

LIBERTY UNIVERSITY
JOHN W. RAWLINGS SCHOOL OF DIVINITY

Disciple-Making at St. Louis Baptist Church

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

by
Vasquez Granberry

Lynchburg, Virginia

July 2024

Liberty University John W. Rawlings School of Divinity

Thesis Project Approval Sheet

Jacob T. Dunlow
John W. Rawlings School of Divinity Professor
Mentor

Jeffrey L. Cockrell
John W. Rawlings School of Divinity Professor
Reader

THE DOCTOR OF MINISTRY THESIS PROJECT ABSTRACT

Vasquez Granberry

Liberty University John W. Rawlings School of Divinity, November 20, 2022

Mentor: Dr. Jacob Dunlow

In careful reflection, the members at St. Louis Baptist Church need a more structured way to train on disciples making disciples. The purpose of this DMIN action research project is to develop and deliver a structured small group training process for making disciples who will become St. Louis Baptist Church disciple-makers. The current thesis for a Doctor of Ministry degree focuses on disciple-making. The objective is to learn and teach the membership how to become disciple-makers within the St. Louis Baptist Church in Tyler, Texas. Allowing these matters to address disciple-makers will also enable the researcher to discover the topics and effective kingdom-building within the body of Christ. It is the essence and principle of focusing on questions about the ministerial problem with disciple-making in the St. Louis Baptist Church and developing a purpose to motivate discipleship to maximize St. Louis' members with confidence in disciple-making. Furthermore, this will allow each member to grow in belief and faith, bringing out the apologetic expression of discipleship for every Christian to stand firm in the Word of God.

Disciple, Faith, Disciple-Making, Multiplying, Discipleship, Love, Kingdom of God

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Abbreviations

DMIN	<i>Doctor of Ministry</i>
PMBC	<i>Peoples Missionary Baptist Church</i>
SLBC	<i>St. Louis Baptist Church</i>

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Introduction

“Jesus showed us how to live life and how to make disciples. We seek to emulate his method and model. As the sinless second Adam, Jesus was man as God intended to be. He then told us, “Do the works I have been doing” (John 14:12).¹ John said those who “claim to live in Him must live as Jesus did” (1 John 2:6).”² This DMIN research project is focused on disciple-making and the importance of being a disciple maker. To learn and teach how to become disciple-makers within the St. Louis Baptist Church is the objective of the DMIN research project. By having the proper training, disciple-makers will cover the topics needed for effective kingdom-building within the church. The projects essence focuses on questions about the ministerial problem with disciple-making in the St. Louis Baptist Church. Developing a purpose to motivate discipleship to maximize St. Louis' members with confidence in disciple-making. Furthermore, enabling each member the opportunity to grow in belief and faith brings out the apologetic side discipleship for every Christian to stand firm in the Word of God. The Scripture explains how Jesus practiced discipleship, giving each disciple the authority in every word He commanded. For this same reason, the believer can "go" just as He commanded—his disciples in the Great Commission (Matthew 28:16-20).³

Often there are times when discipling may seem less effective when results are not seen immediately. However, the Word of God has the power to convict, even when it seems as if all is

¹John 14:12, NASB.

² Bobby Harrington and Josh Patrick, *The Disciple-Maker's Handbook: 7 Elements of a Discipleship Lifestyle* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2017), 180.

³ Matthew 28: 16-20, KJV.

lost power: not seeing instant results does not mean that the power of God is not manifested, because faith cannot be seen, and without faith, it is impossible to please God. Ultimately, every Christian's desire should first be to please their Lord and Savior.⁴ Finally, this is what makes discipleship so crucial to the Christian faith, and with proper teaching and learning, this can be accomplished.

Ministry Context

In the St. Louis Baptist Church, the focus of discipling has been through community work. Different ministries in the church served the community and brought disadvantaged people together, for an opportunity to share the gospel and disciple others to Christ. The church was founded in January of 1885 by Reverend E. W. D. Isaac. The first members were emancipated slaves, with moderated capital and worshiped under a brush arbor near the old Palestine Road ("Four Mile Spring"). Later, the church grew with the help of many pastors. Today, it is led by Pastor Ralph E. Caraway, Sr., who has taken the church to extraordinary prominence, exhibiting service in over some twenty-four ministries—at one time having a membership of some eight hundred people in the church. The Saint Louis Missionary Baptist Church is a member of the Original East Texas Baptist Association (OETBA), the district association, the Texas Educational Baptist State Convention, the state body, and the National Baptist Convention U.S.A., Incorporated, the national body.⁵

The church mission statement is "believing that each member of the Saint Louis Baptist Church is a member of the body of the church. Our mission is glorifying God in fellowship, love,

⁴ Sunder Krishnan, "How to Live A Life Pleasing to God," "The Spirit-Empowered Life" May/June 2018, Vol. 153 No. 3, Pg 4, <https://legacy.cmalliance.org/alife/how-to-live-a-life-pleasing-to-god/>

⁵ Ralph E. Caraway, Sr. and St. Louis Baptist Church, *St. Louis Baptist Church Members Orientation Booklet* (Tyler: St. Louis Church Staff, 2017), 18.

and worship. It is also our mission use our spiritual gifts, ministering to the needs of others through discipleship, evangelism, and service."⁶ The most instrumental part that shapes ministry volunteers' participation is seeing the needs met in the community of those in need. Another ministry that serves the community is the brotherhood and laypeople ministry This ministry serves by organizing men who are members of the church to complete missions promoting stewardship to the community. For example, if someone in the community needs their home painted or yard serviced, the men would organize a group of men to go out and meet the needs. These men also provide fellowship among themselves as a part of their services to one another.

The service of the brotherhood makes clients understand the demonstrated love, care, and concerns. The group also understands the concerns that Christ had for the less fortunate. The laymen are making an everlasting impact on the community and their hard work encourages⁷ others to have a heart for service. Jesus met the needs of people through discipleship, the feeding of the five thousand (Mark 6: 31-44, and in all other gospels). The parable of Jesus feeding the five thousand is one of the symbols that best describes the people at St. Louis Baptist Church.⁸ For instance, when Hurricane Katrina hit the coastlines of Louisiana, in the City of New Orleans, St. Louis was one of the churches that provided shelter for the evacuees. Their Family Life Center provided a safe place for those who had migrated from New Orleans to Tyler some four hundred miles. The church coordinated donations with the following organizations in East Texas: Meals on Wheels, Red Cross, and Burger King. Working in shifts, they served one hundred and thirty-two people for twenty-four hours for seventeen days. These practices and

⁶ Ralph E. Caraway, Sr. and St. Louis Baptist Church, *St. Louis Baptist Church Members Orientation Booklet* (Tyler: St. Louis Church Staff, 2017), 3.

⁸ Mark 6: 31-44, King James Version (KJV). Unless otherwise noted, all scripture references in this thesis project will be from the King James Version of the Bible.

styles capture the church's value in the community's effective relationships. To be compassionate to others' needs with love and care is a part of Christ (Ephesians 4:32).

Jesus wants the believers to take care of each other while simultaneously serving the disadvantaged. There is no greater love than the one who lays down his life for a friend.⁹ The previous statement is an interpretation and has a dual meaning, physically, and spiritually.¹⁰ For example, Christ died physically on the cross for mankind to give mankind the opportunity to accept Him into their hearts and put others first as God so divinely orchestrated (i.e., laying aside things in one's life to serve others).¹¹

Unfortunately, this does not happen in some areas of the world.¹² Moreover, serving with morality and honor has become awry in some parts of the country. On the other hand, some have not understood that discipling members should not be passive. They feel that it is not the member's responsibility because the church has not grown; some assume that it is the pastor's leadership that must make the church grow and Christ makes the increase. Christ gives increase when one plants, and the other waters it (service), and give fellowship to the pastor in obedience with Christ; this is in part with the training that he gave the disciples by hearing the word.¹³ Dann Spader argues, "During this phase, the ministry began to expand, with increasing numbers hearing the Good News, so that "news about him spread all the more" (Luke 5:15). Beginning in

⁹ John 15:13, NASB.

¹⁰ Matthew 22:37-39, NASB.

¹¹ I Cor 6:20, NASB.

¹² Ephesians 6:7-8, NASB

¹³ Hebrews 13:7, NASB.

this phase of Jesus's ministry, Jesus focused intensely upon training His disciples to become reproducing "fishers of men."¹⁴

Members cannot anticipate that someone else will step-up and fill the gap if they are not going to do it. Regrettably, this happens in many churches today, using all kinds of things to justify why they are not serving or discipling others, making them feel absolved. Imagine members even thinking that discipleship and service are not their calling. Eventually, this kind of social characteristic causes discipleship to no longer subsist in or outside the church. The issue starts tiny but later can grow considerably, making more room for ineffectiveness for the church and community; the fear of failure or taking a risk can lead to burying our gifts.¹⁵ It starts in the congregation, then bleeds out to others.

In fact, some Christians believe that disciple-making is not their calling when it comes to making disciples. Not everyone is chosen to disciple others, but the ones who are called are required to make disciples. When God calls an individual into His salvation plan, the first thing that must be clarified is that it is not just about the person who is called to salvation, but the call is also to share God's salvation plan. It does not exclude discipleship because everyone is chosen to disciple others. Christians must make disciples. God gives every individual a spiritual gift, some are called to be pastors, evangelists, and teachers, which are all a part of disciple-making. Christians sometimes do not understand that when disciples become a disciple, they are not only called to follow but are called to make disciples.

¹⁴ Dann Spader, *4 Chair Discipling: Growing a Movement of Disciple-Makers* (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2014), 146.

¹⁵ Greg Ogden, *Discipleship Essentials: A Guide to Building Your Life in Christ*. (Westmont: InterVarsity Press, 2019. Accessed January 30, 2022.), 179.

Tim Henderson is a campus director of Penn State University and oversees many campus ministries and has formed a small group to disciple others.

Tim Henderson argues,

here's the reality: there are a lot of Christians on campus here. They don't all want to be disciplined. And God has not called Cru (Campus Crusade for Christ) to disciple everybody. There are other good ministries on campus and we can't disciple everyone. We'll work with the people who want to be a part of what we're doing, and where God has called us to go.¹⁶

This is not just limited to small churches; it happens to mega-churches as well, and maybe to a greater scale. Teaching and learning discipleship effectively are necessary, whether in smaller or more significant churches. Not teaching and learning can be disastrous to kingdom-building. Historically, this has been the major issue since the beginning of humankind, learning and knowing good from evil, correct from incorrect. Centrally, Tyler, Texas is small geographically compared to others in the area close by, but it has a faith bible based in Christianity. Religious denominations operating in the area are solid and traditional in identity.

These are the most prominent religious denominations in Tyler, Texas: Baptist, Roman Catholic, other Christian faiths, followed by Methodist Church. Bert Sperling's website, "Best Places" breaks down the denominations into percentages as well as other various details about the city. Fundamentally, Tyler is most known as the rose capital of the world. People in this community enjoy working hard throughout the week and then attending church on Sunday.¹⁷ There are various services outside of St. Louis in the community, such as the Tyler Family Assistance Center (TFAC), aiming to meet the physical, spiritual, and emotional needs of people

¹⁶ Tim Henderson, "The Right People for Discipleship" CRU. The Compass: A Tool for Disciplers. <https://www.cru.org/us/en/train-and-grow/help-others-grow/discipleship/the-right-people-for-discipleship.html>.

¹⁷ Bert Sperling, "Best Places: Tyler, Texas," <https://www.bestplaces.net/religion/city/texas/tyler>.

for many years.¹⁸ Likewise, the East Texas Food Bank has been serving Tylerites since 1988, with food and clothing along with others in the community (Smith County food Security Council).¹⁹²⁰

As an associate minister at St. Louis Baptist Church, under Pastor Ralph E. Caraway, Sr., the relationship with the members is exhilarating. As an associate minister there, it has been a privilege to teach Sunday school for one of the adult classes there. In addition, having the opportunity to preach on some Sunday mornings for fourteen years has been a joy. The members and students in Sunday school classes are eager to learn and study the Word of God. The relationship makes it easy to learn and a delight to every one of them every Sunday morning. Class feedback from the students allows the teacher to dialogue with their students.

This creates an atmosphere of comfortability, and students are not afraid to ask questions. Some would rather listen to comments and responses from others present. As far as the relationship with the community, it is always good to fellowship with other churches and preachers, young and old. In addition, there is much to gain from the elders. Elders of the church have great theological sagacity, whether drawn from personal relationships with difficult members or their understanding of their situation. They are making the right decisions but keeping them inside of scripture. Often, pastors may be too involved with a member who has been there before him; instead of keeping the issue inside the scripture, which ultimately comes

¹⁸ “Tyler Family Assistance Center | First Baptist Church Tyler TX,” Google, Last accessed January 14, 2022, <https://www.fbctyler.org/about-us/ministries/tyler-family-assistance-center/>

¹⁹ “History – East Texas Food Bank,” Google, Last accessed January 14, 2022, <https://www.easttexasfoodbank.org/who-we-are/history-2/>

²⁰ “List of Smith County Food Pantries (SCFSC),” Google, Last accessed January 14, 2022, <https://www.smithcountyfoodsecurity.org/community-food-resources>

out in their best interest, he leans on something less helpful. A relationship may sometimes be complex, but it is always best to remain impartial.

Nevertheless, some things could be learned by the younger preachers, although they may not have tremendous experience and wisdom. They can reach some of the younger audiences that the elders may not reach. Historically, these groups are associated together to disciple in those ways. Elder reach older members, and the younger reach the younger audiences. It is hard to relate with people when discipling when they do not share the same experiences. Traditional experience falls under similar circumstances in the group when it comes to discipling. The tradition of the elder group may be original, but the younger group has a desire to start their own identity, making them feel apart. The idea of remembering a tradition of the past is good. On the other hand, with the younger age groups, it seems as if there is a better way to do things with modern science and technology. This is true to a point—for example, mobile phones using social media dispense information to the masses of networking overall.

Unlike door-to-door, spreading the gospel news to the masses (community, city, state, and worldwide), technology has an advantage; unfortunately, this also can be a setback. For example, when there is no signal on wi-fi, and it is not connecting, it causes a delay in communication. The delay in receiving information causes things to get behind or not get done. A delay in communication may also occur when texting on cell phones because of a lack of a proper signal. Messages not received can confuse or decrease the clarity of a message, unlike using a landline phone to call someone, but everything has pros and cons. Technology is good when it works; however, because things can get done faster, the information can reach a larger crowd. The activities that regularly occur or connect to the research in the church, at this present time, are none. This is true not only in St Louis, but also for the communities in Tyler, Texas.

Some members do not feel comfortable when it comes to discipling, and most do not have the proper training to do it or an awareness of the importance of discipling others. Likewise, the resources are not available, insignificant finances, like of interest of the people, deficiencies of time, and an influence with no response.

Moreover, the need for training disciple-makers is at the forefront, and this need is increasing daily and should be an emphatic statement to the church. There must be some renovations to have effective discipleship in every community. There is a considerable amount of perplexity in the needs of everyday life for humanity, whether hunger, shelter, healings are the main reasons for salvation. There must be an attempt by believers to do something.

Problem Presented

St. Louis Baptist Church members need a more structured way to train on disciples making disciples. A structured, small-group disciple training program should teach the members to make disciples like Jesus taught. Not having the proper training for making disciple-makers went on for many generations; baptizing, becoming members, and having a membership became most important. Seemingly, more attention was placed on membership than becoming a disciple. The problem with St. Louis Baptist Church in disciple-making could be that the believers are not sure of their salvation. Some believe that if they sin, then they have lost their salvation. Because of this, they do not feel comfortable with discipling. The issue of disciple-making will be addressed, as other issues from the perspective mentioned earlier. Additional reasons for the project are that most do not view disciple-making as Jesus taught it to his disciples, and they feel that it is antiquated and ineffective.

On the other hand, Christians must not misinterpret the way Jesus taught; it must be understood as teaching to transform lives which still is the purpose today. Many feel that the

internet, social media, and YouTube are better ways to evangelize. Social media is helpful in times of confinement,

David Allen's article "Time Management in the Age of Social Media," lists three qualities about social media that humans value; connection, transparency and immediacy. These three qualities make social media attractive for the majority of people today. The quality of connection when explained, reminds readers that social media is viewed as a supplement not a substitute for face-to-face interaction. Therefore, using social media causes disciple-makers to portray that they are authentic (feelings and perception, but not necessarily honest) and Jesus taught His disciples to teach others face to face with honesty.²¹

The COVID-19 pandemic caused more problems for disciple-making, making many believers afraid to disciple face to face.

Ultimately, COVID-19 caused a setback for the church in that it also allowed ineffectiveness in evangelism. Community outreach for household needs replaced disciple-making, which is vital to ministry but cannot replace disciple-making. Reinstatement of disciple-making can occur with the proper training by faithful leaders. Dedicated believers and faithfulness must be a part of the foundational principles for disciple-makers. The problem is that at St. Louis Baptist Church, there is a lack of a structured training process to make disciples, leading to a deficiency of disciple-makers.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this DMIN action research project is to develop and deliver a structured small group training process for making disciples who will become St. Louis Baptist Church disciple-makers. This research project identifies evidence of the lack of disciple-making, developing a plan to increase disciple making, and testing that plan through a small group training. In addition, the researcher will address the problem from a foundational principle. The

²¹ Williams, Myron. "Community, Discipleship, And Social Media." *Christian Education Journal* 12, no. 2 (Fall 2015): 376-377.

participants will learn from *The Disciple-Maker's Handbook*, which will explain the tools, the plan and the process; to cultivate how to become a disciple-maker.²² Because of the lack of disciple-making, this project and the research that has been done would be beneficial to the church.

The benefits directly related to the ministry context in the thesis project will give all the resources to enable the church to be effective in the community. Making drastic changes will give new insight and hope. Hopefully, this will engage others as they see the growing effects in the community. The problem of disciple-making in today's churches is causing members to be stuck (i.e., struggling with faith, hope, love, and thoughts that prayers are being ignored) when making disciples.

This problem must be faced head-on, with a long-range view for multiplying disciple-makers in the church through small groups in educational tools producing growth with maturity. Ogden argues, “though adult education programs and small group ministries are good tools to produce maturity, without the focus of small discipling units, a solid foundation is difficult to build.”²³ Moreover, the participants must understand the focus of small groups and its effectiveness by starting small groups leaving room to grow as they learn. The smaller the group, the more efficient the learning process can be accomplished. Time is allowed for the growing process to resonate with what is being taught. Each learning session on becoming a disciple-maker can be pinpointed for expert accuracy. This is where growth begins when disciple-makers are well-trained in presenting the gospel to others. Many may not have a great understanding of

²² Bobby Harrington and Josh Patrick, *The Disciple-Maker's Handbook: 7 Elements of a Discipleship Lifestyle* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2017), 164-165.

²³ Greg Ogden, *Discipleship Essentials: A Guide to Building Your Life in Christ* (Westmont: InterVarsity Press, 2019), 8.

small groups and their effectiveness, but when examining Jesus' ministry, one can see the power of his discipling in small groups from the beginning, when he called the first two disciples and taught them to disciple others.

Basic Assumptions

The assumptions of the DMIN research project are listed in this section. First, the participants will address some of the issues they think might help members get involved in true discipleship making and some of the needed things. The research from *The Disciple-Maker's Handbook* begins with foundational principles, teaching the curriculum with the criteria on how to work in the community they serve. Some parts of the community may be different because of the key demographics and the culture presented, particularly geographics. Nevertheless, the plan must stay with the foundational structure as much as possible, persevering when challenges arise. The group must keep its optimistic focus on the training approach for the best results. Next, the main objective is to know this is a discipline that Christ commanded every believer to do—past, present, and future. Discipling only works with the proper training, even when it seems unsuccessful, which is another assumption underlying this study. Nevertheless, it is a part of discipling others.

The following assumption is for the group to learn from the training and then use the same training to train others, causing a multiplying reproducible instrument for God's kingdom-building. Kingdom-building training material gives a structure to place each disciple-maker in the best position to lead others. There are factors, however, that could cause ineffectiveness or may slow down the process in the participants learning skills. It is always important to make sure the time which is given in the training process allows maximum results. Disciple-making is not a thing that is only done when time allows but should be a lifestyle in every Christian to share

what God has done for mankind. There must be a goal to discipling, as the need demands every day. Teaching others to lead others to Christ building a kingdom ready to receive Him when he returns. Francis Chan states, “God wants us to be talking about Him all throughout the week. Discipleship is all about living life together that one structured meeting per week. However, it is shocking how quickly time gets away from us so it is good to establish at least one regular meeting time each week. Without a little bit of structure, our intentions often don’t result in actions.”²⁴ By having the tools, plan, and process to present to the participating groups for this change, the assumption that this process will work for the action for the effectiveness of disciple-making. Never has there been a need for discipling, like today, because God gave mankind time; now, as the time is getting closer, the need grows.

Making disciples today must walk alongside maturity growing toward Christ having an intentional love for God’s creation and to see other disciples’ skills grow. Greg Ogden agrees, stating that “discipling then is a relation where we intentionally walk alongside a growing discipler or disciples in order to encourage, correct and challenge them in love to grow toward maturity in Christ.”²⁵

Definitions

This project involves the case for discipleship in the St. Louis Missionary Baptist Church on disciple-makers. It will epitomize the terms used in the project by definition; they are interchangeable. The terms are a part of the thesis. Throughout the thesis, various terms are utilized to clarify discipling characteristics. The terms used as descriptors for discipling include

²⁴ Francis Chan, *Multiply: Volume 1: Disciple-Making for Ordinary People* (Colorado Springs: David C Cook, 2020), 11.

²⁵ Ogden, *Discipleship Essentials*.

faith, multiplying, gifts, peacemaker, discipleship, love, and Lord. These terms will help personify and conduct the research for the thesis. Moreover, according to its etymological syntax, some terms may be extended with ambiguity. This thesis will be clear and without uncertainty in the definitions of these terms.

