:4–5 |
| 13. Evil Thoughts | _____ Psalm 59:12 |
| 14. Jealousy | _____ Titus 3:3 |
| 15. Sensuality | _____ I Corinthians 6:18 |
| 16. Drunkenness | _____ I Corinthians 6:9 |
| 17. Idolatry | _____ Proverbs 6:16 |
| 18. Sorcery | _____ 2 Timothy 3:3–4 |
| 19. Orgies | _____ I Corinthians 6:10 |

Replacement Prayer for Sins

Directions: Write a replacement prayer for the identified sins in your own life.

Example: Lord, forgive me for my pride, jealousy, envy, strife, lust, and greed. Give me a heart that will follow you. Change my heart so I can see the world from your perspective. Allow me to view myself from a humble position instead a haughty status in life. When I hurt or lie to someone, convict my heart, and allow me to seek forgiveness. Create in me a pure heart that I may be capable of worshipping you in spirit and truth. Thank you for cleansing my heart and restoring me in right relationship with you. Amen.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There is no handwriting or other markings on the paper.

Kingdom Disciples: Heaven's Representatives on Earth

Bible Study – Lesson Ten



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Chapter 10: The Family
Kingdom Collegiate Academies Early Childhood Program
Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship Church
Dallas, Texas

Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship Employee Handbook

Spirit of the Ministry

The following core values reflect the essential elements and priorities that ought to characterize the leadership, staff, and membership of OCBF. It is through these values that we make known the Spirit of the Ministry. It is also how we demonstrate love, which is the primary proof of discipleship, where we passionately and righteously pursue the wellbeing of others.

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Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. Eph. 4:3

2. **The Spirit of Integrity** – To possess a commitment to biblical truth and honesty, refusing to allow our character to be corrupted or compromised.
May integrity and uprightness protect me because my hope is in you. Psalms 25:21

3. **The Spirit of Excellence** – To work as unto the Lord with the highest degree of professionalism, productivity, and skill.
And every willing man skilled in any craft will help you in all the work. I Chr. 28:21

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Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms. I Peter 4:10

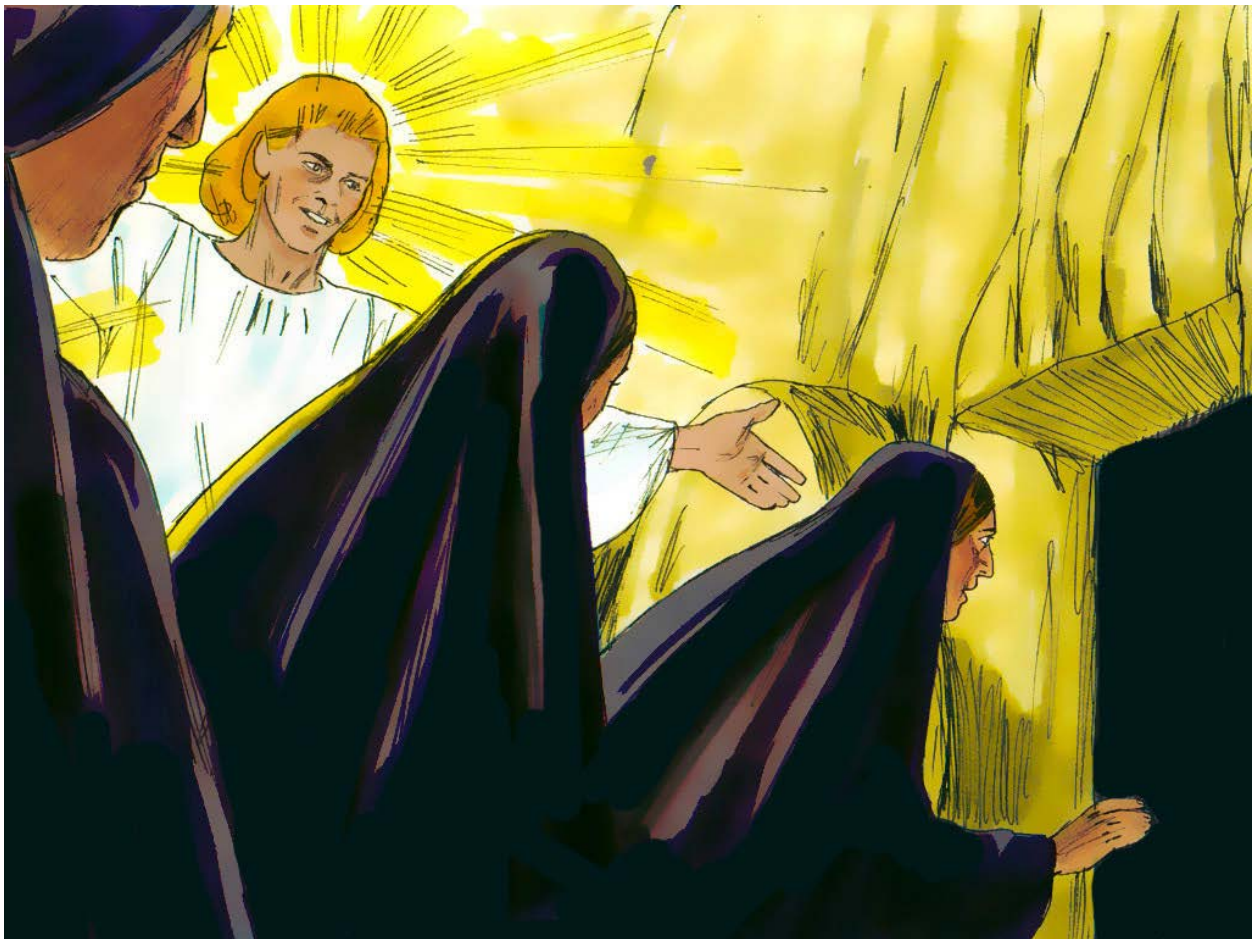
5. **The Spirit of Communication** – To interact with each other on matters of the ministry in a respectful and timely fashion.
Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. Eph. 4:29

