

LIBERTY BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

DEVELOPING A CURRICULUM FOR AFRICAN AMERICAN PASTORS AND CHURCH
LEADERS IN CRESCENT CITY, FLORIDA

A Thesis Project Submitted to
Liberty Baptist Theological Seminary
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree

DOCTOR OF MINISTRY

BY

CORNELIUS S. GOLDEN

LYNCHBURG, VIRGINIA

MARCH 2013

Copyright © 2013 by Cornelius S. Golden
All Rights Reserved

LIBERTY BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

THESIS PROJECT APPROVAL SHEET

GRADE

MENTOR

READER

ABSTRACT

DEVELOPING A CURRICULUM FOR AFRICAN AMERICAN PASTORS AND CHURCH LEADERS IN CRESCENT CITY, FLORIDA

Cornelius S. Golden

Liberty Baptist Theological Seminary, 2012

Mentor: Dr. Charles N. Davidson

It is the writer's premise that there is a great void, particularly within the African American Church of academic training in theology amongst clergy and church leaders in rural areas. However, training is disparately needed.

The training should be very practical and engaging. The writer proposes to develop a curriculum designed to develop the non-seminary trained pastor in six vital areas of ministry: (1) Church History, (2) Church Administration, (3) Theology, (4) Ethics, (5) Evangelism, and (6) Pastoral Care. This project would be useful to the life and work of the church because it makes available a researched curriculum especially developed for a particular class of clergy.

The project shall include theory associated with each discipline presented and a module that has a developed curriculum for each discipline in a way that can be duplicated and taught by others.

Abstract Length: 143

Dedication

This work is dedicated to my dear Mother, Vivian M. Golden, whose love and devotion sustained me through this process.

To my Father who has gone on to be with the Lord for teaching me how to persevere and be tough minded.

Last but certainly not least to my very special friend, Flacyann J. Smith whose encouragement and motivation fueled this endeavor with unyielding hope and expectation.

CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES	3
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	4
Why this Topic is Needed.....	4
Background Leading to the Awareness of the Problem.....	5
Rationale for Selecting this Topic.....	6
Statement of Problem.....	8
Terminology Defined	11
Statement of Limitation	11
Theoretical Basis	12
Theological Basis.....	15
Statement of Methodology	17
Literature Review	19
CHAPTER TWO: GATHERING AND ASSESSING THE RESEARCH.....	28
Questionnaires	31
Telephone Interviews.....	31
Personal Interviews.....	32
Results of Survey.....	33
Interpretation of Research Results.....	41
CHAPTER THREE: DEVELOPING THE CURRICULUM MODEL	49
Church History	49
Church Administration.....	61

Theology74

Christian Ethics.....83

Evangelism.....91

Pastoral Care.....99

CHAPTER FOUR: SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION.....108

BIBLIOGRAPHY.....113

APPENDIX A: Statistics of Rural Churches119

APPENDIX B: Survey Questionnaire.....121

APPENDIX C: Pastoral Interviews.....123

APPENDIX D: Church History125

APPENDIX E: Church Administration126

APPENDIX F: Theology.....127

APPENDIX G: Ethics128

APPENDIX H: Evangelism.....129

APPENDIX I: Pastoral Care and Counseling.....130

VITA131

Figures

Figures 1 Age of respondents	35
Figure 2 Educational Level of Respondents	35
Figure 3 Gender of Respondents	36
Figure 4 Martial Status of Respondents	36
Figures 5 Denomination of Respondents	37
Figure 6 Years in the Church by Respondents	37
Figure 7 Ordination Status of Respondents	38
Figure 8 Theological Training of Respondents	38
Figure 9 Importance of Theological Training	39
Figure 10 Engel's Scale of Evangelism	98

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Why this Topic is Needed

It appears that American society has shifted in its moral ideals and has digressed into a feel good, look good society. Success is defined in terms of material possessions at all costs, with the idea that the ends will justify the means. Our society appears to be preoccupied with cosmetic beauty, which is an external feature, and character is just a by-product of what is really significant. Real beauty is found in accomplishing the purpose for which one exists. The church has the responsibility of witnessing to the beauty of Jesus as both Lord and Christ and to be a beacon of light to those who are in darkness. The church should be the stabilizing entity in an unstable society. In order for the church to do its job effectively, there must be authorized and informed leadership in the church. There is a lack of informed leadership in the church, especially the rural church. Most clergy who seek out education to prepare themselves for the ministry do so with the aspiration of working in a church that can afford them a relatively good lifestyle. Usually ministries that can afford to provide the minister with a full time position are located in urban areas.

The lack of training and ability on the part of pastors serving rural churches has been pointed out as one of its greatest weaknesses. This is related to inadequate financial support, for many rural ministers are paid less than are teachers in the schools in their communities; and they have family, travel, and other expenses which many teachers do not have. There is a sort of secularization among the ministers, for when a man gets a better offer in a large place, he leaves the rural church.¹

¹ W. W. Stuenkel, "Rural Life and the Church," *Concordia Theological Monthly* 22, no. 1 (January 1951): 38.

This in turn leads to a void of academically trained clergy and church personnel in the rural church. This project will be useful to the life and work of the church because it makes available a planned curriculum especially developed for the clergy and/or church leaders in rural churches. This enhances the church's mission overall because it provides tools that are necessary to prepare those in leadership positions to lead the church.

Many church leaders desire more training than they have but it is not readily accessible for them. Most pastors in rural areas are by-vocational and they cannot afford to leave their jobs and head off to seminary. The online seminaries do help to provide training to this population of clergy and church leaders; however, many will not take advantage of this accessibility because of the need to use technology in an efficient way. The reasons may range from being intimidated by the computer to the need for personal instruction to absorb the information in a given curriculum.