Disciple. This is a term commonly applied to Christians, not only the chosen twelve. The word focuses on the importance of being a follower of Jesus Christ and learning from Him.²⁶

Discipleship. This involves following Jesus, learning from the Holy Spirit about God to share with others, and encouraging others to make disciples.²⁷

Faith. Faith is the response to divine truth, a trusting affirmation of a supernatural act of God's action in Christian's soul.²⁸

Gifts. The term of gifts God has many meanings. It primarily denotes to the gifts God gives to mankind, and the word conveys freeness. Mostly used as the divine gift or the gifts of the Holy Spirit. It is the third person in the Trinity and fully God to teach, comfort and empower disciples for the work in ministry.²⁹

Hope. Hope is the “feeling” of expectation and desire for a particular thing to happen.³⁰

²⁶ Martin H. Manser, *Dictionary of Bible Themes: The Accessible and Comprehensive Tool for Topical Studies* (London: Martin Manser, 2009), 8115.

²⁷ Ibid, 8115.

²⁸ F. L. Cross and Elizabeth A. Livingstone, eds., *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 598.

²⁹ Thomas R. Schreiner, Robert Yarbrough, and Joshua Jipp, *Romans (Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament)* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2018.), 607.

³⁰ Sam Van Eman, *Disruptive Discipleship: The Power of Breaking Routine to Kickstart Your Faith* (Downers Grove, Illinois: IVP Books, an imprint of InterVarsity Press, 2017), 86.

Kingdom of God. This describes God's total rule over the whole universe, building on God's kingly rule in heaven. The concept is found in both the Old Testament and the New Testament (end of times).³¹

Lord. This is one who owns and exercises power and authority over the person, making him rule in their lives daily. The Lord administers to their mind, body, and souls as needed (master of all creation).³²

Love. Love is God's attitude he imparts to His creatures as an extension to be demonstrated in every Christian.³³

Multiplying. This is the transferable model of a disciple who has met Christ and becomes a multiplying disciple (bearing much fruit).³⁴

Peacemaker. This term refers to a state of peace where all blessings flow to both land and people, having a peaceful attitude. This was also used to mean a state of rest at the end of war.³⁵

Sent. The terms *send forth* or *send out* are used to mean successful completion of a messenger at the end of His journey by delivery an object or piece of information (missionary apologetic).³⁶

³¹ Paul S. Karleen, *The Handbook to Bible Study: With a Guide to the Scofield Study System* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), 339-340.

³² Allen C. Myers, *The Eerdmans Bible Dictionary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987), 661.

³³ Karleen, *The Handbook to Bible Study*, 343.

³⁴ Manser, *Dictionary of Bible Themes*.

³⁵ Gerhard Kittel, Geoffrey W. Bromiley, and Gerhard Friedrich, eds., *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964), 405-409.

³⁶ Robert Balz Horst and Gerhard Schneider, *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990), 141-142.

Limitations

In this DMIN thesis project, there will be some limitations which some of the contributors may be acutely hesitant in their understanding and pursuit. Therefore, this attempt will call for forbearance from both facilitators and contributors. There must be an understanding to give a dialogue that includes all with comfortability to openly share their thoughts and restraints on discipling. The research must be done in confidentiality because this will help the researcher build confidence in the contributors and cause them to share openly for the project. In addition, action research will appear in this process, taking action due to the information given.³⁷ When this happens, discipling will become a part of the discipline needed for believers in the church, getting others to turn toward God, to follow Christ, as a part of their new creation. Restoring discipling and evangelizing must be a part of the church disciplines; the leaders must teach it with motivational commitment.

Furthermore, it should be done with qualitative research in the project, from a deductive approach, and action research to strengthen its success.³⁸ It makes for a better analysis when dealing with important subjects that may be critical. Unfortunately, many have given up on this discipling even to the point of making others. Christ never gave up on the lost nor lost confidence in his ability to disciple. Despite many strenuous situations and limitations, Jesus was faithful to His church and was obedient, even to death. The process in this DMIN thesis project will untether a long-awaited and revised commandant.

³⁷ Ernest T. Stringer, *Action Research*, fourth ed. (Thousand Oaks: SAGE, 2014), 7.

³⁸ Tim Sensing, *Qualitative Research: A Multi-Methods Approach to Projects for Doctor of Ministry Theses* (Eugene: Wipf and Stock, 2011), 20-21.

Delimitations

The inauguration of this DMIN thesis project at the St Louis Missionary Baptist Church in Tyler, Texas will consist of demographics for the imposed research. The project participants will consist of age groups ranging from eighteen to eighty years. All participants will be recruited from the St. Louis Baptist Church membership and local churches within a 20-mile radius, if needed. The curriculum for St. Louis will come from various academic scholars, who have been in the profession for many years, and have written several books in the study (disciple-makers). The barriers of the research study must also go beyond the curriculum, knowing what to use to train the stakeholders and what not to use. For example, the intervention determines what areas of their weaknesses should be focused on first, targeting disciple-making training from a theological and a theoretical foundation. In addition, participants in the study, whether comprehensive in the Word or not, may be critical of the instruments used to recruit and assess the participants knowledge of disciple-making, and choose not to participate.

In the process of training participants and gathering data in this project, one may forget the physical, mental, resistance, and social cost of gathering the disciple-making data. Upon recruiting participants to complete entry survey questions; those of all academic levels may object to completing a short open-ended version of questions, instead having easy true-false or multiple-choice questions.

Furthermore, the fruitfulness of disciple-making has yet to be effective when viewed in a secular and worldwide system. The gospel should be highly productive and prolific in times of uncertainty, despair, pandemics, and famine; these are the things that cannot be controlled, but these are conditions that should cause the Christians who are willing to make a change for the

better. Some will intensify their effort, and those are the ones who are waiting for the proper training to make a difference in their commitment.

Thesis Statement

If the members of St. Louis Baptist Church participate in deliberate discipleship training, then it will lead to a greater desire for discipleship among the participants. Intentionally teaching others to build relationships as Jesus taught, starting with small groups of available people with faithful hearts and being able to count on reliable people who will transform their lives for others to see. Ultimately, making God visible in their faith walk with Christ. Suppose this is the problem with disciple-making at St. Louis Baptist Church in disciple-makers. In this case, this research for disciple-makers can positively affect discipleship (following the tools, plan, and process). The church must get a full understanding of what becoming a disciple means; faithfulness and obedience are the centerpieces for building disciples who will disciple others.

Luke 9:23-24 gives a full description of what becoming a disciple through faithfulness and obedience means. Luke provides the answer by mentioning denying oneself to come after Christ and taking up a cross as he did for an example and then following Him. Not only did He state taking up the cross, but He mentions doing this daily. Each day in a disciples' life, there must be clarity for daily cross-bearing. Daily cross-bearing does not mean taking a cross upon our shoulders as Christ did, but we must overcome the things that burden us daily by doing our best as Christians to help others struggling with life's circumstances. Those who may know Christ will need guidance from other Christians with the same problems. Because of this, training for disciple-makers to make disciples be taught by those preparing to train disciples. Jesus wanted the disciples to understand that there would be some challenges in discipling each day because disciple-makers should always follow Him and with this being the case, He wanted

them to realize that there would be some things that they must lose. In the same manner, some things could be saved. The vitality of this will be a part of the training to make disciple-makers recognize the problem of not making disciple-makers in the church as He has commanded.

According to this DMIN thesis project, all of the disciple-making training is necessary for becoming a disciple-maker who makes disciples and the healthiness of the church.³⁹ Today, ensuring that disciples can make other disciples has not been made a priority in some churches. At some local churches in Tyler, Texas, there is a lack of focus on disciple-making, and St. Louis Baptist Church is one of those places of worship. Finally, with the research, intervention, and training restoring disciple-making to its rightful place at St. Louis Baptist Church, increasing the priority of disciple-making can be accomplished. If a structured training process for making disciples is implemented, then St. Louis Baptist Church will have more disciple-makers helping to solve the problem facing the church

³⁹ Greg Ogden. *Discipleship Essentials: A Guide to Building Your Life in Christ*. (Westmont: InterVarsity Press, 2019. Accessed January 30, 2022.), 168.

CHAPTER 2: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The following framework used to produce a Doctor of Ministry thesis project addresses the philosophy and understanding of intentional relational discipleship. Since there was no training for disciples making disciples at the St. Louis Baptist Church, the presented training in this framework will include literature from these three primary sources: *Disciple makers Handbook*, *Discipleship Essentials*, and *Disruptive Discipleship*. Indeed, the academic discussion has provided an enormous dialogic of literature to process these themes, which are relevant to the contemporary philosophies in the world today. Modern culture has caused atrophy in biblical studies, making the intentional relational discipleship casual introspectively.¹ The Literature is always essential when reviewing the evidence presented in this work, making the research effective by knowing the correct way to establish topical literature as reviewed. Educational consultant Cary Hardy commented, “Literature is an aspect of modern culture because it allows a person to step back in time and learn about life on Earth from the ones who walked before us. We can gather a better understanding of culture and have a greater appreciation of them.”² Culture shows that theologically literature contains God's creation of mankind in relationship with Him, made in His image, and discipling is about making others in God's image.

Theoretically, literature relates to *discipling* as the divine calling of the church today. *Literature is* needed to guide Christians to comprehend the ways of the Lord. To take the Bible literally must be understood through literature, examining words and verses. Francis Chan

¹ Harrington and Patrick, *The Disciple-Maker's Handbook*, 41.

² Cary Hardy, *How Can Literature Influence a Person?*, 8.

states, “when we examine each word, verse, chapter, and book, we need to allow the context to suggest whether that verse should be taken as a literal statement, a rhetorical question, a figure of speech, etc.”³ Literary context is essential and should be applied when examining the Bible and other literature sources for research. The Bible has no chance for error regarding truth, but textual criticisms must be examined closely for the correct interpretation for effectiveness.

Literature Review

Although there are many writings on how to make disciples, there are five key steps take when forming a disciple-making group: listen, recruit, prepare, engage, and release.⁴ The participants must listen well when the class is reviewing the literature which will be based on preparing them to recruit. And teaching them to engage with the person that they witness to. These key steps are foundational to the use of how, who, and when it relates to being a disciple.⁵ The literature review gives many sources on discipling for believers on how to become a disciple-maker, who the disciple-makers are, and when to make disciples. These foundational key steps make disciple-makers effective in discipling.

Christian training literature and how it is obtained is a little different from the past when compared to the twenty-first century, especially when it comes to generation Z (1995-2010) and Alpha (2010-2025).⁶ In Corey Seemiller and Meghan Grace book, they state, “Generation Z is rapidly replacing Millennials on college campuses. Those born from 1995 through 2010 have

³ Francis Chan. *Multiply: Volume 1: Disciple making for ordinary people*. David C Cook Publishing Company, 2020.), 132.

⁴ Harrington and Patrick, *The Disciple-Maker's Handbook*, 47.

⁵ *Ibid*, 47.

⁶ Corey Seemiller and Meghan Grace, “Generation Z: Educating and Engaging the Next Generation of Student,” *About Campus* 22, no. 3 (2017): 21.

different motivations, learning styles, characteristics, skill sets, and social concerns than previous generations.”⁷

Today technology has been the medium for resources when gathering literature for research. Technology also broadens the use for learning purposes in Christian seminaries and colleges to equip students to do global missions worldwide (disciple-making).

Karen E. Boden argues,

An unprecedented opportunity exists for Christian colleges and universities to utilize 21st-century technology and the impact of globalization to broaden the use of distance learning for missional purposes through their educational offerings. Some institutions offer open education that allows those with internet access to take courses at no cost online without earning credits. A more open approach by Christian colleges and universities to providing educational resources via electronic means can better equip Christians from around the world while also serving students, alumni, and other lifelong learners who seek to remain relevant in today’s workforce.⁸

In addition, this mode of distance learning with modern technology enhances the gathering of literature will spread quickly, reaches out further, and enables the students in their research. Social media and the internet have given the advantage and empowering the student to become more successful than in the past. This eventually carries over into aiding ministry workers and their leaders with valuable sources of literature for disciple-makers. Churches and colleges are working together to advance disciple-makers for the future.

⁷ Corey Seemiller and Meghan Grace, “Generation Z: Educating and Engaging the Next Generation of Student,” *About Campus* 22, no. 3 (2017): 21.

⁸ Karen E. Boden. "The Next Frontier in Making Disciples: 21st-Century Technology Use in CCCU Member Institutions," *Christian Higher Education* 11, no. 4 (2012): 272.

Discipleship

The method of discipleship is important, understanding the argument of teaching one to become a disciple of Christ, and then teaching one to make a disciple for Christ is the focus, and everyone should have this built into their faith as a believer. Jim Putman argues,

Far too many of us assume that discipleship is merely the transfer of information leading to behavior modification. But discipleship, at heart, involves transformation at the deepest levels of our understanding, affection, and will by the Holy Spirit, through the Word of God, and in relationship with the people of God.⁹

The previous quote from Putman is what some believers think when it comes to discipling.

Information does not cause transformation alone but modifying the heart at the deepest levels will by the Holy Spirit change the heart. Therefore, as Harrington and Patrick say it, it should be based on the heart.¹⁰ For without the heart, there is no transformation to the understanding of affection of the Word of God. The heart causes holiness, making for peace with everyone (Hebrews 12:14), enabling the believers to see God. However, to build an understanding, one must understand intentional relational discipleship. Many understand when the Word intentionally is used, meaning that it was not by accident, unexpected, to be caught by surprise, or even to be caught off guard, without plans or reservations.

Moreover, intentionally discipling must be done; it is the duty of the disciples because Jesus has commanded it, making it relational by Jesus and his disciples coming together. The disciples obeyed His command, coming together with others by discipling. His first teachings were to "Follow me"—the command given to the first disciples (Peter and Andrew). Bobby Harrington and Jos Patrick offer “Three aspects for defining disciple or the foundational

⁹ Jim Putman, Bobby Harrington, and Robert Emerson Coleman, *DiscipleShift: Five Steps That Help Your Church to Make Disciples Who Make Disciples* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2013), 49.

¹⁰ Ibid, 49.

definition for a disciple, First, ‘Following’ Jesus (head), getting the follower to understand the call on their lives must be in line with Him. Second, ‘Being changed,’ by Jesus through the Holy spirit (heart). Thirdly, being committed to the mission Jesus, which is to be ‘fishers of men’ (hands).”¹¹ Therefore, making the head, heart, and hands the focus to cause them to go out. There must be a knowledge of him, there must be a heart of him, and there must be a willingness to reach out to others. It makes the three-part framework effective as found in the New Testament definition of a disciple multiplying. The disciple-making process is straightforward, but the following steps are where many lose their attention to grow by following Jesus's examples.

The examples are based on what Jesus’ actions were from the very start, of a disciple following Him to be changed, and then committing themselves to Jesus' mission. The disciples leave everything to follow Jesus. Then Peter said, Lo, we have left all, and followed thee.¹² The disciples left their businesses, families, and homes. The literature demonstrates how the word disciple and following are so intricately connected. One is a title; the other is an act of the title. the Greek word for disciple is *matheteuo* (μαθητεύω), meaning to be taught or instructed, and for that reason, the believer must understand that he or she will be taught.¹³ Teaching in obedience as Jesus taught for instructions; go, baptize and teach obedience. The idea was to go beyond where they were, so Jesus could be made known publicly to draw others to Christ. The Gospel of Mark makes this clear; in chapter twelve, it begins with demonstrating obedience in their missionary work throughout the chapter. James R. Edwards states, “though addressed to the twelve, like much of vv. 17-42 this saying the apostles to disciple at large. The point is made clear by

¹¹ Harrington and Patrick, *The Disciple-Maker's Handbook*, 35.

¹² Luke 18:28, KJV.

¹³ [*The Lexham Analytical Lexicon of the Septuagint*](#) (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2012).

"whosoever" (v 32). A necessary criterion for being a disciple of Jesus is to acknowledge Him publicly."¹⁴

The call is in practical phrases, and they should be taught by the description as disciples to go, baptize, and teach obedience publicly. This makes the following effects seen as a witness (follow). The word "follows," meaning "to come after," *opiso* (ὀπίσω) as a transformed by the spirit and the image of Jesus to enable obedience. In everything he commanded, Harrington and Patrick state, to "Follow – This is how we apply the 'obey' everything I have commanded you part of the command" (vs. 20). Disciple-making leads to obedience and sanctification (the process of being progressively transformed by the spirit into the image of Jesus). Furthermore, it naturally includes and leads the command to make other disciples (mission is built into the process)."¹⁵ In short, the process also encourages "faith," the essential part of Imaging Christ. The works of Christ and His disciples not only reveal intentional relational discipleship, but it also lets others recognize the relationship. Just as baptism demonstrates a sign of a public acknowledgment causing faith, the writer of Hebrews reveals this makes the disciple a stronger witness for sharing the gospel.

The literature explains this situation. Jon Huckins argues, "We often fall victim to viewing one's faith as something we must preserve, and guard, and defend. As such, we think that if we move toward relationships with those we differ from or disagree with, we will somehow compromise the integrity of our faith. As we have stated earlier, moving toward the others does not compromise one's faith; it relates the very best of it."¹⁶ This usually leads to

¹⁴ James Edwards, *The Gospel According to Mark* (Grand Rapids: 2020), 343.

¹⁵ Harrington and Patrick, *The Disciple-Maker's Handbook*, 37.

¹⁶ Jon Huckins, *Mending the Divides: Creative Love in a Conflicted World* (Downers Grove: IVP Books 2017), 100.

battles between two people, causing an ineffective persuasion for Christ. The situation biblically does not call for a win; however, it does call for healing of the issue that may be causing difficulty in one's life that God could heal to win them over (spiritually and physically). Huckins mentions this earlier, stating, "When played out in real life, these words lead to an entrenched faith that seeks to escape our world rather than a faith rooted in deep conviction - a faith that intentionally moves toward difference and disagreement equipped to heal rather than to win."¹⁷

The most effective literature must be well-thought-out. The literature used for the training will involve the problem of the absence of making disciples at St. Louis Baptist Church. For those members who have lost all hope, those who have given up on themselves, their lives outweigh their ability to go further, and for whatever reason, their minds begin to exasperate, not having the answer to their problems. They need to learn how to ameliorate their position to go further. In the literature, Sam Van Eman observes this, mentioning God's provision for the case of how hope feeds on faith. Van Eman argues, "' We go, God provides, faith increases, and hope feeds on it.' We mature because that is the effect the cycle has on our lives. Each little test and every minute of waiting for a need to be met delivers another strength and teaches us to whine less as we like less. Hope feeds on faith."¹⁸ He also mentions how faith and hope can cause a chronic adaptation, when the bodies strength gets stronger and affects the belief that God's strength is better. Discipling others can also bring about a loss of hope when challenges arise in the ministry of discipling.

¹⁷ Ibid., 54.

¹⁸ Sam Van Eman, *Disruptive Discipleship: The Power of Breaking Routine to Kickstart Your Faith* (Downers Grove: IVP Books, 2017), 94.

John Noland states on the faith of the apostle Paul, "The faith which Paul's apostles seeks to bring about is not something different from obedience, from the response God expected from his Covenant people but is rather the way in which obedience must be expressed."¹⁹ Discipleship must be expressed, and their walk, and how they live, being in the image of Christ (imitators), and in their works, and when it did not work out, then wait on the Lord's strength to work it out, causing faith to feed hope.

How Do Disciples Mature?

Literature will help to build a stronger faith to grow and help others to become disciples. The community process sets in as the discipleship develops into anticipated perfection. Multiplying and making more disciples demonstrates how faith is perfected through a prayer life, love for one another, worship, and devotional life. Ephesians 6:18 demonstrates this through; always praying in the spirit, representing a prayer life, worship, and devotional life. Persistence in one's prayers for all believers everywhere validates the love for one another. Observing others come into the body, fulfilling the mystery of how God puts people together for His purpose as a kingdom owner. Mark Edward Taylor concludes, "Mature, in his view, is not a higher maturity level but rather a faith that anticipates perfection. In the case of religion, modern culture has used the mystery of God's Word, creating a gap between believers and non-believers alike when it comes to religion. Religion takes discipleship to another extent, making it more challenging to share the gospel truth, even if Christianity is the accurate Word of God. Christianity comes from the word *Christ*, which ties the term to Him, making it clear. In Dr. Roland Chia's article entitled,

¹⁹ John Nolland, *The Gospel of Matthew: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005), 112.

Bonhoeffer and Discipleship, he explains Bonhoeffer's central message, "Christianity without discipleship is always Christianity without Christ."²⁰

Furthermore, Christian disciples share Christ's teaching with others to persuade transformation through teaching of the gospel. Ghazaryan Ani Drissi concludes,

A Christian disciple is a person who accepts and assists in the spreading of the good news of Jesus Christ. Christian discipleship is the process by which disciples grow in the teaching of Jesus Christ and are prepared in the Holy Spirit who resides in their heart to overcome the pressures and trials of this present life and become more and more Christ-like.²¹

Nevertheless, being able to share and disciple, the modern culture is not able to share or disciple because it is rooted in skeptical philosophy (questions, meaning definition, and explanation).

C. S. Lewis argues,

We are always prevented from accepting total skepticism because it can be formulated only by making a tacit exception in favour of the thought we are thinking at the moment— just as the man who warns the newcomer “Don’t trust anyone in this office” always expects you to trust him at that moment.²²

Therefore, with so many religions' denominational practices, where does a disciple proceed from there? Today's basis for skeptical thinkers' thoughts is due to an intrusion of countless cultures and ways of thinking. Skepticism does not give extensive and demanding answers to life in our current culture. Many religious experiences from the skeptic's past have been negative. In our culture today, everything must be proven with thorough evidence.²³

²⁰ Roland Chia, “Bonhoeffer and Discipleship,” Ethos Institute for Public Christianity, November 20, 2017, <https://ethosinstitute.sg/bonhoeffer/>.

²¹ Ani Ghazaryan Drissi, "What Is Transforming Discipleship?" *The Ecumenical Review* 71, no. 1-2 (2019): 271.

²² Jerry Root and Martindale, Wayne, eds. *The Quotable Lewis*. (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 1990), 1172. Accessed December 11, 2022. ProQuest Ebook Central.