6. **The Spirit of Accountability** – To love, encourage and correct each other as we do the work of the ministry, each taking responsibility for decisions and actions that impact the ministry.
So, in Christ we who are many form one body and each member belongs to all the others. Rom. 12:5

7. **The Spirit of Joy** – To have a positive, infectious and cheerful attitude while performing assigned tasks and responsibilities.
Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again – Rejoice! Philippians 4:4

Additional Traits of the Spirit in the Christian Workplace Environment:

1. Faithfulness
2. Adaptability
3. Compassion
4. Confidence
5. Empathy



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Ten Scriptures about Compassion

1 Samuel 23:21

Saul said, “May you be blessed of the Lord, for you have had compassion on me.

1 Peter 3:8

To sum up, all of you be harmonious, sympathetic, brotherly, kindhearted, and humble in spirit.

Jeremiah 16:5

For thus says the Lord, “Do not enter a house of mourning, or go to lament or to console them; for I have withdrawn My peace from this people,” declares the Lord, “My lovingkindness and compassion.

Hebrews 2:18

For since He Himself was tempted in that which He has suffered, He is able to come to the aid of those who are tempted.

Mark 8:2

“I feel compassion for the people because they have remained with Me now three days and have nothing to eat.

Matthew 18:27

And the lord of that slave felt compassion and released him and forgave him the debt.

Hebrews 4:15

For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin.

Psalms 72:13

He will have compassion on the poor and needy,
And the lives of the needy he will save.

Matthew 9:36

Verse Concepts

Seeing the people, He felt compassion for them, because they were distressed and dispirited like sheep without a shepherd.

Matthew 5:7

“Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy.

Part 3: The Function of Kingdom Discipleship Week 10 Lesson 10, The Family

Thought for Today: Compassion is walking in another person's shoes.

Jennifer had always been an excellent mother. She was the Children's Ministry Director at church. Frequently, Jennifer would host "play dates" for children of single mothers. With the approaching summer, Jennifer dreamed of all the things her Children's Ministry would do for the children. Every plan for each event, simply filled her with joy. On Palm Sunday, a young woman came to church with a four-year-old boy, that had extensive physical disabilities. Jennifer saw the young woman and offered to assist her with finding a seat in church. The young woman asked if they had a ministry for Special Needs children. Sadly, Jennifer said that they did not have a ministry for special needs children. The young woman's eyes looked downward towards the floor. As she started towards the front door, Jennifer stopped and asked if she could keep her son in her office while she went into the church service. The young woman smiled and gave her son to Jennifer. The child's name was Gabriel. His mother's name was Mary. They had been looking for a church that would accept and love Gabriel. Jennifer read Bible stories to Gabriel and played with him as though he was her son. Gabriel began to smile as he sat in his wheelchair. He was unable to speak, yet his smile told her everything. Jennifer didn't know that while she was playing with Gabriel, his mother was watching. She thanked Jennifer for her loving kindness towards her son. Before, she left the church Jennifer offered her an opportunity to help her in the development of a Special Needs Ministry at the church. These two mothers started a ministry that now serves 50 children with various disabilities that minister to families around the community. Compassion moves us to meet the needs of others.

Key Thought: Love is the key word in the phrase "loving kindness".

Read Chapter 10 in Kingdom's Disciples and answer the following questions.

1. If you are at lunch with a friend, discuss this statement, "Family was established to be foundational representative institution in society and provides the framework to collectively carry out the plan of God in history."