The church is directly affected by the preparedness or unpreparedness of its leadership in a proportional way. It is imperative that the church invest in the preparation of competent leadership in the rural church. With the opportunity for rural pastors and church leadership to get a basic theological training comes the potential for a significant ministry as opposed to a purely prominent ministry. This can be done by establishing a curriculum for rural pastors and make it assessable to all who would take advantage of the opportunity.

Background Leading to the Awareness of the Problem

The writer has witnessed a kind of falling away from the rural church over an extended period. After attending many church services in the area, the writer noticed that churches did not have the membership and support that it did previously. In fact, there was very little attendance

in each church. The sermons that were preached had little or no substance and the teaching in Sunday School was pathetically humorous. The writer attended an association meeting of local churches of the same denomination. This association was composed of about ten churches in the immediate area. The meeting was very disorderly and it appeared no one was confident that they knew what they were doing. It was then that the writer knew something had to be done to address the issue of training in the rural church, if the church was going to continue to make a positive contribution to the community in which it is located.

The local churches have minimal attendance and the overall enthusiasm for church attendance and church activity participation is very low. The writer's father was the pastor of a rural church for forty years before he went home to be with the Lord. As a child, the writer could remember the church being the hub of the activities of the community. The church he pastored was, relative to population, well attended and so were the other churches in the community. The pastors would often fellowship with each other and support each other. The writer's father seemed to have a leading role in the community and other pastors would often look to him for advice and guidance. The writer's father was the only African American pastor with a college education in the area and to compliment that, his wife had a college degree as well. Apart from being in the ministry, they were both educators. Since the time of their ministry, the churches in the area have become insignificant as it relates to providing direction for the community. The writer seeks to answer the questions of what can be done to strengthen the church and how to go about getting it done.

Rationale for Selecting this Topic

According to the assessment of Dietrich Champagnie, the Executive Director of Putnam County Anti - Drug Coalition, there is a generational problem of ethics and morals within the family structure in Crescent City, FL. When giving a reason for the extreme problems of alcohol and drug abuse issues within the juvenile community of Crescent City, FL, she says, “Part of the reason for this may lie in the fact that Crescent City’s youth still do not perceive a risk from drinking alcohol and parental acceptance of alcohol use by their children has remained the same or gone up over the past decade.”² This suggests that not only are the children consumers of alcohol, tobacco, and illicit drugs, but the parents accept this type of behavior as a norm. To make matters more interesting, these same parents and children are in church on Sunday morning, giving their attention to the preacher. We must be prepared to teach God’s people wholesome and relevant precepts of Scripture that are practical, relevant, and significant for the promotion of a Godly life.

According to Putnam County Anti - Drug Coalition census, of which Crescent City is a part of, in 2008, “21% of middle school student used alcohol within the last thirty days of the survey and 39% of High school students. In the same year 27% of middle schoolers and 40% of high schoolers felt their parents/guardians had favorable attitudes towards the use of any alcohol, tobacco, and/or other drugs.”³ The statistics for 2010 was consistent with the numbers of 2008 for all practical purposes. In 2010, 22.5% of middle school students and 40.1% of high school students used alcohol within the last thirty days of the survey. In 2010, 27% of middle school students and 40% of high school students felt their parents/guardians had favorable attitudes

² Dietrich Champagnie, *The Putnam County Anti-Drug Coalition: Youth Snapshot* (Palatka, FL: CIC Planning Group, 2009-2010).

³ Putnam County Anti-Drug Coalition, *Florida Youth Substance Abuse Survey* (Palatka, Florida 2010).

towards the use of any alcohol, tobacco, and/or other drugs⁴. It is clear that the numbers are consistent and little change in behavior and attitude has changed among the population of Crescent City, Florida within recent years.

The statistics for deviant behavior, (particular for juveniles) in a town as small as Crescent City, Florida, indicates a serious problem with ethics and morals in this community. Ironically, a significant number of youth indicated that the most influential institution in their lives is the church. Fifty-one percent of middle school students in Crescent City, Florida, indicated that church has the greatest influence in their lives and 59% of high school students said the same thing.⁵ The writer insists that the influence attributed to the church comes by way of teaching. This is one of the advantages in the rural church because it does not have as much competition for the parishioners' time as does the urban church. In an article entitled "The Black Church in Rural America" by Wilbert H. Goatley, the importance of teaching is observed:

A sound teaching program. This is one of the great needs of any church, especially the rural. Seeing the church on mission must always be uppermost in mind. A good Bible teaching program can be utilized through the various organizational components. A week-night Bible study or Sunday School teachers' meeting coupled with the prayer service has proved effective in many Black rural churches. The Sunday School ministry and its extension, the Vacation Bible School, has blessed the lives of thousands each year in the rural and small cities of America. Year after year in Vacation Bible School Clinics reports continue to come of large numbers of boys and girls who have made professions of faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. The Training Union, missionary groups, choir, and usher programs are all teaching arms for the rural church.⁶

The question then becomes, if the church has this kind of influence on the population it serves, why is there so much vice and family corrosion in such a small town?

⁴ Putnam County Anti-Drug Coalition, *Florida Youth Substance Abuse Survey* (Palatka, Florida 2011).

⁵ Putnam County Anti-Drug Coalition, *Florida Youth Substance Abuse Survey* (Palatka, Florida 2010).

⁶ Wilbert H. Goatley, "The Black Church in Rural America," *Review and Expositor* 70, no. 3 (Summer 1973): 361.