²³ Gregg R. Allison, *Sojourners and Strangers: The Doctrine of the Church*. (Wheaton, Ill: Crossway, 2012), 113, 132, 305.

Examples of this in the New Testament are in the Gospel of John. He writes about two negative statements by Jesus's disciples; Nathaniel's comments about Christ (John 1:46) and Thomas's doubts about Christ.²⁴

It is so astonishing to see God's work in the light of impossibility, using even bad situations to make for the oneness of the gospels, using everything that he chooses to make himself known to the world without excuses. Nevertheless, not leaving out anyone—even if it is the lack of faith or unable to convert to his teachings, and even to the point of it being non-native—there is a way to disciple all nations.

The community can be disciplined, creating a multiplying contrivance with an unstoppable relationship—and at the same time, growing and maturing. The daily regeneration, being led and taught simultaneously by the Holy Spirit causing the perfection which God requires to gain maturity in Kingdom living. Just imagine communities everywhere being transformed by effective discipleship. Furthermore, these are the benefits of teaching and training the same way Jesus did it. Discipling success can only come through the way Jesus has instructed disciple-makers. This form of disciple-making benefits the disciple and is a benefit to the church. So, what does that mean to have a church that benefits from performing discipleship correctly?

When disciples lose faith in discipling, maturity decreases gradually, keeping believers' maturity mundane. As well as true maturity works antithetically from this. Sam Van Eman observes, "This makes it challenging to grow in faith on purpose, since growing in faith requires uncertainty and risk (such as entering those stressful situations our brains want to avoid). Just ask the cavers. Few would want everyday life to be so hard, even if it promised a double portion of

²⁴ John 20:24-29, KJV.

faith."²⁵ Thus, maturity comes with a price if discipling others occurs in everyday missions. Sharing the gospel is a beautiful work because God's reward is eternal.

Relational Discipleship

Relationships come and go, even among people who have been friends for many years. To understand the Word, one must look even further. Additionally, to get a premise of this Word, they would have to start out knowing that the Word consists of two or more people. To have a relationship, there must be a foundational methodology. The literature gave a biblical style for authentic foundations; it gives the word "love" to build on for a solid and true relation. Jim Putman concludes, "Jesus's examples and teaching of the New Testament show us that disciple-making is relational. 'Jesus-style' love (John 13:34-35) 4 people is both the foundational environment for disciple-making and the ultimate fruit of disciple-making."²⁶ Mainly, discipling must make "love" the ultimate thing because this is how God disciplines' humanity, with His love, by giving His son so that He could demonstrate God's love. This is the relationship needed for humanity on *agape* love, the kind of love that makes people come together and spend time with each other—working together for one common cause.

Onyinah Opoku states, "The discipleship relationship must feature love, commitment, authenticity, vulnerability, accountability, and intentionality with the disciples-to-be. Jesus, having called His disciples, made a practice of spending time with them."²⁷ This is the truth that must be a part of discipling others; when a person is disciplined, one can see the love in a person as

²⁵ Van Eman, *Disruptive Discipleship*, 70.

²⁶ Harrington and Patrick, *The Disciple-Maker's Handbook*, 42.

²⁷ Opoku Onyinah, "The Meaning of Discipleship," *International Review of Mission* 106, no. 2 (2017): 222.

well when they share the gospel. It is so inviting when the love comes out, making it easier to see the truth. Presenting truth has the power to change minds and hearts. Truth is a powerful persuasion; there is no greater power than love, and secondly, the persuasion of truth.

Lori Dahlhoff argues, "If truth is a truth of love, if it is a truth disclosed and personal encounters with the other and with others, then it can be set free from its enclosure in individuals and become a part of the common good. As a truth of love, it is not one that can be imposed by force; it is not a truth that stifles the individual. Since it is born of love, it can penetrate to the heart, to the personal core of each man and woman."²⁸ The core and the creation of humanity is to love and worship the creator. If God is love, God loved His creation, placing them in a perfect utopia. Nevertheless, sin changed the condition for the relationship with God, but God's love did not change. God continues to demonstrate more love, as He still allows the lost to come back into a covenant relationship with Him by choice. Love is the evidence of true discipleship, where people know that someone cares when creating a relationship. Harrington and Patrick conclude, "Notice what Jesus says: 'As I have loved you.' Jesus-like is something that is first experienced in the context of being disciple by God through the Holy Spirit and God's word and in the context of community through a discipleship. relationship with others in the body of Christ. But love is not just the environment that makes discipleship happen, it is also the evidence of True discipleship."²⁹ God will hold all responsible for relationships with one another. There is so much hatred in the world today; people now will hate a person for no reason or just because of what someone has said about the person, not knowing the full story, disliking someone because

²⁸ Lori Dahlhoff, "Creating a Culture of Encounter," *Momentum* 45, no. 3 (2014): 46.

²⁹ Harrington and Patrick, *The Disciple-Maker's Handbook*, 67.

of what others have said. Even disliking someone by what they possess, or their abilities are. God has given everyone a measure of ability (i.e., gifts).

For a better understanding of what discipleship means, the word *relationship* comes to mind. Some only see or understand this in terms of relating to Christ. Others see or understand this in relating to the church members in their church. When it comes to relationships, however, it is much more than that. So how do relations work when it comes to one another? First, Jesus told His disciples that the world would know them because of the love they have for one another. He taught a clear lesson about a relationship between the disciples first, then equally, to love people as well as God. God's love is an important gift to mankind because all are blessed by the gift of love. Jesus was a love gift to the world for the remission of sin. Not only was the gift of love demonstrated in Jesus for sin, but Jesus also gave His disciples the gift of sharing to make more.

Ferguson and Warren argue that "gift activation occurs at commissioning. What we have nicknamed the Great Commission in Matthew³⁰ was Jesus very specifically offering his authority and blessing to make more."³¹ Additionally, this made the gift more active, encouraging the disciples to move forward with the "Good News," glorifying God and sharing with others. The challenges of traveling and trying to persuade the people to come to Christ showed their faithfulness. These physical challenges had affected the disciples tremendously, and there had to be a need for rest, mentally and physically. God knew that man would have to rest. Sophia Steibel and Martha S. Bergen conclude, "The body is restored to rest and, thereby, strengthened

³⁰ Matthew 28: 19-20, KJV.

³¹ Dave Ferguson and Warren Bird, *Hero Maker: Five Essential Practices for Leaders to Multiply Leaders* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2018),139.

for work. Doing our work well brings God glory and benefits others as well as ourselves. God commands us to 'remember the Sabbath' teaches us that both rest and work are good."³² When training others for discipling, there must be a clear understanding of the concept of a time for rest, and there is a time for work. Resting does not negatively affect discipleship but does make it possible to rejuvenate and strengthen the body and mind to continue in its faithfulness toward disciple-making.

Making no mistakes for demanding work; the challenge comes and goes, but there is no one that will tell them hard work is not beneficial. However, being rewarded does not mean being in competition with each other or being jealous of each other's gifts. But it does mean making it count. Watching families grow, communities grow, and churches and ministries grow to affect the needed change, Paul advocates the Corinthian's sustaining faith and growing into Christ-likeness.³³ Paul is expressing that he was doing right by following the law, but when he became one outside the law, his fervor to win souls was less aggressive. Transformation makes the disciple so others can train Christians to become disciples. We lose what others might gain, transforming them and the disciple trainer.³⁴

Theological Foundations

Old Testament

The word *disciple* is not found anywhere in the Old Testament, although there are abstractions throughout the Old Testament demonstrating discipling others to God (Gen 18:19,

³² Sophia Steibel and Martha S. Bergen, "The Body: Discipleship of our Physicality," *Christian Education Journal* 16, no. 1 (2019): 102-103.

³³ I Corinthians 9:21, KJV.

³⁴ Greg Ogden. *Discipleship Essentials: A Guide to Building Your Life in Christ*. (Westmont: InterVarsity Press, 2019. Accessed January 30, 2022.), 107.

Deut. 6:4-9).³⁵ From the very beginning, one can see the validity of discipleship in the Book of Genesis. Furthermore, to better understand what God meant about discipling and how it would work, believers must explore the foundational meaning as God used it in activity. The first question would be why God created a man. The Bible mentions God created a man for his glory (Isa 43:7) to worship Him. Moreover, causing a relationship with man in creation. The triune God wanted Adam to know him, give him a relationship, and honor him in worship. God wants relational people to serve him in honor of him. So, God created a man in his image and likeness (Gen 1:26) and discipling man to serve God by learning, following, and glorifying God. Their relationship would start every morning early, God walking with Adam in the garden. The narrative gives the first part of a foundational model for discipleship. Making someone in the image and imitating Christ to multiply and for that reason, God made Eve for Adam to multiply the Earth with godly people. Discipleship is about creating more people in God's image. Being like Christ and creating is a vital part of becoming a disciple-maker and teaching others to create more disciples.

The Bible gives other evidence of the relational union between people. Moses, the great leader who led the children of Israel out of bondage in Egypt, taught the people the ways of God and what he had planned for them when they came into the promised land. He disciplined Joshua for leadership as his mentor. Teaching him how to lead God's people to obey and worship God. God chose Joshua, and Moses taught him how to lead by demonstration, standing beside Moses, and learning the Lord.³⁶ God calls individuals to Him and others that are called to teach them

³⁵ J. T. English. *Deep Discipleship: How the Church can make Whole Disciples of Jesus* (Nashville: B&H Publishing Group, 2020.), 1.

³⁶ Num 27:15-21, KJV.

leadership. Joshua was prepared to lead others; discipling must be trained in a way to lead others in the Holy Spirit. Yet, leadership comes with a price, including rejection, disobedience, and unfaithfulness. Allen contends,

Then, to the next generation the challenge was to be given: Would they like their parents say “No” to God? Or would they follow him as he would lead them into the land of promise? Well, God has time and the wilderness has sand. If the second generation behaved as their mothers and fathers had, then they too would be buried in the sands of the wilderness.³⁷

Moses led the people out of Egypt as their leader, but rejection and disobedience from the first generation soon led to the wilderness wanderings of the desert. Training believers to make other disciples is to be passed on, and like the teaching in the Old Testament, each generation must continue to do the same for discipleship in the future. In truth, they are one. Rarely in the Christian tradition have these two areas of theology run together in such vigorous fashion. Edwardsean theology is conversionist, seeking salvation always and everywhere; Edwardsean theology is spiritual, grounded in the Spirit who brings the dead to life and beautifies the believer.³⁸

New Testament

Paul's letter to Ephesus analyzes theology foundations in the New Testament. Paul is writing to the church about building up the body of Christ.³⁹ He makes it clear in the next verse that Christ is the head (leader), and the church is the spiritual "body" of which every believer will become as part of a spiritual body. The spiritual body brings the dead body to life, becoming one.

³⁷ Ronald B. Allen, *Numbers*, (HarperCollins Christian Publishing, 2017), 45. *ProQuest Ebook Central*, <http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/liberty/detail.action?docID=6166852>. Created from liberty on 2022-12-16 01:47:48.

³⁸ Jason G. Duesing and Nathan A. Finn, eds. *Historical Theology for the Church*. (Nashville: B&H Publishing Group, 2021), 236. Accessed December 16, 2022. ProQuest Ebook Central.

³⁹ Ephesians 4:4:16-17, NASB95

This is how discipleship should work, all of the training, focusing on one purpose. The foundational theology worked then, and it will still work in the present time. “As a historical development primarily within the Christian tradition, foundational theology refers to particular categories and concepts that are found on the edge of philosophy and theology.”⁴⁰ The process of teaching for maturing disciples must have an opportunity to grow at the same time as the process of learning. All must be willing to learn in this process of maturing disciples with an open mind and heart. Diana L. Hynson argues, “Some people accept the invitation to teach enthusiastically while others do so more reluctantly. Teaching is a great responsibility and paradoxically will enrich your own growth as you lead others and their growth. We teach and lead because God has called us to do so.”⁴¹ Furthermore, this gives the believer an opportunity to grow strong in their faith as they walk with Christ. The disciple is a student also, teaching and learning at the same time. The participant must pursue their gift. Sam Van Eman states, “Disciples are students and followers of Jesus, which means we studied his way and then grow in them. We do not have to wait for life to bring us opportunities to mature. We can exercise our own God-given ability to take initiative to pursue growth in faith, hope, and love, particular experiences that put these three to the test.”⁴²

There must be some kind of disruption in the way discipling is done today. The church has tried all kinds of theories, and models, but to a less effectiveness on getting people to disciple. Greg Ogden argues, “The irony is that focusing on a few takes a long-range view by

⁴⁰ P.L. Allen (2013), 908-916. *Fundamental Theology*. In: Runehov, A.L.C., Oviedo, L. (eds) *Encyclopedia of Sciences and Religions*. Springer, Dordrecht. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4020-8265-8_1194

⁴¹ Diana L. Hynson, “Who Am I as a Teacher?” *Disciple Ministries-United Methodist Church* (May 2019), <https://www.umcdiscipleship.org/resources/who-am-i-as-a-teacher>.

⁴² Van Eman, *Disruptive Discipleship*, 94.

multiplying the number of disciples and therefore expands a church's leadership base. Though adult education programs and small group ministries are good tools to produce maturity, without the focus of small discipling units a solid foundation is difficult to build."⁴³

There must be an exploration of options which will teach the way Christ taught His disciples for effectiveness. It must be as simple as possible because of all the limitations the leaders will experience, and the delimitations imposed by others. A disciple-maker cannot allow negative persuasions to default on the intervention design. They must work hard to get discipling done. Francis Chan and Mark Beuving in their book "Multiply," elaborate on living as a disciple in three categories—what is a disciple, the command to make disciples, and the heart of a disciple-maker—in order to build a foundational understanding.⁴⁴ The writers provide valid definitions of the word *disciples*.

The intervention design plan must be strong, and it must consist of the things which are modeled in the project thesis: to equip the saints to make it adequate, and to furnish completely, and not leave anything. The mature disciple should be one of the sources in becoming a disciple-maker, teaching disciple-makers to make disciples. A historical foundation of theology is found in the third person in the godhead, the Holy Spirit. He teaches all things, and it brings into memory all things (John 14:26) that are connected to knowing and doing what Jesus taught his disciples. Jesus wanted to leave behind a teacher and a reminder of what he had taught (John 14:26). The Holy Spirit still teaches today and will teach forever (John 16:), as an example of how disciple-makers will have to teach to reach others.

⁴³ Greg Ogden. *Discipleship Essentials: A Guide to Building Your Life in Christ*. (Westmont: InterVarsity Press, 2019. Accessed January 30, 2022.), 8.

⁴⁴ Chan, *Multiplying*, 15-49.

Historical Theology

The teaching should inform Christians about disciple-making through scripture.

Therefore, the project will give its operating principles under a theological outline. The project must operate by the inspiration of scripture, the authority of scripture, and the inerrancy of scripture with the interpretation for clarity; if disciple-makers are to be effective for all the general principles to encapsulate the historical theology must be examined (I Cor 2:12-13). First is to understand how the inspiration of scripture influenced historical theology. God inspired the scriptures, and Paul got Timothy to understand God's word is not the word of God's wisdom that He teaches, but the word of God is from the holy spirit that was breathed through the prophets.

Second Peter 1:19-21 states that no part of the Old Testament (called "the word of the prophets," or "prophetic Scripture," by Peter) "had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit." It was not by human initiative that Scripture came about, but it was the Spirit who worked through the biblical authors as they wrote.⁴⁵

Athenagoras used the metaphor about the spirit from God, describing "the spirit from God who moved the mouth of the prophets like musical instruments." He describes the profits as being lifted in ecstasy above the natural operations of their minds by the impulse of the Divine spirit." Thus, they ordered the things with which they were inspired, the spirit making use of them as a flute player breathes into a flute.⁴⁶ Discipling must be inspired by scripture if there is a case for making disciples of people who have never experienced God's knowledge about himself. Likewise, this will be a part of the teaching to get people disciplined as the teacher matures disciples. The authority of scripture will need to be taught as another part for the leaders to use as

⁴⁵ Gregg R. Allison and Wayne A. Grudem, *Historical Theology: An Introduction to Christian Doctrine: A Companion to Wayne Grudem's Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2011), 60.

⁴⁶ *Ibid*, 61.

they teach each other. This is because there will be some who will want to know that the Bible is God's word. The proof of God's authority is valid because there must be a demonstration of how God is above all other authorities.⁴⁷

As a divine author, and a divine authority, to give God more authority to others who are being disciplined. This will make the truth relevant and clearer to those who are being disciplined. The inerrancy of scripture has many criticisms, making it hard when discipling to maturity. This is why disciples must know how to teach the scripture when discipling people to maturity. It also affects how the theories are discussed in the criticisms. Leaders should receive training on how to deal with the criticisms of the inerrancy of scripture. The next part that should offer simplicity in discipling others is "the clarity of scripture."

The Bible reformer Martin Luther mentions how the Bible is clear in and of itself, but only to be understood with the Holy Scripture, making it up to the readers to get a clear understanding of scripture.⁴⁸ Equally important, the misunderstanding does not occur because of fault, but the problem lies with who reads it. He mentions the effect of seeing truth refusing discipleship teaching. Paul mentions how the veil on their hearts kept them lost; they hid the gospel, being blinded by the God of this world. The world must be disciplined so that they can disciple others. Matthew W Bates argues,

Jesus proclaimed the one gospel by announcing the inauguration of the kingdom of God as well as its anticipated culmination. In fact, when Mark summarizes Jesus' message, he makes it explicit that Jesus' fundamental task was to preach the kingdom of God as the gospel.⁴⁹

⁴⁷ Ephesians 1:20-21, NASB95

⁴⁸ Allison and Grudem, *Historical Theology*, 64-65.

⁴⁹ Matthew W. Bates, *Salvation by Allegiance Alone* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2017), 47-48.

The kingdom of God has to have followers. For the gospel to be shared to all nations, "there must be disciples making disciples," to build a kingdom of God. In the old covenant, the people's hearts were blinded; in the new covenant Jesus knew that the only way for people to see the glory of the new covenant was through their hearts. The people must disciple through their hearts, following Jesus' commands, teaching, and serving as he did as an example of a disciple-maker. Francis Chan states, "Ministering to other people has been a deadly trap for seemingly godly people throughout the ages. If God cared only about outward appearances and religious activities, then any effort toward ministry would please Him. But God tells us repeatedly that He cares more about the heart than the externals."⁵⁰ Likewise, the heart is where all treasures will be stored (Matthew 6:21).

Paul's teaching mentions the narratives of prophecy; he uses a historical theology from the Old Testament to make his points. Murray J. Harris argues, "Paul's thought has progressed from the idea of commendatory letters written on hearts by Christ to reflection on the new covenant under which the law would be written by God himself on responsive human hearts (Jeremiah 31:33; Ezekiel 36:26)."⁵¹ The gospel is known through prophecy, from the first gospel of the Old Testament covenant to the New Testament covenant gospel today. Salvation must be the choice to solve the sin problem, which controls the world today.

In the covenant gospel for disciple-making, there are two impactful examples for training today's disciple-makers, and Barnabas was starting a church at Antioch. Yon-Gyong Kwon states,

Barnabas, a Greek-speaking Jew from Cyprus, reflecting the changing climate of the Church's mission. Acts 11:23. He came and saw the grace of God: Like the church in Jerusalem (Acts 2:42–47), the church in Antioch also displayed visible signs of God's

⁵⁰ Chan, *Multiply*, 39.

⁵¹ Murray J. Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians: A Commentary on the Greek Text, New International Greek Testament Commentary* (Milton Keynes: Paternoster Press), 275.

grace for Barnabas to see. This ‘son of encouragement’ saw that their faith was authentic, and encouraged them ‘to remain faithful to the Lord with steadfast devotion’. Gospel is a ‘word’ to hear, but a word that works, the word of the living God (1 Thessalonians 2.13).⁵²

Acts 11 describes Paul’s relationship with Barnabas as a work of his apostleship to the Jerusalem Church. Barnabas sold his land and gave the money to the apostles to begin their mission work. This was an act of servitude because of Barnabas’ faith in the resurrected Jesus. Furthermore, this also explains Barnabas’ obedience to Paul. Faith and obedience in discipleship must be taught in disciple-making. The second example in the new covenant Paul was discipling the young Timothy on his mission journey (II Timothy 2:2). Charles Swindoll comments, “The purpose of my instruction is that all believers would be filled with love that comes from a pure heart, a clear conscience, and genuine faith.”⁵³ The two examples are a part of making disciples and training them to make other disciples by applying obedience, even if it means giving everything the person has and applying love because every disciple must share love to have obedience coming from a pure heart. Paul makes instructions for his disciples to launch their mission work while at the same time beginning his own.

Theoretical Foundations

In many instances throughout the Bible, discipleship and disciple-making has been carried out.⁵⁴ Even when Israel wanted to be like its neighbors (those who did not fear God), it wanted a king. God allowed them to choose a king, but he did not work for the people. Eventually, God chose David as their King, after God's own heart. David cried to God to restore

⁵² Yon-Gyong Kwon, *A Commentary on Acts*, 1517 Media, 2015, *ProQuest E-Book Central*, <http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/liberty/detail.action?docID=4396198>.

⁵³ Charles R. Swindoll, *Insights on 1 and 2 Timothy, Titus* (Carol Stream: Tyndale House Publishers, 2014).

⁵⁴ New American Standard Bible: 1995 Update (La Habra, CA: The Lockman Foundation, 1995), Ps 51:12–13.

his relationship with Him because he had sinned. After his failures, he now realized he must teach the word of God to others to convert others, just as he was converted.

In Psalm 51: 12-13, David cries out to God, "Restore to me the joy of your salvation and sustain me with a willing spirit. Then I will teach transgressors your ways, and sinners will be converted to you."⁵⁵ David now asks to be restored and to give him a willing spirit to convert sinners to God. This is a great demonstration of how Old Testament discipleship works for Israel's King.