2. Define Covenant:

3. What is Transcendence?

Women of Faith: Compassion
Mary Magdalene
Luke 8:1–3, 24:1–8, Matt. 28:1–7, Mark 16:1–7

There were many followers of Jesus during his three-year public ministry on earth. It is noteworthy to recognize the twelve male disciples (Matthew 10:2–4), yet there were female disciples that supported his ministry. One of these women were Mary Magdalene. She was a woman that Jesus delivered seven demons (Luke 8:1–3). Scripture does not tell us what those spirits were and how they affected her, yet we can understand that perhaps she had a miserable existence until Jesus changed her life. This was a transformational experience for Mary Magdalene. It is understandable that throughout Scripture, she is seen close to Jesus. Mary Magdalene used her own resources to support his ministry. Several women were at the death of Jesus (Mark 15:40–41), among them were Mary Magdalene, Mary, mother of James, the Less and of Joses and Salome. These women must have watched in horror that the Jesus they knew and loved was being crucified. The grief felt was unimaginable. Mary, mother of Jesus was present (John 19:25–27) along with her sister, Mary, wife of Clopas. The deep sorrow of a mother watching the death of her oldest child is unthinkable, yet Mary witnessed the death of her child. The excruciating traumatic memory of her child's death must have haunted the mother of Jesus. She was left with the same hope as the disciples that somehow, she would see him again.

After his death, Joseph of Arimathea went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus, Mary Magdalene and Mary noticed where they placed his body. After the Sabbath, Mary Magdalene and Mary, mother of James and Salome brought spices to anoint his body. Jesus appeared to Mary Magdalene first (Mark 16:9–11), even though she told the disciples and others, they did not believe her. When Peter and the disciples came to the tomb and saw the linen, they left and went back to their homes (John 20:1–10). Mary Magdalene did not leave, she stood outside the tomb weeping for Jesus. As she investigated the tomb, two angels in white were sitting, one at the feet and the other at the head of where Jesus laid. Mary did not even recognize Jesus until,

he said “Mary” (John 20:16). She had heard his voice many times and knew that it was with the tenderness of his voice that brought her to recognize him. Mary Magdalene was the first evangelist (John 20:17–20) in spreading the good news of Jesus’ resurrection!

1. Why do you think Jesus trusted Mary Magdalene with the message of his resurrection?

2. How did Mary Magdalene show compassion to Jesus?



Application of Compassion

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1. How can you explain the value of compassion in your personal life?

2. What are some ways you can promote the trait of compassion with your colleagues/supervisor at work?

3. What are some specific steps you can take in your professional practices to demonstrate compassion as you care for children and/or service their families at KCA-Early Childhood?

4. How would you generate a plan to demonstrate your commitment to compassion in the workplace with your supervisor by your next evaluation conference?

Compassion Tic-Tac-Toe Game

Directions: Choose three activities to create a Tic-Tac Toe match.

Topic: Spirit of the Ministry Trait: Compassion.

Choose three people in the Bible who modeled Compassion.

Write a favorite Scripture on Compassion.

Write the name of a popular song about compassion.

Definition of the word Compassion

Free Space

Describe your emotions when you are being Compassionate.

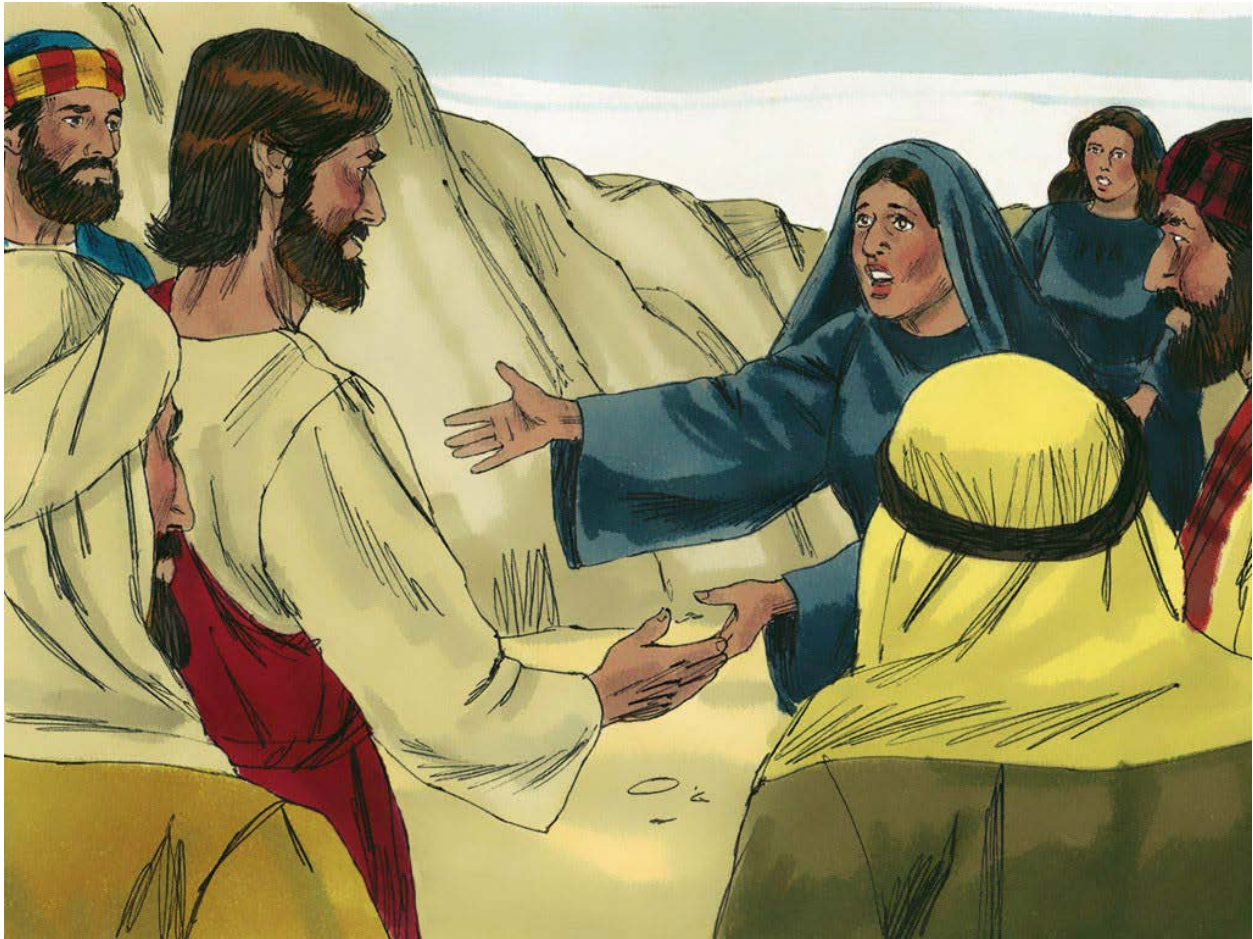
Name something that you would do to model compassion.