Statement of the Problem

The author contends that a serious and very significant problem with the rural church is that of prepared or theologically trained leadership. Much of the lack of interest and falling away from the church as the hub of the rural community is the rural church's lack of prepared or trained leadership. This is not a new issue for the church. In fact, it was recognized in the Catholic Church before the Reformation occurred. In the sixteenth century, it is said of the Catholic Church that, "Local parishes everywhere had long suffered from symptoms of neglect, indifference, and uneducated and untrained clergy who, in any age of rising literacy, no longer met the expectations of many Christians."⁷ This same phenomenon appears to be the case in the African American rural church. The symptoms of neglect and indifference in the rural church seem to be prevalent. As recently as fifteen years ago in a very rural community, there were members of a church in the rural area where the writer lives that were schoolteachers, police officers, businessmen and women, and a cross section of other people. Now most of these people have moved their membership to churches that are in the more populated surrounding towns with theologically trained leadership.

The rural church is failing to provide wholesome spiritual leadership because of the naiveté of its leadership. "As a Churchman, Governor Scott said that the general weakness of the rural church is a major problem in the rehabilitation of rural life. He maintained that the great movement now going on to make adequate the physical facilities of rural life is

⁷Michael Collins and Matthew A. Price, *The Story of Christianity: A Celebration of 2,000 Years of Faith* (New York: DK Publishing, 1999), 130.

handicapped by a retarded church, which is failing in its job of creating spiritual guidance for the community.”⁸

At one time, there was a great interest in the rural church during the first and middle parts of the twentieth century. This was, in large part, a response to the social movement that some say was spearheaded by President Theodore Roosevelt. It was President Roosevelt who called for the Country Life Conference:

In 1907, President Teddy Roosevelt called for the Country Life Conference. This became a landmark event for the Cooperative Extension Movement and for the discipline of rural sociology, as well as for churches. The issues of tenancy, public education, inadequate farm practices, dirt roads, poor hygiene, and the weakness of social institutions, including churches, were among those addressed. The major denominations quickly opened a department of rural church work. They addressed social reform and community improvement. They worked with Cooperative Extension in many states to form summer schools to train rural clergy in the social sciences.⁹

The interest in the rural church grew dramatically in the twentieth century and most denominations were represented (see Appendix A). The number of churches and church membership in Appendix A is not an accurate representation of the entire church because African American churches of all denominations were left out of this census. “If all of the rural African American, smaller Baptist bodies and Independent Baptist congregations were treated as a whole the number of rural Baptist would easily exceed the 10 million mark . . .”¹⁰ It can be readily seen that the number of rural churches and church members are a significant enough number to show cause for interest in the life and work of the rural church.

⁸“Great Churches of America 7, Olive Chapel Baptist, Rural Route 3, Apex NC,” *Christian Century* 67, no. 31 (August 2, 1950): 918.

⁹Gary Farley and David Ruesink, “Rural Churches in America: For the Encyclopedia of Rural Sociology,” <http://Ruralchurch.us/wp-filez/RSCENE/RCA.pdf> (accessed May 29, 2011), 2.

¹⁰Gary Farley, “The Rural Church In The South” (for the Southern Rural Sociological Society, Southern Baptist Convention, New Orleans, Jan 29-31 File 1030).

Admittedly, there are other factors involved in the life of the rural church, such as economics. However, Neitz helps us to realize that decline in the economic base of an area will not necessarily cause the decline of the church.¹¹ The constant factor for church health in the rural church is not economics but church leadership.

The crisis in Crescent City today is that most people in this rural area would consider themselves Christian, but fail to practice Christian values and ethics, and as a result, there are major social problems, such as drug use and a high crime rate in such a scarcely populated area.

Terminology Defined

The term *church* will indicate the rural church and in particular the African American Church in Crescent City, Fl. *Theological training* will be defined as a vocational certificate program whose curriculum is designed to expose the potential students to an introduction to the basic theological disciplines. The term *church leadership* or *church leaders* will be limited to the ordained ministry of the Baptist church.

Statement of Limitations

This project will address a particular rural community and it is not intended to address the issues and circumstances of urban ministry nor even all rural communities, but will be confined to the Crescent City, Florida area in particular, and Putnam County, Florida in general. In essence, this project will be focused primarily on a particular rural community of a population of 1782.

¹¹ Mary Jo Neitz, "Encounter in the Heartland: What Studying Rural Churches Taught Me about Working Across Differences," *Sociology of Religion* 70, no. 4 (Winter 2009): 343-361.

Crescent City is a small southern town in north central Florida whose main industry is migrant work. Because of a hard freeze in the early 1980s, many orange trees died off and the migrant work in Crescent City was adversely affected. According to the United States Vital Statistics Bureau, the population of Crescent City is 1782. There are 825 males and 957 females. Of the 1782 people, there are 707 African Americans. The median age is forty and the median income is \$25,476 per family. This statistic of income is surprising when the visible poverty is so great. It is difficult to imagine the median income to be so high. Given those figures, it is clear to see that there are not many resources for ministry when compared to the more populated and economically stable urban areas.

Theoretical Basis

The theoretical basis for this project is found in the understanding that the church is of great value as it socializes members of the Christian community into the family of God and provide for the well being of them doing their pilgrimage on earth. Pastors must be trained in order to facilitate a ministry that is both significant and relative to the sustenance of a healthy and wholesome community and a happy and responsible people. Crime is very significant and toxic to any community, and the church can have a direct effect on crime.

Matthew Lee, in discussing ways that the church is relevant to the deterring of crime, says:

A second way institutions can be associated with lower crime rates is through their ability to structure behavioral options, and therefore limit the range of acceptable behavior (LaFree 1998:71). Associated with this is the notion that institutions convey mainstream norms, values, and expectations. As Chamlin and Cochran (1995:418) acknowledge, “religious institutions are important transmitters of values and norms that can counteract the anomic pressures produced by the economy.” Aside from the family and the labor force, churches are for many people the third institution in which they regularly spend

time. As a node of structured interaction, churches then become a vehicle by which social life is regulated through the transmission of norms and values.¹²

It is well documented that the church plays a crucial role in the socialization process of rural America especially in the African American community.