Discipling sets the stage for the research to make it clear how discipling was taught—unknowingly—to the Old Testament patriarchs, which was not used as a term, but only by action. David mentions the word teach in this text, so there is no misunderstanding for the work that will be done. God absolves the believers when they are wrong, allowing them to turn back to him in forgiveness; however, it gives insight into a theory for those who may be unsure about their salvation in discipling.

Confession and Obedience

To not believe in Jesus Christ and disciple others is disloyal. Anyone saved must have confessed to Christ and turned away from sin—by believing in Christ (death, burial, and resurrection). Confession is asking for forgiveness and then walking in their faith. Therefore, the theory is debunked because of whom the Son has set free, he is free indeed (John 8:36). Many people have come up short, not allowing them to disciple and witness these narratives. Research proves the obedience of discipleship and how it is a major factor in some theories.⁵⁶ It must be

⁵⁵ New American Standard Bible: 1995 Update (La Habra, CA: The Lockman Foundation, 1995), Ps 51:12–13.

⁵⁶ Ogden, *Discipleship Essential*, 195.

obedience above knowledge but without the exclusion of knowledge. For example, Paul taught discipleship the way Jesus taught. First, with obedience and then with knowledge. Greg Ogden argues, "We see that the Apostle Paul adopted the same goal and methodology in his ministry that Jesus modeled. Paul's vision of the Great Commission is his mission statement (Col 1:28-29)."⁵⁷

Paul had his focus totally on Jesus and the method for maturing disciples.⁵⁸ Undoubtedly, this was because of the personal experience he had on the Damascus Road, connecting with Jesus to make a relationship, and a disciple. There are still so many questions referring to maturing disciple-makers in the post-modern world.

Indeed, education is the part of teaching when opposed by people who have their models for discipleship and disciple-making.⁵⁹ First, what should be taught about disciple-making? To answer this question, disciple-making is valued most when taught early, allowing those who do not know to learn the model used from the research to apply in everyday living. In addition, it must be rooted in faithful, committed people. These people must be committed to the curriculum and practice it as a lifestyle (Shema, Deuteronomy 6:3-7, Great Commission, Matt 28:18-20), teach the young and small, as they grow moderately, believing this can happen.

Why should disciple-makers be made? Because this is a biblical value and is the general purpose for Christian Living. "The vision is that the church's primary mission is to create disciples who create other disciples, just as Jesus intended us to do."⁶⁰ According to Jesus' command, disciple-

⁵⁷ Ogden, *Discipleship Essential*, 7.

⁵⁸ 2 Tim 2:2, LEB

⁵⁹ 2 Tim 3:16-17, NIV.

⁶⁰ Jim Putman, Bobby Harrington, Robert Coleman, and Bobby Harrington. *DiscipleShift: Five Steps That Help Your Church to Make Disciples Who Make Disciples*. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2013), 127. Accessed December 18, 2022. ProQuest Ebook Central.

makers should be made to lead others to Christ, teaching all about the Father first of all, then the Son, and next to the Holy Spirit (John 17:20-21). Bible study and prayer should be a part of the learning and teaching process. Second, some do not see the vision of discipleship and want to see the reason for making others.

This is where the faithful few become the church's premise. There is too much emphasis on quantity and not enough on quality. Yet, if disciples focus more on quality, then quantity will be satisfied because the power of God's word will draw the people. Paul, like Jesus, started his missions with small groups, and over sometime, they grew. Third: Where is the disciple-making mission to be done? It must be done with an ample amount of prayer, in which each group will be assigned a prayer leader and will be chosen before going out by the ministry leader of the group. It will be acclimated into the disciple training part before going out only on each mission.

Finally, when will various areas be taught discipling? New theories have come out on discipleship, suffering, and radical justice, including the book by Israel Oluwale Olofinjana about missions in a pandemic. In summary of his work, Olofinjana states, "This book explores the subject of discipleship and suffering and what can be learned about whole-life discipleship and suffering from the experiences and theologies of majority world contexts."⁶¹

The world is in a state of total delirium, from political unrest to social unrest, causing many to not see God, and leaving some believers to lose hope. This would be the perfect time to disciple others; instead, however, it has made discipling more challenging. Dr. Olofinjana shares some of the experiences which play out through these challenging times, he believes the things which are happening today like racial justice, pandemic as a critical ingredient for various

⁶¹ Israel Oluwale Olofinjana, *Discipleship, Suffering and Racial Justice: Mission in a Pandemic World* (Edinburgh: Regnum Books International, 2021).

models, for real racial Justice. He believes that lament it is away the discipleship can be utilized, as God has allowed these things to take a strong hold on the entire world. For many years, Sunday has been the most segregated time of the week. Paula Schriefer gives in-depth insight on some of the differences for theoretical culture models, which causes somehow separation to ethnic groups. She mentions three cultural backgrounds: multicultural, cross-cultural, and intercultural. Multicultural refers to several cultural groups side by side without attracting each other's interests. Cross-cultural is a comparison of the norm, compared to the dominant as a contrast. Intercultural refers to a respect for all cultures with a deep understanding, dealing with the mutual exchange ideas.⁶²

Culturalistically, Olofinjana and Schriefer addressed things in these theories which the church overlooks in their services, consciously and unconsciously addressing discipleship in all the forms mentioned. God is not interested in race or ethnicity, the only salvation for all humanity. God is only interested in those who believe and have accepted Christ as Lord and savior. Likewise, He does hope that no one should perish but rather repent, making salvation a choice. The notion of discipleship can occur in these demanding situations, and teaching discipleship to people can bring all missions together. Multicultural groups will improve by learning how Christ unified the masses to meet their needs. Cross-culture groups can learn how to share with the less fortunate and wipe out most of the destitution. Intercultural with Christ can have and even deeper understanding with a powerful exultant. Discipleship is the answer to all theoretical matters. Furthermore, the shift that has caused all the uncertainty leads back to the

⁶² Paula Schriefer, "What's the Difference Between Multicultural, Intercultural, and Cross-Cultural Communication?" (April 18, 2016), Accessed on January 29, 2022, <https://interculturaltraining.springinstitute.org/whats-difference-multicultural-intercultural-cross-cultural-communication/>

foundation for some of the problems. The discipling and suffering do go together, but what Christians must know is the God who holds it all together. The promise of God is for all believers to have joy, love, hope and peace, but this requires that Christians must be obedient to his word, even in troubled times. They must know God will provide, and protect them, so the time is now for the mission work to advance.

The discipling of the family systems is essential in the theory systems. The family systems model by Pfeiffer and In-Albon in 2021 is “a theory of human behavior that defines the family unit as a complex social system, in which members interact to influence each other's behavior. Family members interconnect, allowing to view the system rather than as individual elements.”⁶³ These systems are used to understand how the human family functions in interaction with other families. In addition, this system has a wide range of area frame-working, behavioral, and relational systems in individuals. The characteristics of this system should be dissected because some issues will have long-term effects if not appropriately addressed. The weak points could stem from a lack of examining the problem earlier. If detected early, the strong point could be that there is a better chance to heal the situation. Furthermore, with the help of discipling and prayer, getting to know the family's situation better, is helpful for kingdom-building. Scot McKnight argues, “we begin with “kingdom” because Jesus overtly connects his mission, his vision, and his preaching with kingdom.”⁶⁴

⁶³ Simone Pfeiffer and Tina In-Albon, “Family Systems: Bowen’s Family Systems Theory,” Reference Module in Neuroscience and Biobehavioral Psychology (April 24, 2021): 4-5. Accessed January 30, 2022, <https://www.sciencedirect.com/topics/medicine-and-dentistry/family-systems-theory>.

⁶⁴ Scot McKnight, *The King Jesus Gospel* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2016), 109.

Transformation

Likewise, theory and practice for transformation and growth is the method where learners get new information to apply to their lives, resulting in change when others view it. The practice affects their social life beyond the church (kingdom family). These social weaknesses may be an incorrect teaching method, affecting them incorrectly. The strong point would be that they would adequately affect others if done correctly. Through discipling, they were transforming their lives and those of others. Transforming congregations in the community: The person discipling has transformed the face of the community more effectively. The strength of this model is that they can work side-by-side in the model to practice transformation and growth, causing a substantial result for disciple-makers. The theoretical foundation should always correlate with biblical theology. Greg Ogden defines disciple-makers this way; the core truth is to disciple to salvation. Ogden states, "Discipling is an intentional relationship in which we walk alongside other disciples in order to encourage, equip and challenge one another in love to grow toward maturity in Christ. This includes equipping the disciple to make disciples who make disciples."⁶⁵ Making disciples is the core truth. Truth certainly must be represented if there is any chance for humanity to have a genuine relationship with Jesus Christ.

The people who do not believe will die twice: spiritually and physically. What are some of the things we know about disciples making disciples? From the start, it is known that it is relational, challenging, and time-consuming. It is relational because the person(s) training the participants must have a relationship with Christ as Lord and Savior first. Next, it is hard when teaching others to disciple. It is challenging for them to learn how to respond to the rejection that may come from sharing the gospel from time to time. There may be participants who may not

⁶⁵ Ogden, *Discipleship Essential*, 3.

understand the rejection side that will occur in some situations. Ogden states, “We plan our future without reference to the kingdom of God and spend the resources we have to improve our own kingdom.”⁶⁶ Likewise, this causes a loss of interest for many. Upon training believers to disciple others, they must realize that making disciples could be slow. Developing patience is one characteristic that is crucial for a disciple maker.

Another aspect of disciple-making is; the difficulties that occur after the person has been disciplined and time passes; they lose hope in their salvation, leading them to turn from God because of doubt. Christopher Lane contends,

With beliefs harnessing intense psychological and political power, it should also be clear that while the world wrestles with the near-insuperable task of trying to honor everyone’s religious tenets, even as they predictably collide with those of others, the experience of losing those beliefs (or tempering them with doubt) can be dramatic, often culminating in a profound reorientation to the world as it is. Similarly, life-altering, I hope to have shown, is the sense of uncertainty, creativity, and peculiar freedom that can ensue when one set of explanations gives way, leaving in its wake concerns and dilemmas that faith once seemed to answer.⁶⁷

This part of the text comes after the resurrection of Jesus and just before He commissions the disciples with authority to make disciples of all nations, reestablish His appointment earlier, and reassure the doubters. Subsequently, this may happen in discipling today.⁶⁸

Disciple-makers do not know everything, such as the timeframe for training individuals, how long it will take to mature disciples, the best time of the year to train, and the proper time of the day to begin each training session. When discipling to immature, these situations sometimes

⁶⁶ Ogden, *Discipleship Essential*, 16.

⁶⁷ Christopher Lane, *The Age of Doubt: Tracing the Roots of Our Religious Uncertainty*. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011), 185-186. Accessed December 18, 2022. ProQuest Ebook Central.

⁶⁸ 2 Thessalonian 2:2-3, NASB95.

occur. Theoretically, ineffective training in maturing disciples has caused a decline in discipling in biblical literature. Christopher Lane argues,

The evidence is everywhere: shrinking rolls, declining budgets, empty classrooms, missing generations, so much gray hair in the pews that people joke by saying, “There’s a lot of snow on the roof!” It has been a half century since demographers began alerting us to the decline in mainline Protestantism. We don’t need statisticians to point out the obvious. We all know churches that shuttered their doors and sold their property, their witness to their communities consigned to the annals of history. We are also regaled regularly with solutions about “how to save the church.” Every few years, there is a new method for renewal and transformation, some of them very inspiring.⁶⁹

Finally, theoretically declining budgets can contribute to the lack of training for disciple-makers at St. Louis Baptist Church. The funding for materials can be expensive since the training requires a disciple-making curriculum that may also be difficult to locate locally. The classrooms at St. Louis are not used for the youth or young adults for biblical education due to the COVID crisis. In addition, the availability of Vacation Bible School for one week of summer lessons was not available due to COVID for all ages. Unfortunately, this gap in biblical instruction has caused generations to lose interest in attending church and learning about God and disciple-making.

In retrospect, we do not need state or global statistics to prove that the congregation at St. Louis Baptist Church decreased before COVID revealed itself to the masses. One can see the decrease in attendance by members and guests at regular services month after month. There is also, a lack of disciple-making training amid this decrease in the church population. By inviting the membership back into the fold by training disciple-making for the entire family at St. Louis

⁶⁹ Krin Van Tatenhove, and Rob Mueller, *Neighborhood Church: Transforming Your Congregation into a Powerhouse for Mission*. (Louisville, KY: Presbyterian Publishing Corporation, 2019), 73. Accessed December 18, 2022. ProQuest Ebook Central.

Baptist Church, membership numbers theoretically will increase and open the door to opportunities to create disciple-makers

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

The purpose and objectives of the DMIN Thesis project's intervention are to address the problems at the St. Louis Baptist Church, which include a lack of disciples making disciples and no training for disciples making disciples. The findings presented in this thesis may correct the lack of disciple-makers and the untrained congregation. Not only is there no training, also there is no one willing to begin disciple-making training. Many are waiting for someone else to make the first move, creating a gap that leaves the problem unsolved. The thesis provides the proper instructions to train the participants for disciple-making. Controversially, many may feel that it is not their responsibility to start a disciple-making ministry, as they see this as the pastors' responsibility.

Thus, congregations are not volunteering and not seeing the need for a disciple-making ministry because they are not being properly trained in disciple-making. Akano Benjamin the author of the article; "Disciple-Making Movement as an Effective Operational Model for Christian Missions, describes the challenges to adequate missionary funding. He stated that an adequate missionary fund refers to the resources used directly for the task of witness and service.¹ In comparison to the missions in Nigeria, St. Louis Baptist church members and church staff have insecurities that may reduce the funds set aside for disciple-making. Apart from the fact that our economy has not been the same since COVID, the way money is spent, and the mechanisms used for Christian education have changed drastically. Rather than having

¹ Benjamin Isola Akano, "Disciple-Making Movement as an Effective Operational Model for Christian Missions amid Insecurity." *Missionalia* / 51, no. 1 (2023): 74.

individual Sunday school classes, there is only one for teens through adults. It took a while after COVID, but a class was eventually created for younger children on at least 2 Sundays of the month. So as the full implementation gets closer for this DMIN Thesis project, there seems to be more and more reluctances to move forward. Conversations on the topic remain, but that is all it seems to be. There is a limited number of people joining the church and remaining there for extended periods, so there is a definite need for disciple-making outside of the church walls.

Unquestionably, those attitudes must be prevented. To do so, they must be identified and reconciled to change the mindsets for a better resolution. The method must be clear, and the training must present precise disciple-making skills based on biblical teaching with resources from the experts in their training manuals to begin the process of developing the skills.

Intervention Design

The intervention will begin on Monday, August 23, 2023, with ten people attending the meeting from 6:00 to 7:30 p.m. If ten participants do not attend the initial meeting, verification of participation will occur for those who signed up. If some drop out, recruitment will continue. A questionnaire will be handed out to each participant to complete and discuss with feedback (Appendix A). Once the problem and the feedback discussion of the questions have occurred, the training can move forward. The training will consist of one and a half hour sessions and continue for eight weeks. Then, the participants can brainstorm biblical ideas to resolve the situation. Recruitment will be strictly voluntary; the participants must be eighteen or older and a St. Louis Baptist Church member. These criteria can be used to understand how the research data will be used for the training for disciple-making. This disciple-making project thesis aims to transform reliable people in the church (SLBC) and to make God visible by demonstrating their faith as they walk with Christ. If agreeable to all disciple-making participants, Monday or Tuesday

nights will be the day of the week used. Training will include a discussion of the literature data gathered in the project. The St. Louis Baptist Church pastor approved the project prior to the initiation of this thesis. The IRB (the governing body for research at Liberty University) approved it.

Disciple-Making Training Materials

There are specific books required for the initial training for the participants for eight weeks. These are the materials that will be used for teaching outlines and curriculum: *The Disciple-Maker's Handbook*,² *Discipleship Essentials*,³ *Disruptive Discipleship*,⁴ and *Multiplying: Disciples Making Disciples*.⁵ Studying how to become a disciple-maker, making disciples of others using the textbooks, along with their Bibles, to understand what Jesus taught about becoming a disciple-maker. Data gathered from the published books cited in the thesis project will guide the current project to transform ordinary members into strong and confident makers of disciple-makers. Consequently, this transformation demonstrates it as they share the gospel by the designed method taught.

As mentioned earlier in the thesis statement, the practiced faith must be demonstrated in every participant's life. The participants' lives must reflect concern for others living in conditions where no one has shared the gospel with them. Therefore, they conduct life in a fashion which

² Bobby Harrington and Josh Patrick, *The Disciple-Maker's Handbook: 7 Elements of a Discipleship Lifestyle* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2017).

³ Greg Ogden. *Discipleship Essentials: A Guide to Building Your Life in Christ*. (Westmont: InterVarsity Press, 2019. Accessed January 30, 2022).

⁴ Sam Van Eman, *Disruptive Discipleship: The Power of Breaking Routine to Kickstart Your Faith* (Downers Grove, Illinois: IVP Books, an imprint of InterVarsity Press, 2017).

⁵ Francis Chan. *Multiply: Volume 1: Disciple making for ordinary people*. David C Cook Publishing Company, 2020).

leaves them feeling empty, losing hope, and having no joy. Anxiety sets in due to the void that is present, causing fear. The objective is vital to the problem of failure to make disciples in the way that Jesus taught. There must be a course of action taken for this problem. Giving life to disciple-making, making a change, and contributing to building the kingdom of God. The task of disciplining will be very challenging to the particularly challenging to the participants, but they will be successful with prayer. The task and the purpose work for one common cause; it leads the project to the objective, aimed to reach a goal to make something or a system achieve the purpose of making more disciples where there are not any being made. The objective is to examine the best ways in which discipleship can become a part of all the people who are called by God and whom Jesus sends out. It is simply walking in obedience, transforming into Christlikeness, and replacing old habits with new habits (objective).

Furthermore, each of the given materials chosen for the proposed study, which include *The Disciple-Maker's Handbook*, *Discipleship Essentials*, *Disruptive Discipleship*, have varying elements that assisted with impacting the direction of the study as well as the overall intervention design. The researcher aimed to use the chosen disciple-making training materials in ways that not only entail the ideal disciple but also the ways that they present themselves towards others as well as the knowledge they hold towards being a disciple. That means that the goal of disciple-making from a long-term perspective is not just to become a disciple who serves and contributes to God's kingdom, but the building of a disciple is also equivalent to a follower of Christ who bears both the given knowledge in addition to enabling a disciple to engage with others in a way that suits the overall principles and philosophies vis-à-vis disciple making.

The Disciple Maker's Handbook

One of the chosen training materials for the study was *The Disciple-Maker's Handbook*. As previously mentioned, the Disciple-Maker's handbook explains the tools, the plans, and the processes; to cultivate how to become a disciple-maker. The Disciple Maker's Handbook considers the general outlining and ideologies vis-à-vis what it means to not only help shape an ideal disciple but also a life-long servant to Christ who does his bidding. The Disciple Maker's Handbook and its ideologies are reflective of a material that does not just aim to build up the ideal disciple but also to measure the extent to individuals are willing to open themselves to different variations and meanings as to what it means to be a disciple and how willing they are to raise and build up other disciples.

The "Disciple Maker's Handbook" highlights the significance of a structured framework for discipleship training, which is key for addressing and rectifying the usual misconceptions concerning the nature and conduct of disciple-making. The Disciple Maker's Handbook in context of the proposed study is used by the researcher as a means of recontextualizing and defining what would otherwise be the usual misconceptions considering discipleship and what it means to become an ideal disciple.

The project aims to utilize the Disciple Maker's Handbook and align it with the proposed study in a way that aims to clarify uncertainties and provide participants with a clearer, more feasible plan for a robust involvement in spreading the gospel. In other words, the project's key utilization of the Disciple Makers Handbook is focused more on recontextualizing and redefining the ways of discipleship and disciple-making that is considered feasible from the perspectives of potential disciples and disciples in the making. The researcher views this perspective on the Disciple Makers Handbook in measuring success and efficacy from the themes found in the New

Testament, which facilitates adherents to participate in the Great Commission actively. The researcher considers this representation a substantial ideological and methodological shift—from considering evangelistic efforts as solely the domain of ecclesiastical leaders to recognizing it as a collective responsibility of all believers.

As an efficacy measuring tool, the researcher will use the Disciple Makers not just to discipleship and ideal disciple-making, but also the ways that believers can fulfill their collective responsibilities vis-à-vis the process of disciple-making. There is a perspective held by Christian discipleship as a form of collective responsibility from different stakeholders, shareholders, and members of Christ's church. A substantial perspective tied to the overall objectives of the project is measuring not only participants' capabilities of overall discipleship, but also, their ability to recognize evangelistic efforts as something that is not inherently tied to institutional agendas. A key measure of overall success is ascertaining to what extent that believers go from viewing discipleship as a given obligation by evangelical church officials to a much wider and grander responsibility in line with the tasks entrusted to them by the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

There are also works that support the current methodology's training materials not only as a means of measuring the successful training of a disciple but also in defining what it means to multiple disciples as well as disciple makers around the world. As stated by Turner, discipleship and the tasks surrounding it are characterized by individual believers who are passionate about Christ as well as their intentions of becoming true and genuine disciples. Discipleship is not measured by the extent that individuals see the overall process as a type of epistemological process or perceive it as a matter of obligation vis-à-vis the church. Rather, the measurement as to what defines a true and committed disciple is the extent that believers consider the weight of their responsibility and the universal perspectives held around discipleship. Discipleship is not

just a matter of clerical or clergy related obligation, but the impact comes from the meaning that disciples and the believers of Christ are willing to perceive and reevaluate their perspectives when it comes to fully redefining the ideals that entail discipleship.