Describe the opposite of compassion

List one thing that you can share with people about compassion

Kingdom Disciples: Heaven's Representatives on Earth

Bible Study – Lesson Eleven



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Chapter 11: The Church
Spirit of the Ministry Trait: Confidence
Kingdom Collegiate Academies Early Childhood Program
Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship Church
Dallas, Texas

Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship Employee Handbook

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Additional Traits of the Spirit in the Christian Workplace Environment:

1. Faithfulness
2. Adaptability
3. Compassion
4. Confidence
5. Empathy



Eighteen Scriptures about Confidence

Joshua 1:9

Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.

Jeremiah 17:7

*But blessed is the one who trusts in the Lord,
whose confidence is in him.*

Psalms 27:3

*Though an army besiege me, my heart will not fear; though war break out against me,
even then I will be confident.*

Psalms 139:13–14

*For you created my inmost being you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise
you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful; I know that full
well.*

Proverbs 3:25–26

*Have no fear of sudden disaster or of the ruin that overtakes the wicked, for the Lord will be at
your side and will keep your foot from being snared.*

Isaiah 32:17

*The fruit of that righteousness will be peace;
its effect will be quietness and confidence forever.*

Isaiah 40:31

*but those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength They will soar on wings like eagles;
they will run and not grow weary; they will walk and not be faint.*

Isaiah 41:10

*So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God.
I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.*

Philippians 1:6

being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

Philippians 4:13

I can do all this through him who gives me strength.

Ephesians 3:12

In him and through faith in him we may approach God with freedom and confidence.

2 Corinthians 12:9

But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore, I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ’s power may rest on me.

Hebrews 4:16

Let us then approach God’s throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.

Hebrews 10:35–36

So do not throw away your confidence; it will be richly rewarded. You need to persevere so that when you have done the will of God, you will receive what he has promised.

Hebrews 13:6

So, we say with confidence,

“The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid.
What can mere mortals do to me?”