Over the years, sociological studies have stressed that other than the family, the African American church has been the most important and dominant institution in African American life playing a significant role in both the social and cultural life of African Americans for more than two centuries. From their earliest beginning, African American churches have served as the focal point of virtually every movement for change affecting African American communities. One clear example of the tremendous influence exerted by the African American church is the civil rights movement which originated in and grew out of the church. It has been suggested that the church not only provides a spiritual outlet for its followers but more importantly, gives them an avenue for recreation and relaxation from the physical stresses of life.¹³

The value of the church as a socializing agent in the African American community has inestimable value, especially in rural communities. It is of the gravest importance that the leadership of the rural church be prepared to offer substantive and competent leadership. This can only occur when training is available.

A Famous African American sociologist and scholar E. Franklin Frazier saw the African American church as “A nation within a nation,” and credited it with being “the chief means by which a structured or organized life came into existence among the Negro masses after emancipation.” Finally, an African-American Baptist pastor has noted that the African American church cannot be understood in traditional theological terms because this church is a protective fortress behind which African-American people have shielded themselves from a hostile world. It is in other words, an instrument of hope and a weapon of protest in a world where the African American voice is muted.¹⁴

¹² Matthew R. Lee, “The Religious Institutional base and Violent Crime,” *Journal for Scientific Study of Religion* 45, no. 35 (September 2006): 313.

¹³ Arnold Park, “The Rural African American Church,” in Gary Farley et al., *The Rechurching of Rural America: A Report of the Restudy of Rural Churches in America*, <http://Ruralchurch.us/wp-content/uploads/2008/08/The-Rechurching-of-Rural-America.pdf>. (accessed March 20, 2012), 1.

¹⁴ Park., 1.

For this cause, the preparation of leadership in rural communities will directly affect the well being of those it serves.

This author agrees with David Purpel when he said, “I continue to have the faith that schools . . . can actually contribute to the creation of a more loving, more just and saner world.”¹⁵ This writer interprets the term “schools” to mean education. Simply put, the church in the writer’s mind is the only institution available to humanity for renewal and revitalization of life in a holistic way. With this in mind, the urgency and necessity of equipping the church for her mission is of tantamount importance to life itself. Because of the propensity to gravitate towards the potential for maximum material gain, the trained clergy seeks parishes of great resources, such as can be found in urban areas where the support of ministry is more available than in rural areas. This leaves a void within the rural church for trained clergy and/or church-community leaders. The result is a lack of interest and participation in the rural church. Church leaders are charged with taking care of the church; tending the garden, so to speak.

David Pratt says, “Almost all philosophies of curriculum agree that the basis of education is helping learners to construct meaning in their lives. Where they disagree is with respect to the kinds of meaning that deserve priority.”¹⁶ The order by which this proposed curriculum will be delivered will be chosen based on the priorities that the deliverer or teacher deems desirable.

The writer has watched the African American community digress in morality over the years. Johnson says, “During these two millennia Christianity has perhaps proved more influential in shaping human destiny than any other institutional philosophy, but there are now signs that its

¹⁵ David Purpel, *The Moral and Spiritual Crisis in Education: A Curriculum for Justice and Compassion in Education* (Granby, MA: Bergin and Garvey, 1989), x.

¹⁶ David Pratt, *Curriculum Planning: A Handbook for Professionals* (Orlando: Harcourt Brace College Publishers, 1994), 8.

period of predominance is drawing to a close.”¹⁷ There seems to be a decaying of the family system and a serious malnourished moral ethic of conduct within the community. “In contrast to current African American values, most of the African ancestors upheld the sanctity of marriage and provided a stable family structure and education for the nurture of children; we emphasized loyalty to the community as a whole and not just self-interest.”¹⁸ The tendency of the community today is exclusively self-interest. The church is our last stance to “remove not the Old Landmark and go not into the fields of the Fatherless.”¹⁹ With this in mind, there are at least six vital areas of ministry in which the Pastor and church leaders should gain some exposure.

Theological Basis

The theological concept that undergirds this work is found in what is commonly called the Great Commission. In the book of Matthew, Jesus commissions his disciples to “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.”²⁰ Christianity is an evangelistic faith and that requires a passing on of the faith. The passing on of the faith can only be done adequately by teaching the concepts and precepts of the faith. In the book of Acts, the Scripture declares “Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto

¹⁷ Paul Johnson, *A History of Christianity* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1979), VII.

¹⁸ Glenn Usry and Craig S. Keener, *Black Man's Religion: Can Christianity be Afrocentric?* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1996), 18.

¹⁹ Proverbs 23:10 (KJV).

²⁰ Matthew 28:19-20.

them about three thousand souls. And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine [i.e., teaching] and fellowship, and in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.”²¹

Jesus calls a teacher of Israel into question when he failed to understand what seemed to be a fundamental concept. In the book of John, Jesus says to Nicodemus regarding the concept of conversion, “Jesus answered and said unto him, Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things?”²² Authentic teaching is necessary for the work and life of the church. Jesus said, “Can the blind lead the blind: shall they both fall into the ditch.”²³ “This implies that the teacher needs to be taught.”²⁴

Rick Warren, pastor of Saddleback Church, says of the church, “I believe the key issue for churches in the twenty-first century will be church health, not church growth.”²⁵ The idea is that a healthy church will grow but a growing church does not mean it is healthy. When we begin to equate numerical growth with the health of a church, we must not neglect to hear the words of Jesus when he says, “Enter ye in at the straight gate: for wide is the gate and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat. Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.”²⁶ That is to say, numerical growth is not an indication about the success in the mission of the church.

²¹ Acts 2:41-42.

²² John 3:10.

²³ Luke 6:39.

²⁴ Nolan B. Harmon ed. *The Interpreter's Bible*, vol. VII (New York: Abingdon Press, 1956), 440.

²⁵ Rick Warren, *The Purpose Driven Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1995), 17.

²⁶ Matthew 7:13-14.