The key objective of disciples and disciple makers is to multiply their numbers around the world and spread the word of Christ through the means necessary. Discipleship and disciple making is not just an organizational commitment that is tied to the agenda of the church and the institutions that surround it. The researcher views that the making of a successful discipleship and disciple maker is not just rooted in the institutionalization and the indoctrination of a disciple. There are multiple dimensions that define the successes and the shortcomings as to what it means to become an ironclad and committed disciple to Christ. Discipleship has several goals, which include spreading the Word of God worldwide. Simultaneously, the dynamic of discipleship and disciple making is tied not only to duty and action but also a sense of purpose. Works indicate that discipleship is also tied to the sense of purpose that Christians are ingrained with in addition to their overall mission. This sense of purpose encapsulates a global and worldwide perspective that enshrines a sense of shared identity among Christians worldwide. Alongside disciple makers also come the form of image bearers, whose duty involves helping Christians around the world discover who they are in addition to the purpose they are given by God.

How a sense of identity, purpose, and meaning vis-à-vis discipleship is contextualized regarding the study will assist the researcher in measuring the overall effectiveness of a discipleship intervention. The researcher indicates that simply being a good disciple or a good serviceman to God is not enough. Discipleship and disciple making both carry numerous implications as well as weight behind the overall and overarching purpose assigned to them by

the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The implications here mean that discipleship alone is rooted in an individual and a believer's personal journey. Before a disciple can turn to disciple-making and influence others through the word of God, disciples will need to have gone through a journey of their own. The state of being a disciple is not just a linear process. There are multiple parties involved. For example, there are the disciples, the clergy, the disciple-makers, the believers, and many other stakeholders who participate in the overall process. The purpose that is tied to discipleship is reflective of an ongoing and continuous journey that is tied and connected to the implications brought about the means, in which the worth of a disciple and their values hold towards the grander picture, in relation to duties due to the lord.

Dynamic relationships will also function as a focal point in measuring the overall efficacy of the intervention chosen for the project. As stated in the "Disciple Makers Handbook," the key role of relational dynamics in discipleship is pivotal; effective disciple-making extends beyond merely imparting knowledge to include deep and life-changing relationships. This perspective aims to measure the project's success or failures. The project aims to use the formulation of dynamic and life-changing relationships as a means of observing if participants demonstrate a heightened commitment to making disciples, emphasizing person-to-person, relationship-centric interactions, reflective of the approach that Jesus used with His disciples.

There are examples of literature that stress the importance of forging long-lasting relationships within the areas of disciple making as a means of quantifying and evaluating a successful discipleship. Disciple making is especially relevant in forging life-long attachments and connections among young people within the Church. There is indication that discipleship and ideal disciple making is not just tied to a linear process where believers will be subjected to a singular discipleship lifestyle. There is more to measuring the success or failure of any given

discipleship and some of the key factors that determine this success or failure are inherently tied to the extent that meaningful relationships can be forged with others with the intended purpose of forging an ideal and meaningful bond with others and with God.

The aspects that are tied to the dynamics of disciple making and discipleship, as previously stated, are rooted in ways that extend beyond just the organizational experiences of different individuals and as well as stakeholders. The most generalized answer would be the insinuation that discipleship is tied to a linear and focused perspective when it comes to the formulation of meaningful experiences and relationships with Christ. However, the reality behind what it means to be an ideal disciple is far more non-linear. As stated by Kristina Freed, there was a growing number of literatures that indicated a missing relational context both with others and with God when it came to disciple making. Therefore, the project also aims to measure the overall success of a disciple as well as the ensuing discipleship initiative through the ascertaining of how effectively individuals by the end of this project could form meaningful and thorough relationships with Christ and with others.

To summarize, there are several key elements introduced in the Disciple Makers Handbook that the researcher considers important for measuring the success of interventions used. One of the most important aspects to consider when highlighting the success or failure of the intervention is the extent that participants have grown to view disciple making as something far beyond the confines or clergy-related or institutional obligation vis-à-vis the church. The researcher aims to consider and evaluate the extent that participant disciples and potential disciple makers have grown to view their relationship around God in addition to finding a newfound sense of purpose and meaning within their lives. Another litmus regarding the success of the intervention is the extent that potential disciples or disciple makers managed to form

meaningful relationships, both with God and others. The general assumption is that disciple making is tied mostly to just grooming and training a person who can spread the word of Christ the Lord and bestowing his teachings onto others with maximized efficiency and finesse. However, there are much larger meanings behind the implications with regards to discipleship and disciple making. Both discipleship and disciple making entail the formulation and connections made through long-term and meaningful relationships. Therefore, a litmus for the intervention's success will also be tied to the extent that participants could form meaningful and long-lasting relationships. The following section will discuss the *Discipleship Essentials* as well as the implications behind its implementation and what exactly entails is a successful discipleship and disciple making process for the project.

Discipleship Essentials

The objectives of the following section are an in-depth discussion and review of how the project's methods aim to use the Discipleship Essentials as a key litmus and standard that can prove the success or failure of the intervention on part of both disciples, discipleship, and discipleship making. Several factors will be considered while reviewing the disciple essentials vis-à-vis the methodology and while it is being formulated as a litmus for either the success or failure of the project's intervention.

One of the key elements behind the Discipleship Essentials is the ability to forge personal relationships in disciple-making—a belief that aligns with the relationship-focused model exemplified by Jesus Christ. The importance of forging genuine, transformative relationships, in contrast to merely theoretical constructs, underpins relational discipleship and is well-echoed in the "Disciple Makers Handbook." Discipleship Essentials stresses the importance of forging ironclad and long-lasting relationships, in a similar vein as the Disciple Makers Handbook.

Therefore, one of the litmus determinants for the intervention's success or failure will involve whether participants i.e., potential disciples and disciple makers, have expressed views and sentiments that left them open to forming more meaningful and long-lasting relationships with their fellow believers. Converting them to the faith and spreading the word of Christ is not enough and the standard for a successful intervention will be determining how effectively disciples and potential disciple-makers forge relationships not only with others but also with Jesus Christ.

Another key area that the researcher will use to determine the success of the intervention is whether participants i.e., potential disciples and disciple makers have overcome the overall complexities of discipleship and what the path of discipleship entails. "Discipleship Essentials" by Ogden (2019) and "Disruptive Discipleship" by Van Eman (2017) both outline the continuous and complex nature of discipleship, a path that surpasses mere acquaintance with scripture. There are multiple dimensions to the dynamics of becoming an ideal disciple that extend beyond just converting others to the faith of Christ and the Word of God. The complexity of becoming a disciple or disciple making is tied to dimensions such as interpersonal relationships, the way that believers practice their faith, and the changes that are brought about when there are newer perspectives considered regarding the intervention.

Ogden (2019) and Van Eman (2017) both outline key elements regarding the way that ideal discipleship and disciple-making is adhered to at this point. The idea is less focused towards whether participants have successfully converted others to the faith in Christ or the belief in God. Both authors stress the continuous importance and non-linearity of what it means to be a disciple. The process is not just linear or one-dimensional. The researcher, going by inferences made by the works of the two, would go as far as to state that the measure of

intervention success would also have to be tied to the overall practices held by believers beyond just conversion or inviting others to the word of God.

The process of discipleship and disciple making is characterized as a non-linear process that is transformative in nature and involves believers and would-be-believers becoming inquisitive in how they perceive others vis-à-vis spirituality and what the implications mean for general faith and belief. The determinants of a successful intervention for discipleship go beyond the question of whether an individual is inclined to now believe in the Word of God. There are several examples from literature that showcase the validity of measuring the success of the intervention not just from the perspective of general belief or faith.

There are several key elements that are tied to what determines or defines discipleship. One of them is defined as the overall aesthetics that cover the overall complexity of discipleship with regards to overall faith. The act of discipleship and disciple making is reliant on the idea that the different aesthetics of discipleship are what contribute to the overall complexity of the art. Disciple making and discipleship success is not just measured in the amount of believers that disciples managed to convert but the successes are deeply rooted in how effectively they have understood what exactly needs to be done to complete a successful disciple training and disciple making process.

As previously stated, discipleship has multiple dimensions and complexities that go beyond conversion to faith. Potential disciples and disciple makers may be asked to reevaluate their perspectives on certain topical elements in the church, they may consider discipleship as something far beyond just building up a rapport with the institution that is the church, and the complexity that entails discipleship also involves how effectively people can grow as believers. The common misconception from inexperienced disciples in training is that spreading the word

of God alone will bring about a more favorable light to both the faith and to the believers across the globe. However, the truth is far more complex than that. Ideal discipleship and the measurement of success is also tied to how discipleship is nurtured, how individuals are growing as both disciples and disciple makers, and what it all means for how they will be seen in the eyes of the Lord.

The multidimensional facets of discipleship and disciple making are mostly tied to the potential successes or failures that people may face when challenged by others or by themselves to reevaluate the world around them. A key worry held by potential disciples and disciple makers is how they may be perceived by different institutions such as varying Church branches or different sectors of the Catholic faith. The fear of being judged as an invalid or irreputable by higher authorities within the church or by extension, at the hands of communities; are a common fear held by potential disciples. In effect, potential disciples and disciple makers are left with some doubt in the way that they are supposed to perform their epistemological duties. Questions such as: How do I please the lord and others? Will I be judged for my lifestyle? Am I doing enough? Will more likely than not surface in the form of doubts from potential practitioners of the faith.

In terms of the key rubric used, the researcher will ascertain the successful intervention based on whether participants are shown to be competent enough to navigate through the multidimensional facets of discipleship and disciple making. The researcher will design the intervention evaluation in ways that can ensure them that participants i.e. potential disciples and disciple makers, have exhibited enough competence and confidence in fully understanding the implications and aspects that most effectively contribute to their role as a potential disciple in Christ based on their abilities to navigate the challenges bestowed to them by the lord. Hence,

discipleship intervention success will be measured and evaluated based on how well the participants have acknowledged the challenges that surround them and what those overall implications mean for both their meaningful relationship with other believers and the relationships they have forged as loyal servants to God. The following section will highlight the rubrics to either success or failure of the intervention from the perspective of Disruptive Discipleship.

Disruptive Discipleship

The third area, in which success of an intervention will be weighed upon is "Disruptive Discipleship". Disruptive Discipleship encourages various ideas with regards to how successful of a disciple or disciple maker one may become depending on the situation. The researcher will use the rubric introduced with disruptive discipleship to better identify what it means to become a successful disciple. The ideas within Disruptive Discipleship perspectives encourage every Christian's active participation in creating disciples, irrespective of their position within the church's structure. The perspectives offered by Disruptive Discipleship are tied to an immediate or autonomous perspective that allows for the unconditional execution of duty on part of disciple makers. The ideas tied to disruptive discipleship have parallels with the more radical elements of disciple making, which indicate that discipleship is not something that is to be taken lightly and that it is considered a life-long commitment. The perspective being offered from this perspective means that this is a type of discipleship that cannot afford any half-hearted efforts. From this perspective, the measurement of a successful or unsuccessful intervention will be determined by the tenacity and determination of a potential disciple or disciple maker.

The rubric of success or failure will be determined on how much potential disciples can endure what authors consider are the hardships presented by God in the form of challenges

aimed at testing his subjects. Van Eman argued the following: "' We go, God provides, faith increases, and hope feeds on it.' We mature because that is the effect the cycle has on our lives. Each little test and every minute of waiting for a need to be met delivers another strength and teaches us to whine less as we like less. Hope feeds on faith." The key implications of this are that from the perspective of disruptive discipleship, we are expected to accept hardship and adversity as it comes. Difficulties in life are seen as new opportunities to grow with each other in context of carrying out the word of the lord and the will of Christ. Therefore, another aspect that will determine a successful intervention implementation is specifically how tenacious and willing participants are as followers of Christ in enacting his word and spreading fourth the gospel in relation to how we as individuals can navigate through hardships and challenges.

Another view or perspective that is heavily focused on considering Disruptive Discipleship is the element of a transformative journey. The ideas of Disruptive Discipleship refer to a transformative journey of revelation, which is grounded in an in-depth exploration of biblical doctrine as elaborated by Chan and the significant rethinking of discipleship highlighted by Putman and Harrington. This rubric will judge the intervention's success or failure based on how effectively potential disciples can undertake the current teachings of what is considered this long-term journey. Hence, the rubric for success or failure will be judged based on the broad appeal to discipleship—a call that goes beyond traditional church confines and aligns with the teachings of the New Testament and the all-encompassing view presented in "Disruptive Discipleship." The rubric will judge the success of participants based on how effectively they are capable of synthesizing what they have learned and overcoming adversity on the principle of a transformative journey using the teachings of the New Testament. Therefore, success of the intervention will also be weighed based on how effectively participants of the study can go

through what Disruptive Discipleship defines as appealing to the universal call to the cause of Christ.

The third and final rubric or measurement of success for the intervention under Disruptive Discipleship is the idea of collective harmony. The key element found in harmony with scholarly dialogue found in works such as "Discipleship Essentials" and "Disruptive Discipleship," advocates for an inclusive approach to disciple formation. The key principle is that all members of the congregation, regardless of their position, play an essential role in the church's directive to nurture disciples reflects a central tenet of modern discipleship thought. Compared to the other measurements that determine the success of the intervention, collective harmony is a far more institutionally focused rubric and measurement for success. In this context, the researcher will determine whether the intervention was successful in fully implementing potential disciples or disciple-makers into individuals who are willing to engage as a collective not only with the church but by extension, the rest of the global catholic community.

To summarize, Disruptive Discipleship has three measures of success that will be used for the program. The first main measure of success will revolve around the notion of hardships. The researcher will aim to identify whether themes that are tied to enduring hardship and adversity in the name of Christ the Lord's teachings surface as a means of quantifying the degree of success or by extension, the failure of the intervention at hand. The second key measure of success under Disruptive Discipleship is whether participants have grown to believe that they have undergone and traversed some type of personal journey that has resulted in meaningful change in both how they view Christ and how they view discipleship. The final measurement of success according to literature tied to Disruptive Discipleship is the idea of collective harmony. The researcher will then observe whether there has been a significant impact on the overall

attitudes of disciples and potential disciple makers in terms of a resolved perspective towards servitude and collective collaboration with the church as a broader institution.

Summary of Intervention Success Measurements

To summarize, the researcher has a broad scope planned out to measure and gauge the success of interventions on potential disciples and disciple makers. One of the first aspects that will determine a successful intervention is the capacity of participants coming to view disciple making as something far beyond the confines of clergy-related or institutional obligation vis-à-vis the church. The researcher will consider and evaluate the extent to which participant disciples and potential disciple makers have grown to view their relationship around God in addition to finding a newfound sense of purpose and meaning within their lives. A measure of success for the intervention will be the extent to which the study participants develop profound feelings of duty and purpose. Another measurement of success regarding the success of the intervention is the extent to which potential disciples or disciple makers managed to form meaningful relationships, both with God and others. Literature surrounding disciple making highlights that one of the key elements to a successful discipleship is the extent to which disciples in training or future disciple makers can formulate meaningful relationships with others.

The second area of intervention success measurement revolves around the works of Discipleship Essentials. Among the key elements behind the Discipleship Essentials is the ability to forge personal relationships in disciple-making—a perspective that aligns with the relationship-focused model exemplified by Jesus Christ's teachings. The significance of forging genuine, transformative relationships, in contrast to merely theoretical constructs, underpins relational discipleship as a key element. Therefore, from the perspective of Discipleship Essentials is also the capacity that potential disciples and disciple makers can forge personal and

meaningful relationships that are built on the foundation of Christ's teachings. Another key focus of Discipleship Essentials is measuring whether participants have the capacity to acknowledge the multi-dimensional and complex aspects of discipleship and disciple making. The researcher will evaluate a successful or unsuccessful intervention based on whether participants are shown to be perceptive enough to navigate through the multi-dimensional facets of discipleship and disciple making. This means different dimensions such as personal, social, and clergy related. The researcher will design the intervention evaluation in ways that can ascertain whether participants i.e. potential disciples and disciple makers, have demonstrated enough proficiency and confidence in fully understanding the implications and aspects that most effectively contribute to their role as a potential disciple in Christ based on their abilities to navigate the challenges bestowed to them by the hands of God. For disruptive discipleship, key measurements of success during the data analysis stages of the intervention outcomes revolve on three key themes: personal hardship, traversing through a personal journey, and the development of a sense of unified and collective harmony.

To conclude, all three main families of literature used to surmise and weigh-in the success of the intervention are tied to the philosophies that characterize discipleship and disciple-making. *The Disciple-Maker's Handbook*, *Discipleship Essentials*, *Disruptive Discipleship*, have all portrayed the path of discipleship and disciple-making as a non-linear path, which has varying degrees of success and hardships. The researcher saw it most appropriate to implement the teachings of all key three publications and the related literature surrounding them into the intervention's success measurement due to the study's qualitative aspects. The success of disciples in the participant sample will not be defined by numbers or empirical data but rather, through the aspects formulated by all three diverse sources of Discipleship.

Intervention Questions

Greg Ogden argues, “God intends to make us into new persons who reflect His image. To do so, he must remove the old skin that represents our old way of life and clothe us with new skin made in the likeness of him. The image of undressing and re-dressing serves as the frame for Paul's teaching.”⁶ The new self is becoming a disciple, and knowing what it is to become a disciple involves definition and questions such as: What does a disciple do? Who can make disciples? What are the biblical qualifications for a disciple-maker? What training should be required for disciple-makers? These questions will be answered in the current research (see Appendix A) by surveying the participants' opinions for a case study.

The facilitator/leader has developed the questions in the intervention. This will give the information to determine the areas of strengths and weaknesses in the methods for disciple-makers. It will help the leader also see the area to teach in disciple-making together having the maximum effectiveness overall to kingdom-building. Question 12 (Will you be committed to the covenant of disciple-makers and why?) notable example of kingdom-building. A commitment to covenant disciple-making is necessary to get participants to understand that they must have total involvement. The “Disciple-maker Intervention Questions” for the intervention plan were approved by the IRB and used in the recruiting process. Each time a new group of disciple-makers is recruited, implementing the disciple-maker questions is started. If the facilitator needs to reiterate an explanation of any of these questions, revisitation will occur.

⁶ Ogden, *Discipleship Essential*, 198.

Imitating Christ

The purpose is to imitate Christ's life teaching, and the objective is to make it a part of the person's character and behavioral practice. This explains and supports the task in home, church, and community settings. Discipling carries the message of sharing and teaching with the ones who do not know Christ, as well as the ones who have not heard him and do not see him to understand him in action. It is so easy to miss God in action, for believers and non-believers alike. Discipling transforms and the Holy Spirit renew the new man. So, the holy spirit inside the disciples is shared and taught to carry out the tasks of disciple-makers. This is the purpose and objective for the St. Louis Baptist Church to develop a daily living of disciple-making.

First, Chan and Beuving state, "The word *disciple* refers to a student or apprentice. Disciples in Jesus's day would follow their rabbi (which meant *teacher*), wherever he went, learning from the rabbi's teaching and being trained to do as the rabbi did. A disciple is a follower, but only if we take the term follower. Becoming a disciple of Jesus is as simple as obeying this call to follow."⁷ It is an objective to follow, in which the participant sees the purpose of the word and how the focus of the word will be used as the primary task. The first step to take is by emphasizing the need to be a follower and to look how Jesus's followers followed. They left everything, demonstrating a strong commitment to becoming faithful and more than a physical living. In contemporary with this, being committed to coming to training, not missing any sessions, unless it is necessary. This requires passion and an ardent desire to make a difference for others. With the pastor's permission, the classes will start at the church in one of the conference rooms from 6:00 to 7:30 p.m. Times may vary on occasions, with sessions beginning or ending earlier or later.

⁷ Chan, *Multiply*, 16.

Implementation of Intervention Design

Outline of the Class and Structure

The classes will begin with the facilitator opening the training sessions with prayer, the demonstration of the relationship that the disciple-makers must have with God throughout this project. The facilitator will give the pastor of St. Louis Baptist Church an opportunity to address the disciple-makers and let the group know what his expectations are for them and the project. The pastor of St. Louis Baptist Church has given verbal permission to use the church building, allow the willing disciple-making participants (members and staff of the church) to invite them to participate in this research study, and consent forms from participants, a few of the following approvals will have to occur; written training materials and use of the church computers if the disciple-makers do not have their own.

After that, the classes will be taught from several resources and copious tools addressing many areas to train disciple-makers. The disciple must be well-equipped to make disciples for the maximum results possible. All classes will incorporate outside resources to enhance and improve the objective of the ministry of disciple-makers. Moreover, there will be guest speakers and videos on disciple-making to enhance the training for disciple-makers. Eventually there will be a need during training for up-to-date technology sources or access to current data as the ministry grows. There will be a need to meet the demands of the changing world. When the need for computer access increases, the participants will be required to bring a device with them to the class sessions. Currently, computer access at the church is limited because the computers are outdated. Internet access is available at the church, with the Pastor's permission. The use of technology will widen the instructor's wheelhouse, enabling him to require the participants to

access journal articles, books, and disciple-making website models to guide the participants in a positive direction. Chris Shirley from Dallas Baptist University states in his abstract of the article "Overcoming Digital Distance: The Challenge of Developing Relational Disciple in The Internet Age,"

Jesus' model for discipleship (John 15:1-16) is grounded within a context of human and divine relationships: abiding in Christ, fellowshiping with other disciples, and ministering to needs of others in the world and in the church. As the Christian community becomes increasingly reliant on digital technology and the Internet to provide an environment and resources for disciple-making, we must also be familiar with the available options and understand the benefits and limitations of using these methods as we seek to establish and enhance these essential spiritual relationships.⁸

Using technology can also connect old and young generations in this research process. To meet the challenge of connecting and bringing people together, this DMIN thesis project will have to rely on the use of technology and social media to reach and gather people locally and globally.⁹

Measuring change will be done in the process phase by recording the training development each time the groups interact in their communities (done only with permission). As scenarios arise that need to be reflected upon, the facilitator will review the videos to orchestrate a reenactment for the participants to learn from as a group, taking into consideration the confidentiality of those witnesses involved. As the steps move along, responsive data is collected to determine what should improve, leaving a window for growth and opportunity. The data will be analyzed by documentation in graph form of what approaches were used to deliver the Gospel, the responses received, and the results from the individuals. It is vital to ensure that the

⁸ Chris Shirley, "Overcoming Digital Distance: The Challenge of Developing Relational Disciple In The Internet Age," *Christian Education Journal* 14, no. 2 (Fall, 2017): 376.
<https://go.openathens.net/redirector/liberty.edu?url=https://www.proquest.com/scholarly-journals/overcoming-digital-distance-challenge-developing/docview/1960978584/se-2>.