2 Timothy 1:7

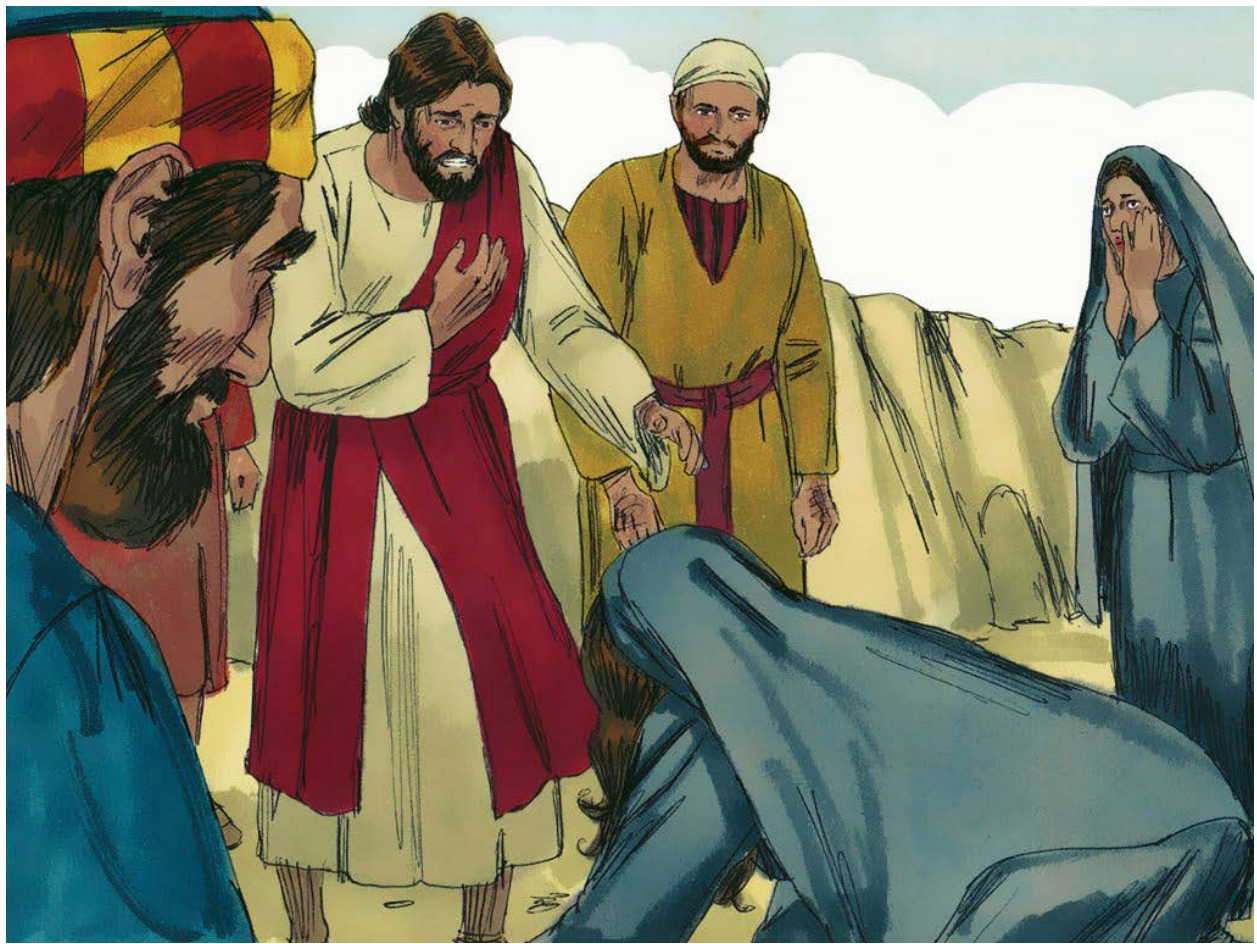
For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and self-discipline.

1 John 4:17

This is how love is made complete among us so that we will have confidence on the day of judgment: In this world we are like Jesus.

Psalm 71:4-5

“Deliver me, my God, from the hand of the wicked, from the grasp of those who are evil and cruel. For you have been my hope, Sovereign LORD, my confidence since my youth.”



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Part 3: The Function of Kingdom Discipleship Week 11, Lesson 11, The Church

Thought for Today: Confidence is total trust in God for a miracle.

In the city of Savannah, many citizens simply didn't know what to think about the candidates running for the office of mayor. They had spent the last several years in misery because of high crime, corruption, and mismanagement of city funds. Many of the clergy were praying for something new to revive a desperate city anxious for hope and revalidation. As the candidates began to announce their candidacy for mayor, one young man stood out above all the others. He spoke about how the city could reinvest to stop the rising crime rate, renew hope in government and promote growth. He visited local schools, churches, businesses, and community groups. Slowly, people began to be captivated by the ideas and charisma of this young man. The local clergy began to invite him to speak at their churches. As his campaign began to get traction and take off in the community, an enemy from his past appeared and tried to dishonor his name. A few days before the mayoral election, there were negative allegations about his character and ethics in the newspaper. Carson Parker took out a full-page newspaper ad along with a television commercial to refute each allegation openly and honestly. The pastor of the largest Baptist church supported this young man and encouraged others to do the same. Pastor Bradley recognized the plot by several individuals to smear the name of Carson Parker. On election day, everyone had predicted that with the false allegations spread across the community, Parker would never win. Being a Christian, Carson Parker got on his knees, prayed, and trusted God for the outcome of the election. Early the next morning, Carson Parker was announced the new mayor of Savannah. Confidence is trusting God in the face of possible defeat.

Key Thought: Trusting God will build your confidence.

Read Chapter 11 in Kingdom's Disciples and answer the following questions.

1. What is a Kingdom Church?

2. Dr. Tony Evans states, "The purpose of every local body of believers is to become a kingdom church making kingdom disciples who are having a kingdom impact individually and corporately in the world." Share what does this mean?

3. Worship is the furnace of the spiritual life and of a disciple making church. How would you explain this to another person?