The theme for training in connection with God and his declared people is prominent in the Scripture. We find in Scripture, “people will be destroyed because of a lack of knowledge.”²⁷ In this text, God is addressing the priests for failing to properly instruct the people and as a result, “they will be deprived of their office, as will their children after them.”²⁸ The church’s theological mandate is to prepare and nurture the people until the second coming of Christ. This mandate can be found in Jesus’ instructions to Peter. The Scripture reads, “So when they had dined Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs.”²⁹ The idea of feeding is nurturing and sustaining the church by teaching. The leadership of the church should have a clear theological position based on systematic and disciplined thought. Any church leader should have a firm grip of the spiritual path by which he or she is leading God’s people and be able to articulate it. One must engage in developing what Ogden calls, “Fully reflective understanding.” He says, “Theology has a correlative structure because its task is to work out a fully reflective understanding of the Christian witness of faith in terms that are intelligible and relevant to human existence.”³⁰

Statement of Methodology

The proposed project will involve four chapters. These chapters will provide an overview of the need for theological training in the rural church and how it impacts the local community. This paper will examine and present a designed and effective curriculum for

²⁷ Hosea 4:6.

²⁸ Nolan B. Harmon, ed. *The Interpreter’s Bible*, Vol. vi (New York: Abingdon Press, 1956), 605.

²⁹ John 21:15.

³⁰ Schubert M. Ogden, “What is Theology?” *The Journal of Religion* 52, no. 1 (January 1972), 22-36.

equipping the saints for the work of the ministry. The curriculum will be based on current research, interviews, and previously developed curriculum models. Below are the chapter listings for the project and a summary of what each chapter will contain.

Chapter 1: Introduction

Chapter 2: Gathering & Assessing the Research

Chapter 3: Developing the Curriculum Model

Chapter 4: Summary and Conclusion

Chapter One – Introduction

Chapter One of this paper primarily deals with the rationale for the project. It describes the condition of the church and its effect on the community in which it is located. The background for the need of the project is visited, as well as the theological premise that undergirds the need for the study. In the introduction, some alarming statistics about the community are presented and the ways in which church leadership directly affects its community are discussed.

Chapter Two - Gathering and Assessing the Research

Chapter Two is concerned with providing the methodology used to gather the data that supports the need for the project. It lays out the results of relevant literature, survey results, and interviews. Along with the method of obtaining data, Chapter Two deals with what the data suggests as to the hypothesized problem and suggested resolution of the problem.

Chapter Three - Developing the Curriculum Model

Chapter Three involves the actual curriculum that is to be used in the six areas of a basic theological education. The six areas of study will present only an introduction of each discipline. Those disciplines that will be addressed are: (1) Church History, (2) Church Administration, (3) Theology, (4) Ethics, (5) Evangelism, and (6) Pastoral Care and Counseling.

Chapter Four - Summary and Conclusion

The Summary and Conclusion is designed to allow the author to personalize the project and place special emphasis on particular components of the study that will place the study within the intended context of the author.

Literature Review

Books

Curriculum Planning: A Handbook for Professions, by David Pratt, is good book for those who are beginning to understand the underlying principals of developing relevant and significant curricula. Pratt addresses the question of prioritizing curricula and the methods employed in doing so. He also makes one aware of the reality of how much work is involved in developing a curriculum. This book is very helpful in understanding the philosophies behind developing curricula for any particular discipline. It was very helpful in providing direction for the writer in this work.

Church History Vol. One: From Christ to Pre-Reformation, by Everett Ferguson, is a great reference for developing a curriculum describing the basic issues and development of the church as an entity of itself. Its outline of Jesus and the beginning of the church is theologically sound as it references the Scripture to support its claim of the origin of the church. Its simplistic

account of Christological controversies that affected the early church makes it a good resource for an introductory course in church history.

The Story of Christianity: A Celebration of 2,000 Years of Faith, by Michael Collins and Matthew A. Price, does an outstanding job of summarizing the Reformation and American Christianity during its formative years. It has brilliant pictures and church art that would prove engaging to the new student. Its method of compartmentalizing its subject matter is very practical and easy to follow. This book in no way offers a detailed account of Church or Christian history but it does offer a suitable introduction to the subject matter for the beginning Church History student.

Leadership Handbook of Management & Administration, edited by James D. Berkley, is an excellent book for approaching church administration in a holistic way. This book addresses every area of church management and administration, from forms to philosophies. Berkley did an excellent job in compiling relevant topics of church administration and presenting them in a way that can be of use to the novice. The book assists in this work by providing a text for the curriculum on Church Administration that can be easily understood and kept as a lifelong reference. The content of this book is an ideal source for developing a curriculum in the area of church administration.

The Case for the Resurrection of Jesus, by Gary R. Habermas and Michael R. Licona, arms the church with a creditable way of defending the faith using secular methodologies of ascertaining the truth of the resurrection of Jesus. This book is a great resource for training church leaders by establishing a sound theological insight into the truth of the resurrection of Jesus using the historical critical method. This book is written in a way that can be easily

understood and its method is composed in such a way that the reader can teach others about the proof of the resurrection of Jesus.

A Testament of Hope, edited by James M. Washington, is a collection of the speeches of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. This is an excellent book that assists in understanding the theology of Dr. King and to show how his theology shows up in his speeches. This will be a valuable tool in exemplifying a method of doing theology or having theology reflected upon in one's preaching or teaching. Dr. King's brilliantly constructed speeches reflect his understanding of God, and his theological system of hope is worth the student of theology's inquiry.

Perimeters of Light: Biblical Boundaries for the Emerging Church, by Elmer Towns and Ed Stetzer, is a great book that shows the importance of sound theological postures when seeking to evangelize the unchurched. This book helps the student to understand the importance of evangelism and some of the ill-advised mindsets that actually hinder the evangelistic process. It is brilliantly written in the genre of a parable that teaches the quote of an unknown author: "Methods are many Principles are few, Methods change Principles never do."