⁹ José M. Amaya, "Forming Disciples World-Wide," *Momentum*, (Sep, 2013): 21.
<https://go.openathens.net/redirector/liberty.edu?url=https://www.proquest.com/magazines/forming-disciples-world-wide/docview/1449993392/se-2>.

facilitator uses the text of the correct scriptures and that the approach is not harmful or hostile to the person when they are training to make disciples. In addition, the diagnostic questions must address the needs and the training for disciple-making. It is essential for the disciple-maker not to be offensive or aggressive when training to make disciples; however, they are likely to encounter a situation where the people to whom they are ministering do not know scripture well.

Discipling Conflict

Nevertheless, the person being disciplined begins to use scripture to make their point by interpreting their own opinion, which is incorrect, resulting in an uncomfortable dialogue. Subsequently, a facilitator must be a part of the training to defuse the conversation that leads to a confrontation. The disciple defusing the confrontation must be a part of the training. The disciple should stop talking and listen to the aggressor, and after a few minutes, remember that people love to hear what they have done right, while some want to get credit for their ideas. Find out what they are good at doing and then use it as a stepping-stone to present God's love for them. These positive characteristics will lead the disciple-maker back to the diagnostic questions to present the salvation of the gospel to them. Van Eman argues, "This is why we pursue challenges. They train us to expect differently. Hope relies on a memory bank of faith confirmations, increasing our patience and teaching us to adapt when comfort gets postponed or when life as we planned it suffers altercations."¹⁰

Trauma and conflict will sometimes play a role for people that are being disciplined because of their past experiences. Conflict resolution is a part of the training for the disciple-maker, using sources and all the tools for training in dealing with trauma and conflict. In Week 4, reviewing the survey data to create a graph to display their growth, effectiveness, and disciple-








¹⁰ Van Eman, *Disruptive Discipleship*, 92.

making in the community, which will emphasize their coding and themes. Effectiveness will be measured through how effectively participants in the study have acquired the knowledge needed through disciple-making.

Although adults will be the primary focus in this disciple-making process, children will be disciplined with their parent's permission. In the article, "Doing Theology with Children: Some Challenges for Adult Theologians," Jan Grobbelaar states, "despite the growth of child theologies, most of the literature focused on how adults think about children and childhood. We all have our own presuppositions, images, and assumptions about children."¹¹

¹¹ Jan Grobbelaar, "Doing Theology with Children: Some Challenges for Adult Theologians," *Hervormde Teologiese Studies* 75, no. 1 (2019), <https://go.openathens.net/redirector/liberty.edu?url=https://www.proquest.com/scholarly-journals/doing-theology-with-children-some-challenges/docview/2327764381/se-2>.

Table 3.1 Intervention Design

ST. LOUIS BAPTIST CHURCH DISCIPLE-MAKING RESEARCH PROJECT	
Weeks 1	
	Facilitator - researcher leader meets with the pastor to discuss the details of the project and finalize the project. 
Weeks 2 – 3	
	Survey participants contacted via phone to ask for participation in the initial survey. Only the chosen participants will take the survey, not the entire membership. Surveys were distributed to specific SLBC members and one PMBC member. (Appendix A)
Weeks 4	
	Researcher of Disciple-Maker Project will review the initial survey data. 
Weeks 5	
	Dispense email and make phone calls to invite potential case study participants. (Appendix A1) 
Weeks 6-7	
	Initial: Interview with secured case study participants NT (Appendix B) 
Weeks 8	
	Intervention: Integration NT- All participants will attend a maximum of 3 hours (four 45-minute sessions) of intervention in a 2-week period. This will give the facilitator and the participants time to discuss and ask questions about all areas of discipleship (1-2 sessions could complete the intervention). 
Weeks 8	
	Closing questionnaire and interview by appointment. (Appendix C and D) 
Weeks 8	
	Synthesize data. 

Implementation of the Intervention Design

Table 3.2 Measurement of Disciple-Maker Goals

Measure	Objective	Goal
What are the measurable values of being a disciple-maker?	Multiplying for kingdom building through disciple-making.	To make disciples makers as Christ taught.
These the courses of action that will be taken in the plan for discipleship: sharing Christ, serving God, and others.	Sharing the gospel of the Great Commission.	To please God in obedience for his grace and mercy.
These are the materials that will be used for teaching outlines and curriculum (See Appendix E)- Primary: Disciple makers Handbook. Secondary: Discipleship Essentials, and Tertiary: Disruptive Discipleship.	Each participant or stakeholder will use these sources for instruction and data research.	To train members how to become disciple-makers.
Survey, interview, intervention, and closing questionnaire.	Each participant an opportunity to express why they are well suited for disciple-making.	To make mature qualified disciple-makers who will teach others to make disciples.
The survey is the first sample item to measure the participants input.	To determine why there are not any disciple-makers and what recommendations for starting a ministry for disciple-makers.	To poll each participant on why there are not any disciple-makers at St. Louis Baptist Church (SLBC).
The survey is scored through graphing the participants responses.	The survey will create a way to count the responses to each question and see where commonalities lie.	To deduce the participants opinions on why there are not any disciple-makers at SLBC.
Excellent surveys produce accurate data and critical information, providing important glimpse into the central idea of disciple-making. In contrast, bad surveys produce, data that are unreliable.	The survey must produce accurate data and information.	To use that accurate data will lead to mature, capable disciple-makers.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

Introduction

St. Louis Baptist Church members need a more structured way to train on disciples making disciples. A structured, small-group disciple training program should teach the members to make disciples like Jesus taught. Not having the proper training for making disciple-makers went on for many generations; baptizing, becoming members, and having a larger membership became most important. As a result, more attention was placed on increasing membership to the detriment of discipling the membership.

The members of St. Loius Baptist Church do not actively engage in, nor feel comfortable discipling others, which is the purpose of the DMIN Thesis project. Because of this, they do not feel comfortable with discipling. The issue of disciple-making will be addressed, as other issues from the perspective mentioned earlier. Additional reasons for the project are that most do not view disciple-making as Jesus taught it to his disciples, and they feel that it is antiquated and ineffective. The purpose of this DMIN action research project was to develop and deliver a structured small group training process for making disciples who will become St. Louis Baptist Church disciple-makers. The following section of this chapter is a discussion of the setting of the DMIN Thesis Project followed by a description of the participant demographics and data collection process. Next, this chapter includes a discussion of the procedures for data analysis followed by a presentation of the study results. The final section of this chapter is a summary.

Setting

The study was conducted at the St Louis Missionary Baptist Church in Tyler, Texas. Members of this church, who are primarily African American, were selected to take part in the

study. The participants were not influenced by any organizational or personal conditions. Moreover, no such conditions influenced their experience at the time of study since there were no budget cuts, changes of personnel, or other trauma. Therefore, the interpretation of the results of this study was not influenced by organizational or personal conditions. The survey data was collected for 8 weeks from the participants in March through April of 2022.

Participant Demographics

There were 11 participants in the current study. They comprised of both male and female. Regarding the characteristics that were relevant to the current study, it was important that each participant was 18 or older and a St. Louis Baptist Church member. Other qualifications of the participants included: active and engaged followers of Jesus, having a solid commitment to growing in their faith (letting others see them following Jesus and demonstrating it), they value the Bible and its call to disciple-making, and have the desire to make a difference in the spiritual lives of others. have a solid commitment to growing in faith such as letting others see them following Jesus and demonstrating it. They see the Word's purpose and how the Word's focus leads to Disciple Making and have passion and an ardent desire to make a difference for others. These qualifications were important since lacking them would have meant that the participants could not provide the relevant data that were needed for this study.

The real names of the participants were known to the researcher. However, because anonymity and confidentiality of participants were paramount in this DMIN Thesis Project, the use of pseudonyms was an important consideration. Therefore, the project facilitator created pseudonyms for each participant which were used in place of their real names. The use of pseudonyms is consistent with a qualitative approach. Overall, assigning a pseudonym to each participant helped to ensure that their identity was protected. Each of the 11 participants stated

that they were willing and prepared to complete qualitative, open-ended questionnaires. Most of them were in their 50s in terms of age. The demographic information of the participants is summarized in Table 1.

Table 4.1

Participant Demographics

Participant pseudonym	Gender	Age	Ethnicity	St. Louis Baptist Church member (yes/no)	Follower of Jesus (yes/no)
Participant 1	F	51-60	Black	Yes	Yes
Participant 2	F	61-70	Black	Yes	Yes
Participant 3	M	41-50	Black	Yes	Yes
Participant 4	M	31-40	Black	Yes	Yes
Participant 5	F	41-50	Black	Yes	Yes
Participant 6	M	21-30	Black	Yes	Yes
Participant 7	F	51-60	Black	Yes	Yes
Participant 8	M	31-40	Black	Yes	Yes
Participant 9	F	51-60	Black	Yes	Yes
Participant 10	F	71-80	Black	Yes	Yes
Participant 11	M	51-60	Black	Yes	Yes

Data Collection

For the collection of data to address the purpose of the study, the number of participants who were recruited is 11. The project's facilitator created two sets of questionnaires for the collection of data in this DMIN Thesis Project. The first of the two sets of survey questions were completed prior to acceptance into the project by each participant, wherever they chose, and returned to the facilitator within a week. Each participant completed the final set of questions as a summary or feedback on the experience within the project. The completed questions were returned by the eighth week of the project, which was the final week, April 24, 2022. The pre- and post-questions were formatted on a Word document and a Google document was easily shared for the participants to answer.

There were slight variations in data collection for the post-survey from the plan presented in chapter 3. For example, the plan was for all 11 participants to complete the surveys both before and after the intervention as outlined in chapter 3, but only six out of the 11 participants completed the post intervention survey questions after the training. Although six was a small number, it still enabled the project facilitator to reach data saturation. No unusual circumstances were encountered when collecting data.

Data Analysis Procedure

Verbatim transcripts of the 11 individual open-ended surveys were analyzed in NVivo 12 qualitative data analysis software. The data analysis procedure applied to the data was Braun and Clarke's inductive, thematic method.¹ The procedure had six steps, including: (1) familiarization, (2) generation of initial codes, (3) grouping codes, (4) reviewing themes, (5) defining final themes, and (6) producing results. The first step of the analysis involved familiarization with the data.² The data was read and reread in full. The researcher made handwritten notes as regards points of potential analytical interest, including repeated ideas and phrases and key words, from which codes might be developed in the second step of the analysis.

The second step of the analysis involved generating the initial codes. The project facilitator clustered into codes different excerpts from the transcripts that expressed similar meanings. Those codes were then labeled with descriptive phrases that indicated the meaning of the data assigned to them. In total, 236 response excerpts were assigned to 50 codes. Table 2

¹ Braun, Virginia, and Victoria Clarke. "Using thematic analysis in psychology." *Qualitative Research in Psychology* 3, no. 2, (2006): 77. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa>

² Ibid., 79

indicates the initial codes and the number of response excerpts that were assigned to each of them (i.e., the code frequencies).

Table 4.2*Initial Code Frequencies*

Initial code	Code frequency in interviews
Any Christian believer who is saved, follows Christ, and is a disciple can be a disciple maker	3
Been saved since childhood	16
Disciple maker must be a disciple first, follower of Christ, live according to God's commands, and loves God, others, and self	16
Disciple maker should be Christian Believer, have leadership skills, and be emotionally healthy	14
Disciple making is helping people trust and follow Jesus and become more like Christ	7
Disciple making is spreading the gospel and discipling people	2
Discipled in a church setting	9
Discipled other people before	9
Evangelistic training, training of a warrior, and training on communication skills required for disciple makers	5
Expectation for disciple making is to be righteous, help non-believers become believers, and teach importance of disciple making	4
Expectation for disciple making is to have more love for all people, provide honest messaging, and have humble interactions with others	4
Expectation for disciple-making is to be able to lead others to Christ and fulfill God's commands	3
For those lagging build a proper foundation and communicate and hold them accountable	4
For those lagging in the disciple-makers ministry, encourage them with God's word, pray, do not give up on them, keep talking to them and teaching the gospel	7
Group keeps passion for disciple making by staying involved, fellowship with other believers, asking for help, and focusing on importance of disciple and Christ's mission for them	3
Group keeps passion for disciple making through accountability and knowing their identity and God-given purpose	4
Group keeps passion for disciple-making by reading and teaching the Bible, discussions, meditation, and praying	4
If someone does not believe in God, pray with them and talk to them about salvation, and also pray for them to change their mind	7
If someone does not believe in God, find out their reasons, keep talking to them about God, and witness to them	8
If someone is already saved, make sure they are praying and reading the Bible, and see if they have been baptized with water	4
Process of disciple makers is continuous with no time limit, and one must read the Bible and pray	3
Training duration depends on the individual, be as long as it takes	4
Will ask presentee if they believe in God and where they worship and for how long, what their role in the church is, and to explain the gospel	8
Will ask presentee if they are a follower of Christ, if they are living an ideal life worthy of God, and if they love God and mankind	4
Will be committed to the covenant of disciple-makers as they want God to know them and is their duty as believer of Christ	6

The third step of the analysis entailed grouping codes. The project facilitator grouped codes to form themes. When different codes indicated various aspects of the same broader,

overarching idea, the project facilitator identified them as related and clustered them to form a theme. In total, the 50 initial codes were clustered into five themes. The fourth step of the analysis consisted of reviewing the themes.³ The researcher cross-checked the themes against one another to ensure the ideas they represented did not overlap. The researcher also compared the themes to the original data to ensure they indicated patterns in the responses of the participants. In the fifth step of the analysis, the themes were named and defined.⁴ Theme definitions are provided in the Results section of this chapter. The sixth step of data analysis involved presenting the results by writing this chapter.

Results

In the results of the DMIN Thesis Project on disciple-making intervention, there was a week-by-week methodology procedure break down. The expected results were to have a small group intervention that would cause a change in the way disciple-making was taught. First, looking at the cause of the lack of disciple-making was not taught. The DMIN Thesis project brought expected and unexpected results in the intervention from the outline project perspective.

Some saw the need, and some thought it could have been a better plan according to the literature and the methodology from the project prospectus. The participants gave their opinion based on their capabilities and availability. After about an hour of consideration and deliberation regarding participation in the training, it required some more time and more patience and sacrifice. Eventually, some had to reconsider participating in this disciple-making training. This reconsideration occurred for assorted reasons. For example, some individuals had changes in

³ Braun, Virginia, and Victoria Clarke. "Using thematic analysis in psychology." *Qualitative Research in Psychology* 3, no. 2, (2006): 81. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa>

⁴ Ibid., 82.

their time schedules that caused them to be unable to attend classes because of changes at work, others were involved in sports activities with different seasons of events, and others reconsidered their participation for academic reasons with school programs.

Six St. Louis Baptist Church members completed both sets of the Intervention Survey Questions. The research participants in this anonymous study represented age groups from twenty-three to seventy-eight. St. Louis Baptist Church represents a church of approximately 500 to 800 predominately African American church members. This DMIN action research project aimed to develop and deliver a structured small group training process for making disciples who will become St. Louis Baptist Church disciple-makers. The responses to the survey questions were taken through phone dictation, written by hand, typed, and printed, and typed and emailed. Potential participants made various comments about the survey questions. One of the participants stated that the questions needed to be shorter and were too detailed. Others who would not refuse to complete the questions did so because they refused to participate because the survey of questions was not multiple choice and shorter.

Overall, five themes emerged from the analyzed data. The themes demonstrate that after the intervention plan, the participants have acquired knowledge regarding disciple-making the Great Commission and their definition of disciple-making has changed. They have also gained an understanding of how disciple-making should be done at SLBC and what is needed for continued success and recognize what they need to say to people who mention that they do not believe in God. Besides, their understanding and view of disciple-making has changed because of their participation in the disciple-making training. Furthermore, the participants share the gospel more frequently at the conclusion of the disciple-making training than at the start of the

training and are willing to participate in a discipleship ministry at SLBC. The themes are discussed below:

Theme 1: Participants Have Gained Knowledge about Disciple-Making and the Great Commission, and the Definition of Disciple-Making has Changed for Those who did not Define it Correctly Before Training. This theme suggests that the disciple-making participants who took part in the disciple-making training project gained knowledge regarding disciple-making and the Great Commission. The theme also shows that for some participants whose definitions were initially incorrect, their definition of disciple-making has changed after taking part in the training. During the training, the participants were taught about the accurate biblical definition of disciple-making, which is based on the Scripture. It is as follows: entering relationships to help people trust and follow Jesus, which includes the entire process from conversation through maturation and multiplication (Matt. 28:18-20). A disciple-maker refers to a disciple of Jesus who enters relationships with people to help them trust and follow Jesus (Matt. 28:18-20). As illustrated in Table 3 below, two participants, namely P6 and P8, had a somewhat poor understanding of the definition of disciple-making at baseline before the training project began. At baseline, Participant 6 noted that:

Disciple making is the process of making people royal, dedicated followers. Someone who is very influential and riveting practices disciple making. Disciple making requires a long-term, arduous Commitment by those who seek to make disciples. Disciple- making can lead to consequential impact on society that influences monumental change.

Participant 8 defined disciple-making as “Teaching and equipping new believers with the tools and practices they need to thrive in your respective faith; as well as encouraging them to do their own disciple making.” The others had a better understanding of the term. According to

Participant 10, “My definition of disciple making is proclaiming/spreading the "Good News, the Gospel" of Jesus Christ, the love of Jesus Christ to everyone, everywhere, and discipling them into the family of God.” Participant 11 defined disciple-making as, “Teaching the word of God, help to grow spiritually, help to go deeper with a relationship with God.” Table 3 is illustrated below.

Table 4.3

Question #1 from Appendix A: The disciple-maker intervention survey questions.

1. What is your definition of disciple-making?	
P1	To help people trust and follow Jesus.
P2	Matt 28:19 - teaching others the word of god and helping them to understand it. Live by it
P3	My definition of disciple- making is the process in which someone uses to help an individual or individuals become more like Christ.
P4	Using opportunities to encourage & teach other to know Jesus & faithfully follow Him.
P5	When an individual’s leads another individual to Christ. They will also guide their development & growth.
P6	Disciple making is the process of making people royal, dedicated followers. Someone who is very influential and riveting practices disciple making. Disciple making requires a long-term, arduous Commitment by those who seek to make disciples. Disciple- making can lead to consequential impact on society that influence monumental change.
P7	You have to be a follower of Jesus Examples of Disciple makers → Preacher, Teacher, Deacon, Faithful servants
P8	Teaching and equipping new believers with the tools and practices they need to thrive in your respective faith; as well as encouraging them to do their own disciple making.

P9	Entering into relationships to help people trust and follow Jesus (Matt. 28:18-20), which includes the whole process from conversion through maturation and multiplication. A disciple of Jesus who enters relationships with people to help them trust and follow Jesus. Teaching and equipping new believers with the tools and practices they need to thrive in your respective faith; as well as encouraging them to do their own disciple making.
P10	My definition of disciple making is proclaiming/spreading the "Good News, the Gospel" of Jesus Christ, the love of Jesus Christ to everyone, everywhere, and discipling them into the family of God.
P11	Teaching the word of God, help to grow spiritually, help to go deeper with a relationship with God.

After the training, all participants gave the correct biblical definitions of disciple-making as stated in Matt. 28:18-20. For example, Participant 9 accurately described it as, "Entering into relationships to help people trust and follow Jesus." Participant 1 simply defined it as, "To help people trust and follow Jesus." Other participants went into depth about their understanding and definition of disciple-making and were precise.

Demonstrating their understanding of the Great Commission, the participants described it as the instruction to help non-believers be led to God. For instance, Participant 3 defined it as, "spreading the Christian message and converting other people to Christianity," while Participant 5 stated that, "it is the command from Christ following His resurrection for His disciples to spread the Gospel to all nations." This shows that the participants gained knowledge about the Great Commission as well as the biblical definition of disciple-making due to their participation in the training program.

Theme 2: Participants Understand How Disciple-Making Should Be Done at SLBC and What is Needed for Continued Success. The second theme shows that the disciple-making participants have gained an understanding of the way in which disciple-making should be carried out at SLBC as well as what needs to take place for sustained success. At baseline before the training, a few participants did not have a particularly good understanding of what disciple-

making actually entails. For example, as illustrated in Table 4, Participant 6 spoke about educating others, saying:

As I have been made whole and complete through Christ, he has called me to inspire others to find their “voice.” At this point of my life, he has called me to be an educator. The Primary job of an educator is to inspire, encourage and motivate students to be the best they can be. Through the will of God, I hope to educate others in and out of the classrooms.

According to Participant 7, “You have to have more love for all people. Everyone is different, we all make mistakes, but we can always ask for forgiveness, whether it is accepted or not, (you have done your part).” The following table shows the participants’ expectations prior to the training program.

Table 4.4

Question #11 from Appendix A: The disciple-maker intervention survey questions.

11. What are the participants’ expectations for disciple-making?	
P1	To lead others to Christ.
P2	Ultimately to help nonbelievers become believers. Then teaching the importance of disciple making
P3	The number one expectation for disciple-making is to ensure that you are helping others become more like Christ.
P4	The individual needs to be seriously righteous.
P5	That only a righteous and sprightly individual should actively engage in disciple making.
P6	As I have been made whole and complete through Christ, he has called me to inspire others to find their “voice”. At this point of my life, he has called me to be an educator. The Primary job of an educator is to inspire, encourage and motivate students to be the best they can be. Through the will of God, I hope to educate others in and out of the classrooms.
P7	You must have more love for all people. Everyone is different, we all make mistakes but we can always ask for forgiveness, whether it is accepted or not, (you have done your part).
P8	Honest straightforward messaging, a consistent and responsible approach and assigning of helpers, humble yet confident interactions with others

P9	Not everyone disciplined will accept Christ. Some already have some experience with "Church people" (saved & unsaved). Not all disciple making experience will be positive, but you cannot be discouraged
P10	These participants' expectations are to fulfill the commands given in Matthew 28: 18-20, "And Jesus came and spoke unto them, saying all power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen."
P11	N/A

Following the end of the disciple-making training program, all participants accurately described the way that disciple-making should be carried out at SLBC. Participant 1 noted that it is carried out by leading "others to Christ" whereas Participant 2 stated it involves helping "nonbelievers become believers." Participant 8 spoke about, "Honest straightforward messaging, a consistent and responsible approach and assigning of helpers, humble yet confident interactions with others." Furthermore, the second theme suggests that the participants have gained a better understanding of what is needed to achieve continued success in disciple-making. They indicated that they will be committed to the covenant of disciple-makers as this will lead to continued success, as depicted in Table 5.