Women of Faith: Confidence
Mary & Martha
John 11:1–57, 12:1–19

Family is an essential ingredient to the unity of a community. Lazarus, Mary, and Martha lived in the village of Bethany. Jesus heard about the sickness of Lazarus. He told his disciples that this sickness was not unto death, yet it is for the glory of the Son. The disciples did not understand. They stayed two more days in their location before traveling to Bethany. Jesus directed their discussion regarding Lazarus' health. He let them know that Lazarus had died. When he arrived near the town, Martha came out to greet him. She said that her brother would not have died, if Jesus was there. Her faith and confidence in Jesus were profound. She and her family believed in him and knew that he was the Son of God (John 11:20–27). When Mary heard that Jesus had arrived, she went to him and said, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died." (John 11:32). Mary expressed the same level of faith and confidence in Jesus.

The death of Lazarus and the suffering of his family caused Jesus to weep. He was deeply moved in witnessing their pain and sorrow of his friend's death. In preparation for his miracle, Jesus had several individuals to remove the stone in front of Lazarus' tomb. He had been buried for four days. Everyone knew his body was decaying, yet they obeyed Jesus' command. Jesus prayed to his Father, knowing that God always hears him, yet for the people to believe that he was the Son of God, he asked him to bring Lazarus back to life. At Jesus' command he asked him to come out. Due to the power of Jesus, he asked specifically for Lazarus to come back to life. Since Jesus is the Resurrection and the life (John 11:25) everyone who believes in him will live even if he dies. Mary and Martha's faith in Jesus demonstrated their confidence in his power and witness of being the Son of God.

1. Why were the Jews present at the miracle still skeptical of Jesus?

2. Explain why the resurrection of Lazarus was a miracle.



Application of Confidence

Dear Participant,

Throughout this Bible study, you will understand the Seven Traits of the Ministry of OCBF Church. The traits are Accountability, Joy, Unity, Integrity, Communication, Excellence, and Servanthood. Some additional traits in the workplace can include Faithfulness, Adaptability, Compassion, Confidence and Empathy. Our teachers and staff are asked to model these traits in their daily journey at home, work, and throughout the community. Apply the meaning of Confidence to the following situations.

1. How can you explain the value of confidence in your personal life?

2. What are some ways you can promote the trait of confidence with your colleagues/supervisor at work?

3. What are some specific steps you can take in your professional practices to demonstrate confidence as you care for children and/or service their families at KCA-Early Childhood?

4. How would you generate a plan to demonstrate your commitment to confidence in the workplace with your supervisor by your next evaluation conference?

Scrambled Scriptures

Directions: Using the key code at the bottom, write the matching symbol/letter underneath each symbol. Example: $\frac{\tau}{t} \quad \frac{\eta}{h} \quad \frac{\varepsilon}{e}$

Scrambled Code for PC Computers

a = α	b = β	c = χ	d = δ	e = ε
f = ϕ	g = γ	h = η	i = ι	j = φ
k = κ	l = λ	m = μ	n = ν	o = \omicron
p = π	q = θ	r = ρ	s = σ	t = τ
u = υ	v = ϖ	w = ω	x = ξ	y = ψ
z = ζ	. = .	? = ?	, = ,	0 = 0
1 = 1	2 = 2	3 = 3	4 = 4	5 = 5
6 = 6	7 = 7	8 = 8	9 = 9	% = %

Scrambled Code for MAC Computers

A= \AA	B= \textasciicircum	C= $\text{\textcircled{c}}$	D= ∂ .	E= \textasciitilde
F= f	G= $\text{\textcircled{C}}$	H= \textasciitilde	I= \textasciicircum	J= Δ
K= $^\circ$	L= \textasciitilde	M= μ	N= \textasciitilde	O= $\text{\textcircled{O}}$
P= π	Q= $\text{\textcircled{Q}}$	R= $\text{\textcircled{R}}$	S= β	T= \dagger
U= \textasciitilde	V= $\sqrt{\quad}$	W= Σ	X= \approx	Y= \textasciitilde
Z= Ω				

Example: $\frac{\text{\textcircled{C}}\text{\textcircled{O}}\partial}{\text{God}} \quad \frac{\text{\textasciitilde}\beta}{\text{Is}} \quad \frac{\text{\textcircled{C}}\text{\textcircled{O}}\text{\textcircled{O}}\partial}{\text{Good}}$

Directions: Using the PC or MAC Scramble Code letters, write the code symbols for the following scripture.

Jesus said to her, I am the resurrection

and the life.

_____. (John 11:25)

Kingdom Disciples: Heaven's Representatives on Earth

Bible Study – Lesson Twelve



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Chapter 12: The Community
Spirit of the Ministry Trait: Empathy
Kingdom Collegiate Academies Early Childhood Program
Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship Church
Dallas, Texas

Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship Employee Handbook

Spirit of the Ministry

The following core values reflect the essential elements and priorities that ought to characterize the leadership, staff, and membership of OCBF. It is through these values that we make known the Spirit of the Ministry. It is also how we demonstrate love, which is the primary proof of discipleship, where we passionately and righteously pursue the wellbeing of others.