11 Innovations In The Local Church: How Today's Leaders Can Learn, Discern and Move into the Future, by Elmer Towns, Ed Stetzer and Warren Bird, is an excellent book that presents resources for exposing students of evangelism and church growth to different ministries and the importance of sound theological principals when seeking to be innovative in a significant way.

Attachment Focused Family Therapy, by Daniel A. Hughes, offers great insight into the importance of nurture and modeling in the life of the church and guidance in parenting. The book is a bit technical for the beginning student. However, there are some principles that the

writer finds clear enough to introduce to the new student. This book is useful in pastoral care in emphasizing the importance of parenting.

Connecting: Healing For Ourselves And Our Relationships, by Larry Crabb, provides a paradigm for coaching those that are close to each other. Many church leaders are called upon to give advice in one form or another and this book contains resources that will give the student a practical way of approaching the many issues that they may be called upon to address in the lives of their acquaintances. In addition, it provides the church leader with a model for teaching others to help each other in the healing process.

African American Pastoral Care and Counseling: The Politics Of Oppression And Empowerment, by Edward P. Wimberly is an eye-opening book that addresses many of the issues that are unique to the African American community. It is a fantastic resource for developing a type of consciousness in the leadership of the African American church driven by purpose and expectation. The book brings light to the healing or damage the conversations one has within themselves. It offers what seems to be a very simplistic way to bringing positive change in one's life by changing his or her conversation. This book is a good book for beginning instruction of pastoral care.

Interpreting The New Testament: A Practical Guide by Daniel J. Harrington, S.J. is a great book that provides a very simplistic and basic way of exegeting the Scripture. It will be a good resource for the ethics class. It provides a relatively simplified way of interpreting Scripture in a way that retains the integrity of the Scripture and allows the Scripture to speak to the proper relationship of the individual and the environment.

The Smart Step Family, written by Ron L. Deal, is a necessary book to be read by all who are seriously engaged in caring for the people of God. It is well written in terms that are very simple yet profound in content. It walks through a practical way of ministering to a raising population of the church.

Journal Articles

“Religious Involvement Among Rural Youth”, by King, Elder, Glenn and Whitebeck , substantiates the value of the Rural Church particular in the lives of our youth. This article adds insight to the need of a trained clergy to prepare young minds for everyday life. The research of this paper reveals how significant the church is to the youth that it serves.

“The Black Church and Community Development and Self Help”, by Marci Littlefield is an excellent article that familiarizes the reader with the unique issues of the rural church as it is connected to the community in which it is located. Littlefield identifies the shift in the status of blacks in rural America and the emerging of a different professional class in rural areas. No longer is the professional class of rural areas confined to educators as it was in the segregated south, but now blacks are in law enforcement, first responders, and government to name a few. As the educational level of the population has increased, so should the level of training be increased by the pastor.

“The Integral Place of Religion in the Lives of Rural African American Women Who Use Cocaine,” by Emma J. Brown, is a good source that allows the reader to get a picture of the critical nature of ministry even in the rural church. Misconceptions and bad theology is a result of unlearned teachers. Brown’s research reveals a class of people who needs social support yet their theological view is Christianity a faith of solitude and fellowship is not necessary.

“Righteous Politics: The Role of The Black Church in Contemporary Politics,” Helps enlighten the reader to the influence the Black Church has on the congregation. This article puts forth the responsibility of church leader to be informed and be effective communicators to promote the well being of the parishioners. The article primarily addresses the urban church however, the rural church leaders have even more of a role of leadership than the urban counterparts.

“Black Churches Creating Safe Spaces to Combat Silence and Stigma Related to AIDS,” The article by Michelle Beadie exposes the reader to one of the most prevalent problems of the black community which is the AIDS epidemic. At the same time it introduces the church to a opportunity to be significant. The AIDS problem is not reserved for the poverty stricken urban areas of the Black community but it is just as prevalent or in some cases more prevalent in some rural areas.

“Substance Abuse among Rural and Very Rural Drug Users at Treatment Entry,” by Schoeneberges, Leukfeild, Carl, Hiller, and Godlaski, offers insight into the concern of the rural communities and their moral problem of substance abuse. It arms church leaders with the knowledge of a problem that is not discussed much in the rural church setting. However, it has a direct affect on the life and work of the church.

“The Religious Institution Based and Violent Crime In Rural Areas”, by Matthew R. Lee, is a good source for understanding the relationship between the church and crime in the community. Lee shows a direct correlation between the two and does a good job of attempting to diagnose the problem, but falls short of offering a solution to the problem.

Internet

<http://Ruralchurch.us/wp-filez/RSCENE/RCA.pdf>. By Gary Farley and David Ruesink is an article that addresses the importance of the rural community to America at large. It documents the efforts of different organizations including the federal government to sustain and support the rural community. It provides the reader with a concept of the problems associated with the rural community and a history of its decline as well as a history of efforts to reclaim it.

<http://Ruralchurch.us/wp-content/uploads/2008/08/The-Rechurching-of-Rural-America.pdf>. By Gary Farley, John Bennett, Jere Giles And Arnold Parks is a great work depicting the overall status of the rural church and the emerging changing trends that directly affects the continued mission of the church its shortcomings and the prognoses for its development and continued success in accomplishing the mission of the church.

<http://www.overlandmissions.com/rpn/> is a model developed by Philip Smethurst for developing a network of information for the rural pastors . The website is a self-described “watering pot” for leaders from third world countries can receive sound teaching, doctrine, and encouragement in their task of reaching their nation for Christ. It is a good source to use as a model for rural church associations of America.

Theses

Jeremy Paul Roberts “Transitioning The Local Church From a Rural to Suburban Context” D.Min Thesis, Liberty Baptist Theological Seminary, 2009.