Table 4.5

Question #12 from Appendix A: The disciple-maker intervention survey questions.

12. Will you be committed to the covenant of disciple-makers and why?	
P1	Yes, because I want God to know who I am and my goal is heaven bound.
P2	If the "covenant" is the Great Commission of Matthew Yes. As a believer, it is my duty!
P3	Yes, as I think it is important to communicate to others and share the stories of how God has worked in your life before you came to Christ and how things have been since he came into your life.
P4	Every believer of Christ should want to commit to disciple making
P5	All true believers should deserve all to be saved; as such, we all should be, "disciple makers" Never grow weary of doing what is right.
P6	Yes, I will be committed to the covenant of disciple-makers. I will be committed because I know both my identity through Christ and my God given purpose. God has called me to be a servant leader, where he hopes that my light shines to make the world a better place. Through the will of God, I hope to continue to grow as a Kingdom man, where I disciple others.

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- P7 Yes, because every day is new day to come to Jesus, that you live and you see a new day, you also have about to come to Jesus, because is waiting on you with open arms and saying to you come to me my child. I love you. Simply because love is the most power word in the World. Jesus is the reason that He came & died on the cross that we all might have a right to the tree of life.
- P8 I feel like I already am, due to the council I have both given, and been requested of by my peers and strangers as well.
- P9 One must be committed to the covenant of disciple makers because one must be committed to.
- P10 Yes. I will be committed to the covenant of being a disciple-maker for the reason that God knows my desire is to share His word with others and to bring others to Him. And He knows the plan that he has for me; His plan is to prosper and not to harm. God does not want any soul to perish neither do I. Therefore, I will continue to share God's word wherever He sends me for as long as He allows me to go.
- P11 N/A
-

Participant 4 noted that, “Every believer of Christ should want to commit to disciple making.”

Participant 6 reported that:

Yes, I will be committed to the covenant of disciple-makers. I will be committed because I know both my identity through Christ and my God given purpose. God has called me to be a servant leader, where he hopes that my light shines to make the world a better place. Through the will of God, I hope to continue to grow as a Kingdom man, where I disciple others.

Likewise, Participant 10 noted that:

Yes. I will be committed to the covenant of being a disciple-maker for the reason that God knows my desire is to share His word with others and to bring others to Him. And He knows the plan that he has for me; His plan is to prosper and not to harm.

Theme 3: After the Training, Participants Now Understand What They Need to Say to People Who State That They Do Not Believe in God. The third theme demonstrates that the participants know the right information that needs to be said to individuals who indicate that they

do not believe in God. Prior to the training, some disciple-making participants did not know what exactly should be said to such people. For example, as depicted in Table 6, Participant 2 stated that she would, “Explain why I do. Tell them what happens if you don't believe in God, "Jesus Christ"” whereas Participant 7 stated that, “Ask them why; find out their reason (get more details). What has happened in their lives to make them think this.” Table 6 is shown below.

Table 4.6

Question #15 from Appendix A: The disciple-maker intervention survey questions.

15. If you are presenting the gospel, what do you do if the person says they do not believe in God?	
P1	I wouldn't turn my back on that person I will continue to be who I am and continue to talk about God to them.
P2	1) Explain why I do. 2) Tell them what happens if you don't believe in God, "Jesus Christ,"
P3	Pray for the person to change their mind.
P4	Always pray that god directs me in those conversations & then witness to them based on my experience explains.
P5	First & foremost, ask god for guidance. Then ask them "Why?" Share with them what god means to you & support it with scripture.
P6	We should still pray for that person regardless of their beliefs. We can only hope that the person can find God's presence in their life. We should continue to live our lives worthy of God, where we may Influence and impact those who are non-believers. God has called us to live a life of salvation where we impact everyone, including non-believers.
P7	Ask them why; find out their reason (get more details). What has happened in their lives to make them think this.

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- P8 You give understanding, while possibly talking about your personal path to your faith, without aggressing or condemning them
- P9 What do you do when someone says they don't believe in God? First, just pray and fast for them so that their heart may open up to the gospel. Then the next time you meet them, open up topics and subjects that lead to a conversation about the gospel. Be sure to invite them to church or activities, and most of all, be friendly.
Proclaim the Truth of the Gospel without respect for persons or favoritism. Do not use opinions and non-biblical doctrines and traditions when trying to explain the Gospel of Christ to unbelievers or members of another religion/denomination. Evangelizing isn't for everyone.
- P10 That is a great time to act without overreacting. Act while the problem of non-believe is taking place. Pray for guidance by the Holy Spirit, use your (Apologetics Training). If they will allow you to pray, now is the time to pray with them and for them if they will not pray for them in secret. This is a great time to rely on God, his wisdom is full of grace and truth. "Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man (Colossians 4: 6)." Explain salvation is a "Free Gift" St. John 14: 6 "Jesus said, I am the way, the truth and the life, no man comes to the Father, but by me." Share St. John 10: 10 The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly. This is a perfect time to admit, pray, praise, supplication (ask/petition), worship with thanksgiving for the movement of the spirit of God. The manifestation of God's saving power may not be seen the first time but be assured that he has a plan and he know who will accept him and who will not.
- P11 Wait, pray, seek an answer from God
-

After the training, all the participants demonstrated that they clearly understood what they need to say to people who state that they do not believe in God. For instance, Participant 10 accurately noted that the disciple-maker should not overreact but take action by praying for guidance, stating that:

That is a great time to take action without overreacting. Take action while the problem of non-believe is taking place. Pray for guidance by the Holy Spirit, use your (Apologetics Training). If they will allow you to pray, now is the time to pray with them and for them if they will not pray for them in secret. This is a great time to rely on God, his wisdom is full of grace and truth.

Similarly, Participant 8 spoke about not condemning the non-believer, mentioning that, “You give understanding, while possibly talking about your personal path to your faith, without aggressing or condemning them.” Participant 5 was also precise by stating that, “First and foremost, ask God for guidance. Then ask them "Why?" Share with them what God means to you and support it with scripture.”

Theme 4: Participants Share the Gospel More Frequently at the End of the Training Than at the Beginning and Believe That Disciple-Making is a Public Matter. This theme shows that following the disciple-making training program, the participants are now able to share the gospel more frequently at the conclusion of the training than they used to share at the start and feel that disciple-making is a public matter. Prior to the training, some shared the gospel less frequently or not at all as shown in Table 7. For example, Participant 6 noted that:

Prior to this Survey, I have not tried to disciple others intentionally. If I wanted to try to disciple others, I would try to live a life that is commendable, ideal, and respected. I want to be the best version of myself and continue to grow into who I am meant to become, while I am growing, I am helping others grower as well in a Positive light, and that represents an Ideal of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Participant 8 spoke about discipling to other people less often before the training, stating that, “Less discipling, more giving perspective to what they already believed,” while Participant 11 simply stated “No,” meaning that she did share the gospel at all.

Table 4.7

Question #5 from Appendix A: The disciple-maker intervention survey questions.

5. Have you ever tried discipling others prior to this survey?	
P1	All the time, I often talk to people about God in trying to help them understand who he is and what a difference he could make in their life once they get to know him.

P2	Yes
P3	Yes, I have tried discipling others before.
P4	As a Sunday school teacher to teens presenting & a children's Church Leader, Yes
P5	YES
P6	Prior to this Survey, I have not tried to disciple others intentionally. IF I wanted to try to disciple others, I would try to live a life that is commendable, ideal, and respected. I want to be the best version of myself and continue to grow into who I am meant to become, while I am growing, I am helping others grower as well in a Positive light, and that represents an Ideal of the Lord Jesus Christ.
P7	Yes. With my children and with my children in Sunday school class, my grandchildren also
P8	Less discipling, more giving perspective to what they already believed.
P9	Yes, my students.
P10	Yes I have discipled other people to Christ. It is such a joy to witness the new birth of a new convert.
P11	No

After the disciple-making training however, all the participants indicated that they are sharing the gospel more frequently now. Participant 9 talked about discipling her students, saying “Yes, my students.” Participant 1 indicated that, “All the time, I often talk to people about God in trying to help them understand who he is and what a difference he could make in their life once they get to know him.”

Theme 5: Participants are Willing to Participate in a Discipleship Ministry at SLBC and Believe That the Training Has Enhanced Their View of Disciple-Making. The other theme that emerged from the analyzed data is that because of the training, the participants are willing to participate in a discipleship ministry at St. Louis Baptist Church and feel that the training has improved their view of discipling. Specifically, all the participants indicated that they are ready to take in discipleship at the Church. Furthermore, prior to the training program, the participants had varying views regarding disciple-making. Some had poor understanding of who can make disciples as shown in Table 8. For instance, Participant 1 noted that, “We do [make disciples] through leadership, but Jesus makes them through us,” whereas Participant 6

stated that, “People who are passionate, dedicated, influential, persistent, and charismatic are those that can make disciples.”

Table 4.8

Question #2 from Appendix A: The disciple-maker intervention survey questions.

2. Who can make disciples?	
P1	We do through leadership, but Jesus makes them through us.
P2	Believers in Christ who are living out the Great Commission.
P3	All Christians are qualified to make disciples.
P4	Other disciples make disciples.
P5	ANY true believer in Christ who studied and shown themselves to be a dedicated follower of Christ.
P6	People who are Passionate, dedicated, Influential, Persistent, and Charismatic are those that can make disciples. Discipleship is a calling, and those who Make disciples see it as their purpose. Disciple makers are committed to the cause of discipleship. Recently, we have seen those who serve as Pastors, evangelists, Politicians, and even cult leaders, make disciples.
P7	Anyone can because you will be spreading the good news of Jesus teaching.
P8	Preferably leaders or elders in any faith, but technically any current member of a congregation.
P9	The Great Commission is outlined in Matthew 28:16-20, where on a mountain in Galilee Jesus calls on his followers to make disciples of and baptize all nations in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. All disciples are to make disciples. All Christians are disciples. So, yes, all Christians are to make disciples. More proof of this is presented below for your prayerful consideration.
P10	A disciple-maker must first be a disciple himself or herself. Any Christian Believer who has been called by God into the Ministry of Discipleship. Anyone who is willing to repent of their sins, confess with their mouth and believe in their heart that Jesus is the Son of God, and that God raised Him from the dead can be a disciple-maker. Anyone who is willing to accept Jesus Christ as Redeeming Savior and is willing to follow Jesus Christ can be a disciple-maker.
P11	Pastor, deacons, priests, church leader’s

After the training, all participants provided accurate explanations of disciple-making compared to their explanations at the start of the training. According to Participant 4, “Other disciples make disciples.” For Participant 5, individuals who can make disciplines include, “any true believer in Christ who studied and shown themselves to be a dedicated follower of Christ.” Participant 7 indicated that, “Anyone can because you will be spreading the good news of Jesus teaching.”

Summary

St. Louis Baptist Church members need a more structured way to train on disciples making disciples. A structured, small-group disciple training program should teach the members to make disciples like Jesus taught. Not having the proper training for making disciple-makers went on for many generations; baptizing, becoming members, and having a membership became most important. More attention was placed on membership than becoming a disciple. The purpose of this DMIN action research project is to develop and deliver a structured small group training process for making disciples who will become St. Louis Baptist Church disciple-makers.

Qualitative data from 11 people aged 18 years and above who completed a pre-intervention survey, and 6 post-intervention surveys were analyzed through thematic analysis. The participants were members of the St. Louis Baptist Church in Tyler, Texas. Six steps of analysis were followed. The six steps are familiarization with the data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining, and naming themes, and lastly reporting. NVivo 12 software aided in the analysis process. The intervention plan yielded both unexpected and expected results.

Overall, five major themes emerged from the analyzed data. The results showed that because of the training program, participants have gained knowledge about disciple-making and the great commission, and their definition of disciple-making has changed for those who did not define it correctly before training, which was the first theme. Moreover, the participants understood how disciple-making should be done at SLBC and what is needed for continued success, which was the second theme. The results also revealed that after the training, participants

now understand what they need to say to people who state that they do not believe in god, which was the third theme. in addition, the results showed that the participants share the gospel more frequently at the end of the training than at the beginning and believe that disciple-making is a public matter, which was the fourth theme. Lastly, the results demonstrated that participants are willing to participate in a discipleship ministry at SLBC and believe that the training has enhanced their view of disciple-making, which was the fifth theme. Chapter 5 will contain the research summary, implications, conclusions, and recommendations of the whole study based on these findings.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

Introduction

The purpose of this DMIN action research project is to develop and deliver a structured small group training process for making disciples who will become St. Louis Baptist Church disciple-makers. Adhering to the cornerstone of action research and attentive to the mandate of the Great Commission, this inquiry was organized around the principal question of how to efficiently prepare church members to fulfill the role of disciple-makers. This chapter consolidates the five emergent themes derived from the study's findings, evaluates their congruence with existing scholarly work, addresses the study's limitations, and proposes suggestions for both applied practice and subsequent inquiry. It also explores the potential repercussions of the findings for fostering societal betterment and caps with an overarching summary of the study's contributions to the sphere of religious ministry.

The first theme revealed a significant transformation in the participants' comprehension of disciple-making after the training. At the outset, participants held various incorrect beliefs, with some conflating disciple-making with commanding leadership or motivational teaching. However, after the intervention, participants uniformly embraced an understanding consistent with the Great Commission—as delineated in Matthew 28:16-20—highlighting the importance of a relationship-centered methodology in guiding believers through their spiritual growth.

The second theme emphasized the necessity for a planned and practical strategy in disciple-making at St. Louis Baptist Church. Participants reached a shared understanding that dedication, uniform messaging, and the reinforcement of communal structures are vital for an efficacious ministry, as spurred by the training. The third theme accentuated the enhancement in

participants' self-assurance and readiness to address doubts associated with faith. The shift from hesitation and doubt to confident advocacy highlights how the training prepared participants for engaging in profound conversations. The fourth theme captured the shift in how frequently and confidently participants shared their faith with others. The clear move from reluctance to active outreach underlines the effect of the training on participants' dispositions towards openly sharing their beliefs.

The fifth theme underscores the preparedness and enthusiasm among participants to participate actively and enhance the discipleship mission within their church. This expressed eagerness embodied a communal goal to make a significant impact on their spiritual community. The development of each theme from the amassed data reflects an underlying story within the experiences shaping St. Louis Baptist Church members' views on the development of disciples poised to serve as disciple-makers. The integration of these themes yields a detailed viewpoint on the shifting dynamics that the disciple-making intervention incited within the ecclesiastical setting, with extrapolations that reach into a wider discourse concerning spiritual education and communal engagement.

Interpretation of Findings

Theme 1: Participants Have Gained Knowledge about Disciple-Making and the Great Commission, and the Definition of Disciple-Making has Changed for Those who did not Define it Correctly Before Training

The first theme aligns with the theoretical underpinnings highlighted in the literature review, particularly drawing from the insights of Chan (2020)¹ and Putman and Harrington

¹ Chan, Francis. (2020). Multiply: Volume 1: Disciple making for ordinary people. David C Cook Publishing Company.

(2013)². It underscores a notable transition in individuals' understanding of disciple-making, evolving from a superficial grasp to a profound, scripture-based comprehension. Chan's work advocates for a comprehensive and context-sensitive analysis of scriptural passages, emphasizing the need for deep interaction with biblical texts to cultivate authentic discipleship.

The enhancement in understanding exhibited by the research participants echoes the conceptualization of discipleship by Putman and Harrington. They advocate that discipleship involves more than acquiring knowledge; it is about a holistic change that affects an individual's perceptions, emotions, and actions—a concept that aligns with the shifts observed in the participants of this study. This is in harmony with the principles discussed in "Disruptive Discipleship," which encourages every Christian's active participation in creating disciples, irrespective of their position within the church's structure.

Furthermore, this theme addresses the main objective of the training intervention: to align the participants' conception of disciple-making with a complete and scriptural perspective. The participants' transition from a basic understanding of disciple-making to a comprehensive and practical embodiment symbolizes a journey of spiritual maturation from the onset of belief to ongoing development and active contribution, mirroring the story depicted in the New Testament. This transformation indicates a multifaceted comprehension of the Great Commission and captures the dynamic core of impactful discipleship.

The previously mentioned theme captures a transformative journey of revelation, grounded in an in-depth exploration of biblical doctrine as elaborated by Chan and the significant rethinking of discipleship highlighted by Putman and Harrington. This progression, from elementary understanding to an ingrained, lived expression of disciple-making, aligns with the

² Putman, Jim, Bobby Harrington, and Robert Emerson Coleman. *DiscipleShift: Five Steps That Help Your Church to Make Disciples Who Make Disciples*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2013.

broad appeal to discipleship—a call that goes beyond traditional church confines and aligns with the teachings of the New Testament and the all-encompassing view presented in "Disruptive Discipleship."³

Theme 2: Participants Understand How Disciple-Making Should Be Done at SLBC and What is Needed for Continued Success

This theme notably underscores the significance of contextual adaptation in disciple-making practices, consistent with Ogden's⁴ theoretical contributions. Recognized as a principal figure in the field of discipleship, Ogden emphasized the necessity of tailoring disciple-making approaches to the specific characteristics of each faith community. The research findings demonstrate that at St. Louis Baptist Church, participants developed an appreciation for disciple-making, one that reflects and embraces their church community's unique environment, culminating in demonstrably effective outcomes.

Within the scope of this theme is the recognition of diversity within a church's membership, encompassing disparate needs, cultural identities, and life experiences. This theme advocates for a disciple-making approach that is not only theoretically sound but also practical and relationally attuned to the congregation's realities. A shift from generic practices to a method that is acutely aware of specific contexts ensures that SLBC's disciple-making initiatives are sustainable, with the promise of long-term significance. This shift symbolizes the study's alignment with Ogden's framework, which recommends embedding discipleship strategies within the peculiar culture and values of the local church.

³ Sam Van Eman, *Disruptive Discipleship: The Power of Breaking Routine to Kickstart Your Faith* (Downers Grove: IVP Books, 2017), 94.

⁴ Greg Ogden, *Discipleship Essentials: A Guide to Building Your Life in Christ* (Westmont: InterVarsity Press, 2019), 8.

The focus on relational discipleship within this theme is essential and corroborated by findings in the literature. Putman and Harrington (2013)⁵ highlight in "Discipleship Essentials" the importance of personal relationships in disciple-making—a belief that aligns with the relationship-focused model exemplified by Jesus Christ. The importance of forging genuine, transformative relationships, as opposed to merely theoretical constructs, underpins relational discipleship and is well-echoed in the "Disciple Makers Handbook."

Bringing together these components, the theme reveals an integrative model of disciple-making at SLBC, linking the principle of mentoring others in faith with the church's intrinsic qualities and community dynamics. The effectiveness of the initiative in cultivating a culture of interconnected and context-sensitive disciple-making stems from applying insights from modern scholarship on discipleship. This methodology not only addresses the congregation's immediate needs but also shows robust discipleship strategies within the church's ethos, fostering a more engaged and active spiritual community.

Theme 3: After the Training, Participants Now Understand What They Need to Say to People Who State That They Do Not Believe in God

This theme emphasizes a critical aspect of discipleship: the application of evangelism skills vital for substantive dialogues with those outside the faith community. The theme's resonance with the wider corpus of discipleship literature is clear, underscoring the necessity for disciples to have a robust understanding of biblical stories as well as hands-on evangelistic competencies. The progression from hesitant or rudimentary tactics to confident and systematic

⁵ Putman, Jim, Bobby Harrington, and Robert Emerson Coleman. *DiscipleShift: Five Steps That Help Your Church to Make Disciples Who Make Disciples*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2013.

approaches in interactions with non-believers serves as a testament to the tangible success of discipleship training.

Discipleship materials such as "Discipleship Essentials" by Ogden (2019)⁶ and "Disruptive Discipleship" by Van Eman⁷ highlight the enduring and complex nature of discipleship, a path that surpasses mere acquaintance with scripture. This transformation spans cognitive, spiritual, and applied aspects, leading to a holistic change in how individuals interpret and practice their faith. The training participants' enhanced interactions with non-believers exemplify this comprehensive growth process, accentuating the transformative role of the Holy Spirit in reshaping individuals' outlooks and behaviors.

Furthermore, this theme emphasizes the critical training of disciples in evangelism skills, which are essential for successful contemporary ministry efforts. By focusing on practical evangelism, the training prepares individuals to engage in sincere exchanges skillfully, facilitating their ability to communicate their beliefs and respond to skepticism or disbelief with empathy and insight. This practice aligns with current approaches to discipleship that promote a relationship-based evangelism style and the delivery of faith in ways that effectively connect in a variety of contexts.

The transition that participants experienced—from initial uncertainty about their abilities in evangelism to a state of confidence and well-informed communication—illustrates the significant impact of the training. This progression, which moves from a foundational understanding of knowledge to active implementation, constitutes an essential aspect of

⁶ Greg Ogden, *Discipleship Essentials: A Guide to Building Your Life in Christ* (Westmont: InterVarsity Press, 2019), 8.

⁷ Sam Van Eman, *Disruptive Discipleship: The Power of Breaking Routine to Kickstart Your Faith* (Downers Grove, Illinois: IVP Books, an imprint of InterVarsity Press, 2017), 86.

discipleship that surpasses traditional educational methods. Focusing on practical applications that intersect with daily life, the program ensures that disciples are not only instructed in their faith but are also proficient in expressing it to others, especially to those who do not share the same convictions.