1. **The Spirit of Unity** – To work in harmony toward a shared purpose and vision.
Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. Eph. 4:3

2. **The Spirit of Integrity** – To possess a commitment to biblical truth and honesty, refusing to allow our character to be corrupted or compromised.
May integrity and uprightness protect me because my hope is in you. Psalms 25:21

3. **The Spirit of Excellence** – To work as unto the Lord with the highest degree of professionalism, productivity, and skill.
And every willing man skilled in any craft will help you in all the work. I Chr. 28:21

4. **The Spirit of Servanthood** – To demonstrate true humility by seeking, serving, and protecting the wellbeing of others.
Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms. I Peter 4:10

5. **The Spirit of Communication** – To interact with each other on matters of the ministry in a respectful and timely fashion.
Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. Eph. 4:29

6. **The Spirit of Accountability** – To love, encourage and correct each other as we do the work of the ministry, each taking responsibility for decisions and actions that impact the ministry.
So, in Christ we who are many form one body and each member belongs to all the others. Rom. 12:5

7. **The Spirit of Joy** – To have a positive, infectious and cheerful attitude while performing assigned tasks and responsibilities.
Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again – Rejoice! Philippians 4:4

Additional Traits of the Spirit in the Christian Workplace Environment:

1. Faithfulness
2. Adaptability
3. Compassion
4. Confidence
5. Empathy



Seventeen Scriptures on Empathy

1 Thessalonians 5:11

Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing.

Hebrews 10:24–25

And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.

1 Peter 4:10

God has given each of you a gift from his great variety of spiritual gifts. Use them well to serve one another.

Romans 12:15

Be happy with those who are happy, and weep with those who weep.

Galatians 6:2–3

Share each other's burdens, and in this way obey the law of Christ. If you think you are too important to help someone, you are only fooling yourself. You are not that important.

Romans 15:1

We who are strong ought to bear with the failings of the weak and not to please ourselves.

Philippians 2:2–4

Then make me truly happy by agreeing wholeheartedly with each other, loving one another, and working together with one mind and purpose. Don't be selfish; don't try to impress others. Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourselves. Don't look out only for your own interests, but take an interest in others, too.

1 Corinthians 10:24

Try to do what is good for others, not just what is good for yourselves.

1 Corinthians 10:33

Even as I please all men in all things, not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved.

Matthew 22:37–40

Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

Galatians 5:14

For the entire law is fulfilled in keeping this one command: “Love your neighbor as yourself.”

1 Peter 3:8

Finally, all of you should be of one mind. Sympathize with each other. Love each other as brothers and sisters. Be tenderhearted and keep a humble attitude.

Ephesians 4:2

Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love.

1 Corinthians 12:25–26

This makes for harmony among the members, so that all the members care for each other. If one part suffers, all the parts suffer with it, and if one part is honored, all the parts are glad.

Romans 12:5

So, we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one member one of another.

Hebrews 4:13–16

Nothing in all creation is hidden from God’s sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account. Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has ascended into heaven, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin. Let us then approach God’s throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.

Psalms 103:13–14

As a father has compassion on his children, so the Lord has compassion on those who fear him; for he knows how we are formed, he remembers that we are dust.

Part 3: The Function of Kingdom Discipleship Week 12, Lesson 12, The Community

Thought for Today: Empathy is walking in someone's shoes through a similar experience.

Margaret and Timothy were high school sweethearts. They married right out of college and quickly started a family. Margaret was delighted to have three children. They kept the homemaker busy with soccer, baseball games and dance lessons. She was busy yet loved every minute of it. Often, Margaret expressed her delight in being a homemaker. On a cold winter's night, Timothy came home after a business convention and asked Margaret for a divorce. Shocked beyond belief was not an accurate description of her emotional trauma of being rejected for another woman. She didn't know what to tell her children or how to begin life again. Margaret had never held a job outside of her home. Timothy moved out and left Margaret to tell the children what happened. Nothing in Margaret's life had prepared her for this event. Rachel, a close family friend, knew that something was wrong and visited Margaret. Rachel brought some fresh baked chocolate chip cookies for the kids. She and Margaret sat at the kitchen table, as Margaret glared into an empty tea glass, twirling it in her hands repeatedly. Gently, Rachel held her hand and asked her what was wrong? Through shame, guilt, and anger, Margaret told her the story of Timothy's departure. Rachel listened contently to every word. Through the flood of tears, Margaret continued to blame herself for the failure of her marriage. Rachel was a member of Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship Church. She invited her to attend a Free at Last class. Over the months of attending the class, she gained courage from listening to other people share similar stories of what she had experienced. Margaret learned that Rachel had gone through the same experience with her husband. Rachel knew the devastational effects of divorce and recovery. She had walked in Margaret's shoes. After two years of church attendance, Margaret and her family are finally adjusting to a new life. Margaret is a schoolteacher, volunteering in youth ministry and writing a book about her story. A trusted friend can help an individual through life changing experiences by empathizing with the person in the situation.