Rodney Merrill Sprayberry, “The Revitalization Process In A Small Rural Plateaued Southern Baptist Church” D.Min Thesis, Liberty Baptist Theological Seminary, 2010.

Ronald Brent Mays “Comparing Turnaround Leadership In a Rural Church and Schools”

Ph.D. Thesis, University of Louisville, 2011.

Stevens J. Daniel, Sr. “A 21st Century Model for Church Revitalization in a Rural

Setting” D.Min Thesis, Union Theological Seminary, 2012.

Scripture

Hosea 4:6 offers us a clear reason for the endeavor of acquiring knowledge. According to the writer of Hosea, the issue of life and death lay in getting or not getting knowledge. This passage of Scripture affirms the mandate of the church to be a teaching agent in the care of the life of the church. It is against the will of God to refuse or neglect to teach his principles to his people by those charged to do so.

Proverbs 23:10 encourages us not to forsake that which has worked for us down through the years and not to approach life as if we have no heritage. This helps us to understand the importance of dispensing biblical knowledge to the people. In fact, it is the congregation’s divine right to be taught the Scripture with competence and integrity.

Matthew 7:13-14 demonstrates how Jesus helps us to understand that there is no right way to do wrong. Many are enticed to take what they believe to be shortcuts but this text reminds us that there is only one way to do right. As church leaders, we must try hard to keep the church on course with the precepts that God has put forth. Church Leaders must give themselves to study and reflection so they can be sure they are on the right path so they can lead others.

Matthew 28:19-20 is commonly known as the Great Commission of church leaders. It puts forth the clear mandate to teach. This text clearly lays out the responsibility of church leaders to teach converts in the way of Christ and his church.

John 3:10 suggests that an office in the church carries with it an expected level of competence. The writer observes many church leaders that were not equipped to serve in the office they were holding. However, when proper training is made available, they should take advantage of it so they can contribute to the church operating decently and in order.

John 21:15 teaches that it is the responsibility of church leaders to nourish the people in spiritual things. Jesus affirms this in his request of Peter based on Peter's confession of love for Jesus. Love should be the motivation for preparing one's self for the work of the church. Because we love our children, we teach them. Christ is saying to all who he has called into the leadership of the church to prepare to feed his people.

Luke 6:39 suggests that when one is in a church leadership role, they directly affect the well being of those who follow them. The mere notion that one can affect the well being or demise of others would motivate them to try to improve on their level of competence if the love of God dwells in them.

Acts 2:41-42 shows us that after conversion we must keep ourselves under the teaching of those in leadership. We are admonished as the people of God, both lay and ordained, to remain under the teaching of the anointing of God. Conversion is the first step but the need for training in the way of God never ceases to exist.

CHAPTER TWO

GATHERING AND ASSESSING THE RESEARCH

In statistics, survey methodology is the field that studies the sampling of individuals from a population with a view towards making statistical inferences about the population using the sample. The instrument designed in this work is designed in a way to determine how important training is seen to be among the rural church population of Crescent City, FL and the demographics of those who deem it important and those who do not. The writer seeks to determine whether there is a correlation between those who think training is essential and those who do not. Generational, gender, denominational, and educational level correlations among those who esteem education as oppose to those who do not will be examined. The writer was not able to find any literature addressing the idea of a correlation between age and/or gender and the attitude about the need for church training for church leaders. However, there was a study done in 1929 about the method of conversion where inferences can be made about a correlation between gender and the concept of a need for training among church leaders. Both male and female participants in the study indicated that the conversion experience was most effective for them by a process. The study concluded, "It is now coming to be generally recognized that religion dawns by development and therefor demands educational processes, the various emotional phenomena being only incidents."¹ The study further revealed "After taking a survey of 2,174 cases 61.1% indicated that their religious awakening occurred by the educational process as opposed to emotional stimulus or a definite crisis. When they were analyzed by gender 71% of females and 57% of males indicated that their religious awakening was a result of

¹ Elmer T. Clark, *Psychology of Religious Awakening 1929* (Whitefish, MT: Kessinger Publishing, 2003), 38-39.

education.”² These statistics indicate that there are some differences in how females and males interpret their experience of conversion but it does not reveal the emphasis one group places on the need for a theological education by church leaders over another group. When using the above statistics that women indicate that conversion takes place more often by a process than by an event, it only infers that females deem theological education more important than men do. However, that is only an inference arrived at by deductive reasoning.

The writer is seeking data that will allow for inductive reasoning to reach a conclusion about the attitude of a need for theological training among church leaders. The writer feels that the best conclusion that can be arrived at will amount to inductive logic because the subject matter is purely subjective. However, the effects of the subject matter remain objective.

A copy of the survey used in this work can be viewed in Appendix B. All the questions on the survey are relevant to understanding the basic attitude about training of church leaders among church members of a cross section of rural church denominations.

The lack of trained personnel in the church can and often does hinder church and spiritual growth in diverse ways. Using the tools of the social scientist, the writer seeks to identify the tendency of having trained church leadership in the rural church, in particular Crescent City, FL, and to offer a remedy or make some suggestions to increase the tendency with the view of strengthening the church. The writer is seeking to identify the cause and effect of the lack of trained church leaders in the rural church. “By cause and effect, social scientist mean that the presence of one condition (the cause) makes the occurrence of some other condition (the effect) more likely than it would otherwise have been.”³ The instruments designed in this work are

² Clark., 47-48.

³ John E. Farley and Michael W. Flota, *Sociology* 6th ed. (Boulder, CO: Paradigm Press, 2012), 27.

structured in a way to determine how important training is seen to be among the rural church population and the demographics of those who deem it important and those who do not. The writer seeks to determine if there is a correlation between those who think training is essential and those who do not, such as a generational, gender, denominational, or educational level correlation.