Theme 4: Participants Share the Gospel More Frequently at the End of the Training Than at the Beginning, and Believe That Disciple-Making is a Public Matter

The fourth theme elucidates the significant influence targeted training has had on participants' evangelistic activities, indicating a major shift from passive reception to active engagement in disseminating the gospel. Such transformation aligns well with fundamental tenets prevalent in discipleship literature. For example, Cotrado (2020)⁸ emphasizes the transition from non-engagement to active dissemination of the gospel, a theme that resonates with the changes observed in the participants. The marked increase in gospel sharing post-training not only reflects a deepened understanding but also acts as an impetus that motivates and equips them to participate fervently in evangelism.

The "Disciple Makers Handbook" emphasizes the importance of a structured framework for discipleship training, which is essential for addressing and rectifying common misconceptions concerning the nature and conduct of disciple-making. The project's alignment with this prescriptive model is evident in its success at clarifying uncertainties and providing participants with a clear, actionable plan for robust involvement in spreading the gospel.

The theme also resonates with the imperative in the New Testament that encourages adherents to actively participate in the Great Commission. This represents a substantial

⁸ Cotrado, Y. J. H. (2020). Principles of Discipleship and Church Growth from Acts 2: 46-47. *International Review of Mission*, 109(2), 328-339.

ideological and methodological shift—from seeing evangelistic efforts as solely the domain of ecclesiastical leaders to recognizing it as a collective responsibility of all believers. Whitehead and Chryssides (2022)⁹ note that this shift is in line with contemporary concepts of discipleship that advocate for preparing every believer with the necessary tools and assurance for effective communication of their faith.

The increased regularity with which the gospel is shared also suggests a deeper internalization of the training's principles, implying that participants are not merely absorbing information but are transforming through their newly gained knowledge. This evolution fosters a sense of motivation and purpose, inspiring participants to take on proactive roles in their communities as facilitators of discipleship. Such change signifies the functional application of scholarly insights from established literature, highlighting the crucial importance of discipleship training that is both spiritually enriching and practically focused.

Theme 5: Participants are Willing to Participate in a Discipleship Ministry at SLBC and Believe That the Training Has Enhanced Their View of Disciple-Making

The fifth theme highlights a critical shift in participants' perceptions of their roles within the ecclesiastical structure, aligning with contemporary views that portray discipleship as a collective calling. The theme is in harmony with scholarly dialogue found in works such as "Discipleship Essentials" and "Disruptive Discipleship," which advocate for an inclusive approach to disciple formation. The principle that all members of the congregation, regardless of their position play an essential role in the church's directive to nurture disciples reflecting a central tenet of modern discipleship thought.

⁹ Whitehead, A. R., & Chryssides, G. D. (2022). *Contested Concepts in the Study of Religion*.

Moving away from a hierarchical, clergy-centric model of discipleship to one that is more participatory and collaborative marks a profound change. This shift recognizes the inherent capabilities of every believer to contribute to the greater goal of discipleship, thereby expanding the influence and impact of church efforts. The adoption of a universal approach to discipleship tasks, consistent with the biblical portrayal of the church as the body of Christ where every component has a unique importance and role (Karleen, 1987)¹⁰, fosters an environment of cooperation. Within this framework, the diverse skills and gifts of churchgoers are harnessed towards the communal objective of cultivating disciples.

Within the context of SLBC, this theme reveals a transformative change in the understanding of discipleship, moving away from the traditional view that it is solely the domain of ordained ministers or church leaders. The adoption of the idea that all members are called to engage in disciple-making highlights the importance of equipping and empowering everyone within the church for this mission. Such inclusive practices foster a collective sense of responsibility and empowerment among the congregation, enhancing the overall effectiveness of the church's discipleship efforts.

Following the training, participants demonstrated an eagerness to engage in discipleship activities, reflecting a laudable integration of the training's foundational principles. This shift illustrates the practical impact of the program, where academic concepts have been effectively translated into nurturing a culture focused on discipleship within the church body. It also shows how well-structured training can catalyze a significant change in mindset, motivating individuals to take part in fulfilling the Great Commission within their local church setting.

¹⁰ Karleen, *The Handbook to Bible Study*, 343.

The emphasis on each Christian's active role in discipleship reflects the concept presented in the New Testament where the church is depicted as a community of collective contribution toward the growth and support of others—a theme emphasized in works such as "Discipleship Essentials." The initiative's focus on inclusive participation is congruent with the Scriptural model of discipleship that urges believers to share the Gospel and strengthen their counterparts. According to the "Disciple Makers Handbook," the crucial role of relational dynamics in discipleship is significant; effective disciple-making extends beyond simply imparting knowledge to include deep and life-changing relationships. This perspective is echoed in the project's outcomes, with participants showing a heightened commitment to making disciples, emphasizing person-to-person, relationship-centric interactions, reflective of the approach that Jesus used with His disciples.

Implications for Practice

Analysis of themes from this research sheds light on crucial aspects of improving practices within church and educational sectors, particularly concerning disciple-making. The evolved perspective on disciple-making among participants underscores the necessity for orderly and deliberate training within the church setting. Congregations may consider implementing similar training initiatives, ensuring alignment with doctrinal principles, and accommodating various learning preferences. These practices echo the transformative learning theory's focus on reflection and active engagement as agents for profound change. Additionally, the findings emphasize the need to tailor church-sponsored educational programs to the unique obstacles church members face in accessing such services. In response, churches and partnering educational entities can narrow the divide between the availability and actual use of afterschool

enrichment opportunities, considering the difficulties single parents encounter, as discussed in academic literature addressing educational support challenges.

As participants displayed increased readiness to competently engage with those not of their faith, a recommendation is suggested for churches to consider ongoing training in apologetics and street evangelism. This training aligns with the tenet of relational evangelism, preparing disciples to handle such exchanges with both tact and insight, as emphasized by Pazmino (2008)¹¹. Encouraging routine sharing of the Gospel both within and beyond the church setting can solidify congregants' self-assurance. Additionally, churches should cultivate an atmosphere that promotes the sharing of personal faith experiences, highlighting the observed link between disciple-making training initiatives and the enthusiasm for evangelism amongst church members, as noted by Chan (2020)¹².

As church members advance in their proficiency at creating disciples, they achieve an increased sense of empowerment and autonomy in their spiritual path. This advancement is particularly consequential, aiding in the development of a knowledgeable and confident Christian community adept at confronting the challenges of contemporary faith practices. Furthermore, this enhanced capability creates a ripple effect throughout the church, as each empowered individual is more equipped to mentor others, thereby fostering a robust and supportive faith environment where collective growth is encouraged and celebrated.

Involving younger members of the church in the process of making disciples generates an array of advantages, including the promotion of an early sense of duty and dedication to their beliefs. This involvement fortifies intergenerational ties, ensuring the continuity of spiritual

¹¹ Pazmino, R. W. (2008). *Foundational issues in Christian education: An introduction in evangelical perspective*. Baker Academic.

¹² Chan, *Multiply*, 16.

traditions and principles. The current research enhances ministry scholarship by providing concrete proof of how structured training on disciple-making impacts a local church environment. It addresses an existing gap in the academic discourse and presents a model that could prove useful for other church communities and scholars interested in religious education and pedagogy. The findings of this study highlight the significant influence that well-organized training has in improving the success of disciple-making initiatives, nurturing active faith communities, and instigating wholesome societal change locally and more extensively.

Limitations of the Study

While this research is extensive in scope and insight, it acknowledges certain inherent limitations. The qualitative methodology of the study offers rich, detailed understanding but may limit the ability to apply the findings more widely. The particular social, cultural, and contextual experiences of the St. Louis Baptist Church members participating in the study may not reflect or be applicable to a broader audience. Moreover, the study's sample size was small and self-selected, drawn from a single geographic location, introducing bias and limiting the universality of the conclusions. Reliance on participant self-reports also exposes the research to subjective interpretations and memories, which might not capture the entirety of the experiences with the afterschool programs.

The study was constrained by a limited timeframe, with interventions and data collection happening within a brief span. This confines the extent to which long-term effects and the enduring impact of the disciple-making training can be understood. Therefore, opportunities for examining long-term trends and their implications for the study's insights remain an unexplored area. The research methodology did not encompass a control group for comparison, which might have provided a more robust understanding by contrasting outcomes for those who received the

training against those who did not. The study did not specifically address the potential influence of technology or ongoing changes in societal behaviors that could affect disciple-making dynamics and involvement in afterschool activities, signifying another area that warrants further investigation.

The design of the study excluded a longitudinal assessment to gauge the long-term retention and application of the competencies gained from the training. As a result, though short-term improvements were observed, the permanence of these shifts is yet to be confirmed. An additional limitation involves the lack of a control group, rendering it impossible to decisively attribute the changes noted to the training alone without acknowledging the potential impact of simultaneous external variables. This study also centered on adult participants who actively chose to enroll in the training, which limits the generalizability to other populations, such as younger church members not involved in the study. The divergence in discipleship involvement between these different demographics must be considered when interpreting the research outcomes. These limitations necessitate cautious interpretation when drawing conclusions from the findings and highlight the necessity for continuous and broader research to address these gaps and improve understanding of the complex interactions among religious instruction, parenting roles, and socioeconomic status in the context of after-school program participation.

Recommendations

Based on the insights gained from this qualitative study, avenues for future research are now apparent, calling for more in-depth academic inquiry. To broaden the scope of understanding regarding disciple-making practices among St. Louis Baptist Church members, future studies might expand their focus to include a more diverse range of religious groups. Implementing longitudinal research methodologies could provide a more comprehensive view of

the long-term impacts of disciple-making training. It would be particularly relevant to explore comparative studies looking at differences in perceptions and behaviors between individuals who have participated in disciple-making training and those who have not, within a church environment. This approach would clarify the distinct effects of the training, considering the various elements influencing engagement in religious activities.

Future research could be enriched by integrating current theoretical frameworks with additional concepts, such as social identification theory or social cognitive theory. This expansion would provide a more diverse analysis of the social dynamics present in communities focused on disciple-making. Additionally, thorough examination of the structural differences and operational approaches of afterschool programs is needed. This analysis could reveal ways to adapt these programs to better serve church members more effectively. With technology becoming increasingly pervasive, exploring its role in religious and educational pursuits, especially assessing digital platforms for their potential to support and broaden disciple-making efforts, is warranted.

By pursuing these lines of inquiry, researchers can further decode the complex facets of religious education and community engagement, resulting in a more complete framework for understanding and supporting church members. This research highlights the value of fostering a culture of inclusivity within ministries, steering participants toward proactive involvement. Echoing the principles of community psychology, these actions can motivate congregants to play a substantial role in their spiritual circle, thereby strengthening their feelings of belonging and commitment. Although these insights are primarily directed at church practices, their application may extend more widely, notably to fields involving marginalized groups and their interactions with religious education and enrichment initiatives.

Conclusions

The qualitative investigation at St. Louis Baptist Church has provided valuable perspectives on the process of making disciples within a faith-based community after introducing a formalized group training regimen. The program successfully filled a vital need within the church's strategy to conduct the Great Commission, propelling a noticeable evolution in participants' comprehension, attitudes, and practices related to making disciples. The analysis resulted in the identification of five themes that highlight the program's influential role in transformation.

Participants now possess a deeper understanding of the Great Commission, have adapted their conception of making disciples to be in line with scriptural principles, are prepared to manage the challenges brought by doubt, and are more dedicated to disseminating the gospel and engaging in church discipleship initiatives. These results demonstrate the profound impact that comprehensive and deliberate faith training has in cultivating skilled makers of disciples.

Though faced with constraints such as a limited sample size, potential bias, and the absence of a protracted evaluative component, the implications of the study accentuate the capability of systematic training to foster positive societal shifts that extend beyond the church's domain, promoting constructive discourse, insight, and a robust spiritual community. The suggestions put forth are designed to steer church efforts towards enduring practice of disciple-making and to prompt additional research into the practices of disciple-making across diverse religious and cultural contexts. This research represents a significant contribution to the field of ministry, providing church leaders with practical guidance and inspiring churchgoers to actively live out their convictions. The hope is that these insights and directives will catalyze progress in

the work of many more churches and stimulate an expanded academic dialogue on the execution of efficacious disciple-making.

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APPENDIX A

DISCIPLE-MAKER INTERVENTION SURVEY QUESTIONS

There are no right or wrong answers. This survey is only to collect data for research.

- 1. What is your definition of disciple-making?**
- 2. Who can make disciples?**
- 3. What if any, are the biblical qualifications for a disciple-maker?**
- 4. If any training should be required for disciple-makers, how much and for what length of time?**
- 5. Have you ever tried discipling others prior to this survey?**
- 6. What does the leader do if the participant does not abide by the covenant for the disciple-makers?**
- 7. How does the group keep their passion for disciple-making?**
- 8. What should be done when a person is lagging in the disciple-makers ministry?**
- 9. By whom were you discipled? Were you discipled in a church setting, by a friend or both?**
- 10. How long have you, the participant, been saved and what are some of your experiences after salvation with disciple-making?**
- 11. What are the participants' expectations for disciple-making?**
- 12. Will you be committed to the covenant of disciple-makers and why?**
- 13. What are some things you would ask the presentee when presenting the gospel?**
- 14. If a person mentions that they have already received salvation, what would be the next thing to do?**
- 15. If you are presenting the gospel, what do you do if the person says they do not believe in God?**

APPENDIX B

St. Louis Baptist Church Disciple Maker Consent Form

Title of the Project: St. Louis Baptist Church Disciple-maker DMIN Thesis Project
Principal Investigator: Vasquez Granberry, graduate student in the Theology and Apologetics department/Rawlins School of Divinity at Liberty University.

You are invited to participate in a research study. To participate, you must be at least 18 years of age. As a participant one will be required to: become a disciple-maker who makes disciples.

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.

The purpose of the study is a Disciple-Makers consent to participate in the study of becoming a disciple-maker who makes disciples. It will be conducted by members who volunteer to participate.

If you agree to be in this study, I will ask you to do the following things: Participate in a 6–8-week training process before going out to disciple. It will include practice in discipling with a facilitator and your fellow stakeholders. You will be asked to do follow-up reports after disciple-making outings, if you are chosen to disciple after this research and interview process is complete.

Participants should not expect to receive a direct benefit(s) from taking part in this study. If successful, this study may contribute to your understanding of disciple-making.

Benefits to society include increase in the number of saved in the Kingdom of God.

The records of this study will be kept private. Published reports will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a subject. Data collected from you may be shared for use in future research studies or with other researchers. If data collected from you is shared, any information that could identify you, if applicable, will be removed before the data is shared.

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with Liberty University and St. Louis Baptist Church. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.

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.

The facilitator will be glad to answer any questions about the procedures of this study. Answers to questions on topics that might influence the outcome of the study may be deferred until the end of the session, when facilitator will explain the purpose of the study in more detail.

Participants will not be compensated for participating in this study.

The researcher is an unpaid associate minister of the sponsoring organization. This study is funded by St. Louis Baptist Church is providing equipment/device/etc. for the study. This disclosure is made so that you can decide if this relationship will affect your willingness to participate or not participate in this study.

The researcher conducting this study is Vasquez Granberry. You are encouraged to contact facilitator Vasquez Granberry [REDACTED] will be glad to answer any questions about the procedures of this study. Answers to questions on topics that might influence the outcome of the study may be deferred until the end of the session, when facilitator will explain the purpose of the study in more detail. In addition, contact is Dr. Jacob Dunlow, of Rawlings School of Divinity at Liberty University, department of Theology and Apologetics and professor of Thesis Research and Writing will also be consulted on church organization issues and his concerns about the study. Contact Dr. Dunlow [REDACTED]

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.

Before agreeing to be part of the confidential research survey, 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 Vasquez Granberry or Dr. Jacob Dunlow using the information provided above.

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

Printed Subject Name

Signature & Date

APPENDIX C

April 5, 2022

Potential Disciple Maker
St. Louis Baptist Church

Dear Participant:

As a graduate student in the Rawlings School of Divinity at Liberty University, I am conducting research as part of the requirements for a Doctor of Ministry degree. The purpose of my research is to get participants to complete a disciple-maker's consent to participate in the study of becoming a disciple-maker who makes disciples. It will be conducted by members who volunteer to participate. If you agree to be in this study, I will ask you to do the following things: answer survey questions that will assess the participants scriptural knowledge of disciple making. The survey questions begin with the participants definition of disciple making. As a participant a pre-survey and post-survey interview will occur. I am writing to invite eligible participants to join my study.

Participants must be

- A. 18 years of age or older
- B. Do you believe you fit qualifications to become a disciple-maker and are you willing to work on the areas where you fall short?
 1. A Christian (follower of Jesus),
 2. Strong commitment to growing in faith (let others see you following Jesus/demonstrating it),
 3. See the purpose of the Word and how the focus of the Word leads to Disciple Making.
 4. Developing your leadership
 5. Passionate, with a strong desire to make a difference for others.

If you fit the descriptors listed above, you may be eligible to participate in this research study.

Participants, if willing, will be asked to complete survey questions that poll the participants scriptural knowledge and opinion of disciple making. It should take approximately thirty minutes to complete the procedure listed. 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 Vasquez Granberry or completing the questions on a google document and email to

A consent document is provided as the first page of the survey/is attached to this letter/email will be sent to Vasquez Granberry via email or returned in person. 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 Vasquez Granberry after you have read the consent form. Doing so will indicate that you have read the consent information and would like to take part in the survey.

Sincerely,

Vasquez Granberry
Doctor of Ministry Graduate Student


APPENDIX D

Making Disciple Makers Recruitment

Research Participants Needed

St. Louis Baptist Church Making Disciple Makers

Participants must be

- A. 18 years of age or older and a member of St. Louis Baptist Church.
- B. Do you believe you fit qualifications to become a disciple-maker and are you willing to work on the areas where you fall short?
 1. A Christian (follower of Jesus),
 2. Strong commitment to growing in faith (let others see you following Jesus/demonstrating it),
 3. See the purpose of the Word and how the focus of the Word leads to Disciple Making.
 4. Developing your leadership
 5. Passionate, with a strong desire to make a difference for others.

If you fit the descriptors listed above, you may be eligible to participate in this research study.

The purpose of the study is a Disciple-Makers consent to participate in the study of becoming a disciple-maker who makes disciples. It will be conducted by members who volunteer to participate. If you agree to be in this study, I will ask you to do the following things: Answer survey questions to assess your knowledge of Disciple Making. Be interviewed before and after.

Prayerfully a closer relationship with your fellow participants and God.

A consent document is provided as the first page of the survey/will be given to you upon your initial verbal consent.

Vasquez Granberry, a doctoral candidate in the Doctor of Ministry School of Theology and Apologetics at Liberty University, is conducting this study.

Please contact Vasquez Granberry [REDACTED] for more information

APPENDIX E

Permission Request Letter

April 5, 2022

Ralph E. Caraway, Sr.
Pastor
St. Louis Baptist Church
[REDACTED]

Dear Pastor Caraway,

As a graduate student in the Theology and Apologetics department/School of Divinity at Liberty University, I am conducting research as part of the requirements for a Doctor of Ministry degree. The title of my research project is Making Disciple Makers, and the purpose of my research is to access the root(s) that created the lack of disciple-making at St. Louis Baptist Church and develop an outline of what interventions would work.

I am writing to request your permission to conduct my research at St. Louis Baptist Church, contact members of your staff/church/organization to invite them to participate in my research study.

Participants will be asked to contact me to schedule an interview. 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 an official letterhead indicating your approval. A permission letter document is attached for your convenience.

Sincerely,

Vasquez Granberry
Associate Minister, St. Louis Baptist Church
Liberty University Doctor of Ministry Online Student

APPENDIX F
Permission Response

April 5, 2022

Vasquez Granberry
Liberty University Student



Dear Vasquez Granberry:

After careful review of your research proposal entitled Making Disciple Makers. I have decided to grant you permission to access our membership list then contact our staff and membership and invite them to participate in your study.

Check the following boxes, as applicable:

I grant permission for Vasquez Granberry to contact potential participants, 18 years of age or older to invite them to participate in her research study.

I will not provide potential participant information to Vasquez Granberry, but we agree to provide his study information to description of potential participants on his behalf.

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

Sincerely,

Ralph Caraway, Sr.
Pastor
St. Louis Baptist Church

APPENDIX G

Disciple Makers Instruction and Research Lesson Sample

Lesson Duration: 2-3 class meetings.

Lesson Topic: How do we apply the element of multiplication today?

Materials: Primary: Disciple Makers Handbook

Lesson Objective: Each participant or stakeholder will use these sources for instruction and data research to become an productive disciple-maker.

Introduction: 1. Introduce the authors of “The Disciple Makers Handbook.” 2. Definitions of the terms - Disciple, Disciple Making, Disciple Making is Both Evangelism and Discipleship, Jesus’ Method, Jesus’ Method is Intentional Relational Discipleship.¹

Guided Practice: Points for lesson- 1. Clarification of motives and your passion for disciple-making as a church body. 2. The discipleship assignment is not complete until the people you are investing in are able to make disciples of Jesus on their own. 3. Prepare for opposition if you choose to embrace Jesus’ view. 4. The Great Commission cannot happen the way Jesus intended until everyday Christians actively participate and stop relying on pastors and church leaders to make disciples.²

Independent Practice: Peer discussion **and completion of lesson review questions.**

Closure: Questions and answer session

Lesson Assessment: Verbal and/or written quiz over lesson direct instruction.

Lesson Reflection: Daily journaling on class reflection and conversation.³

¹ Bobby Harrington and Josh Patrick, *The Disciple-Maker's Handbook: 7 Elements of a Discipleship Lifestyle* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 2017), 34-43.

² Ibid, 172.

³ Ibid, 173.

APPENDIX (XX)

IRB APPROVAL LETTER

May 26, 2022

Vasquez Granberry
Jacob Dunlow

Re: IRB Application - IRB-FY21-22-962 Making Disciple Makers

Dear Vasquez Granberry and Jacob Dunlow,

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(l).

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