Key Thought: Healing comes from trusting God with the wound.

Read Chapter 12 in Kingdom's Disciples and answer the following questions.

1. What does it mean to be the "salt of the earth"?

2. How can God use a Kingdom Disciple to influence racial injustice?

3. Give an example of how a Kingdom Disciple can serve and assist his/her community.

Women of Faith: Empathy
Sarah: Mother of Isaac
Genesis 15:1–5, 18:9–15, 21:1–7

Barrenness (infertility) in the Bible was considered a curse for a woman, who was unable to have children. Many families in the Bible, such as Hannah, Rachel, and Elizabeth (John, the Baptist mother), experienced this condition that brought grief, pain, and suffering. Yet, when conception happened there was great joy and celebration. God consistently shows his mercy, love, and grace by granting the request for a child. In the case of Abraham and Sarah, who were a couple from Haran in Mesopotamia, called by God to leave their family, friends, and country to travel to a new land. According to the Abrahamic Covenant, God would grant him his own country, people, and possessions. Abraham knew that he did not have children. God let him know that he would have children. He believed God and it was considered as righteousness. After years of waiting, Sarah grew impatient and gave her maid, Hager to Abraham to produce an heir. Ishmael was born to Abraham and Hager. This did not cure her barrenness; it merely intensified her anger towards Hagar. Sarah was in turmoil with the promise and hope of a child, yet none at eighty-nine years of age. She was passed the age of being able to bear children.

God knew her situation. He empathized with her desire to be a mother. Sarah did not realize that God understood her anguish and would bless her with a child. Abraham was visited by three strangers that assured him; she would have a child within the year. Sarah laughed because she cautiously didn't believe that the joy of motherhood would come for her. After so many years, could anything as wonderful as giving birth at her age could happen? Yes, within a year she experienced the joy of having a baby boy. They named him Isaac meaning "laughter".

This child brought so much joy and completeness to the life of Sarah. She was no longer barren, angry, and feeling a sense of being inadequate. God had rewarded her with a child.

1. In your opinion, why did Sarah offer Hagar to Abraham, was it beneficial?

2. How did God empathize with Sarah's infertility? What was the result?

3. Explain what is the Abrahamic Covenant?



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21 Women of the Bible Trivia Game

Directions: Read each question and scripture. Match the statement to the correct scripture passages.

	Trivia	Women in the Bible	Match the name by number
A. (Ex.)	Who was the first women in the Bible? Genesis 2:15–25, 3:1–23, 4:1–15	1. Ruth	5
B.	Who was turned into a pillar of salt? Genesis 19:12–29	2. Mary	
C.	Who was the mother of Joseph and Benjamin? Genesis 29:14–30, 31:19, 30–35, 35:16–26	3. Rahab	

D.	Who was the mother of Ishmael? Genesis 16; 21:1–21	4. Deborah	
E.	Who was Isaac's wife? Genesis 24, 25:21–34, 26:1–17, 27	5. Eve	
F.	Who was childless until ninety years old? Genesis 12:1, 10–19, 16, 17:5, 15, 18:10–15, 20, 21:1–21, 23:1–21	6. Dorcas/Tabitha	
G.	Who was the mother of Moses, Aaron, and Miriam? Exodus 2:1–10, 15:20–21, Numbers 12:1–15	7. Abigail	
H.	Who was David's daughter and raped by Shechem? Genesis 30:21, 34:1–31	8. Esther	
I.	Who was a prostitute in Jericho and mother of Boaz? Joshua 2:1–21, 6:16–17, 22–23, Ruth 4:20–21, Matthew 1–5	9. Anna	
J.	Who returned to Bethlehem with her daughter in law, Ruth? Ruth 1–4:13–22	10. Jochebed	
K.	Who went to battle with Barak? Judges 4–5	11. Rebekah	
L.	Who was the sister of Rachel? Genesis 29:14–25, 31:19, 30–35,	12. Lot's wife	
M.	Who is the great grandmother of David? Ruth 1–4	13. Martha	
N.	Who prayed for a son and dedicated him to the Lord? I Samuel 1, 2:1–11, 18–21, 26	14. Mary Magdalene	
O.	Who was the peacemaker between Nabal and David? I Samuel 25:2–42	15. Leah	
P.	Who became a queen and saved the Jewish people? Book of Esther	16. Naomi	
Q.	Who was the mother of Jesus? Luke 1:26–56, Matt. 1:18–25, Luke 8:19–21, John 19:25–27	17. Sarah	
R.	Who was a prophetess and saw Jesus at the Temple when she was very old? Luke 2:22, 36–38	18. Hannah	
S.	Who was the sister of Mary and Lazarus of Bethany? Luke 10:38–42, John 11:1–45	19. Dinah	
T.	Who was possessed with seven demons and disciple of Jesus? Luke 8:1–3, 24:1–10, Mark 15:40–41	20. Hagar	
U.	Who died and was restored to life by Peter? Acts 9:36–42	21. Rachel	

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