There are some weaknesses in the survey method of doing research. There is always the issue of integrity (the honesty of those participating in the survey) and that of competence (do the responders understand what is being asked in the survey). In this research, the latter is more of a concern than the former. The writer will use all three methods of doing research by survey: the questionnaire, telephone interviews, and personal interviews. The questionnaires will be of a fixed type to eliminate as much of the potential for misunderstanding as possible.

General reasoning leads the writer to believe that if church leaders had an opportunity to get theological training they would take advantage of it. The writer felt that the lay population of the rural church did not value academic training and that is why they did not require their leaders to have or get any theological training. The writer felt that the leaders of the church especially the clergy know the value of training because they are involved in providing leadership for the church on a daily basis. On the other hand, the laity could not understand what goes into the preparation for church organization and leadership. An example would be the preparation and delivery of a sermon. Lay people are privileged to the final product without understanding the work involved in preparing a twenty to thirty minute sermon. Pastoral care and counseling is another example. Pastoral care and counseling is a critical part of ministry that requires some training to be appropriate and effective. With this in mind, it would seem reasonable to predict

that those involved with developing ministry would understand firsthand the value of training. When one is involved in teaching Sunday School, preparing for Bible study, preaching on Sundays, and marriage and grief counseling, one would think that they would attest to, “It is a truism that Christian faith and education are inevitable companions.”⁴

Questionnaires

The writer developed an instrument to get a better insight into the desire and need of training among clergy in the rural black church (see Appendix B). It is a very basic questionnaire keeping in mind that the population being surveyed has a very low median educational level compared to the State and National level. In most categories, Crescent City is well below the State and National average of educational level. However, Crescent City’s level was higher than the writer anticipated (see Appendix C).⁵

The question of why the rural black church is staffed with so many non-theologically trained personnel is a matter of concern. Is it a lack of interest or is it a lack of opportunity?

Telephone Interviews

Telephone interviews proved to be very engaging and the opinions of the responders were very detailed. An example was an interview held on June 6, 2012, with a clergy member. When asked the same basic questions that are on the questionnaire, the respondent responded to the fixed questions in a very definite manner much as the ones that filled out the questionnaire. However, he shared some more insight by engaging in conversation. The writer discussed with

⁴John H. Westerhoff, III, “Christian Education for Tomorrow,” <http://www.religion-online.org/showarticle.asp?title=1894> (accessed June 16, 2012).

⁵Crescent City, Florida Demographics, *Crescent City Educational Level Profile and Enrollment Statistics*, http://www.clrsearch.com/Crescent_City_Demographics/FL/Education-Level-and-Enrollment-Statistics (accessed June 9, 2012).

him the emerging tendency of my research suggesting that the laity seemed to see the need for training more so than the clergy. His response was that preachers did not know enough to know the need to know more. The writer then asked, “How do you move the clergy to see the need?” The respondent had some theological training so the writer asked him what sparked him or motivated him to get training? His response was, “I felt a void, I felt something was missing and another pastor encouraged me to take a certificate course offered by The Interdenominational Theological Center in Atlanta, GA.”⁶

Generally speaking, many of the same principals emerged in the telephone interviews: those who had some training indicated that they did not think they needed training until they got it. This is a very significant issue if indeed the only time one can see the need for education is when one gets an education.

Personal Interviews

The personal interview was the favorite method of research for the writer. The personal interview allowed the writer to observe the respondent and make concessions and adjustments to get the best or most intended response as it relates to the intent of the responder’s answer to the question.

Those who had no theological training indicated that they never thought seriously about getting any. They said they thought it would be nice to get some theological training but not a necessity. However, at some point in the interview they all indicated that they would like the opportunity to get some level of training if it were available.

⁶ Rev. Theodore McRae, interview by author, Crescent City, June 6, 2012.

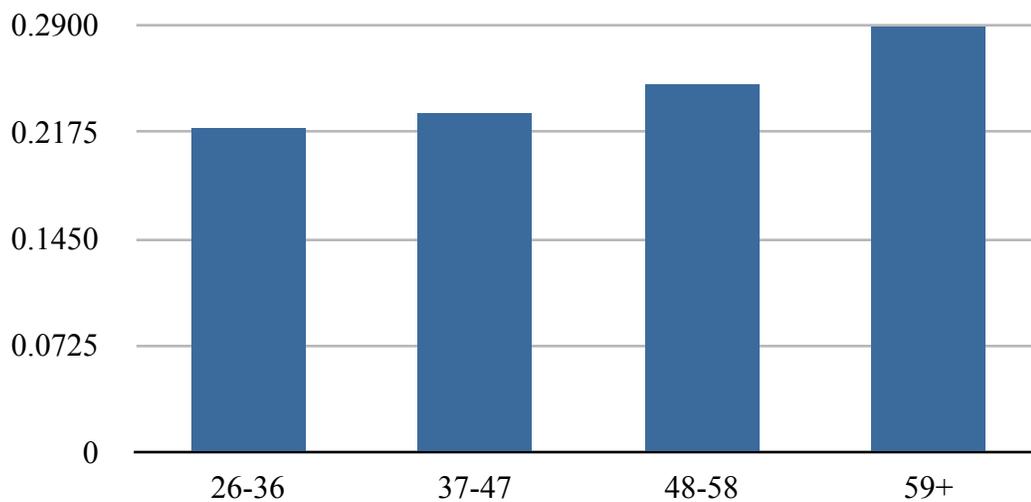
Results of Survey

When the writer gathered all the data, there were a few things that were overwhelmingly apparent. There were few church leaders that were theologically trained, there were few church leaders who desired theological training, and there were few church leaders who valued a theological training. The interesting thing was that the lay members esteemed theological training and desired to obtain one if given the opportunity at an alarming rate relative to church leaders. However, church leaders, the clergy in particular, did not place a high value on theological training.

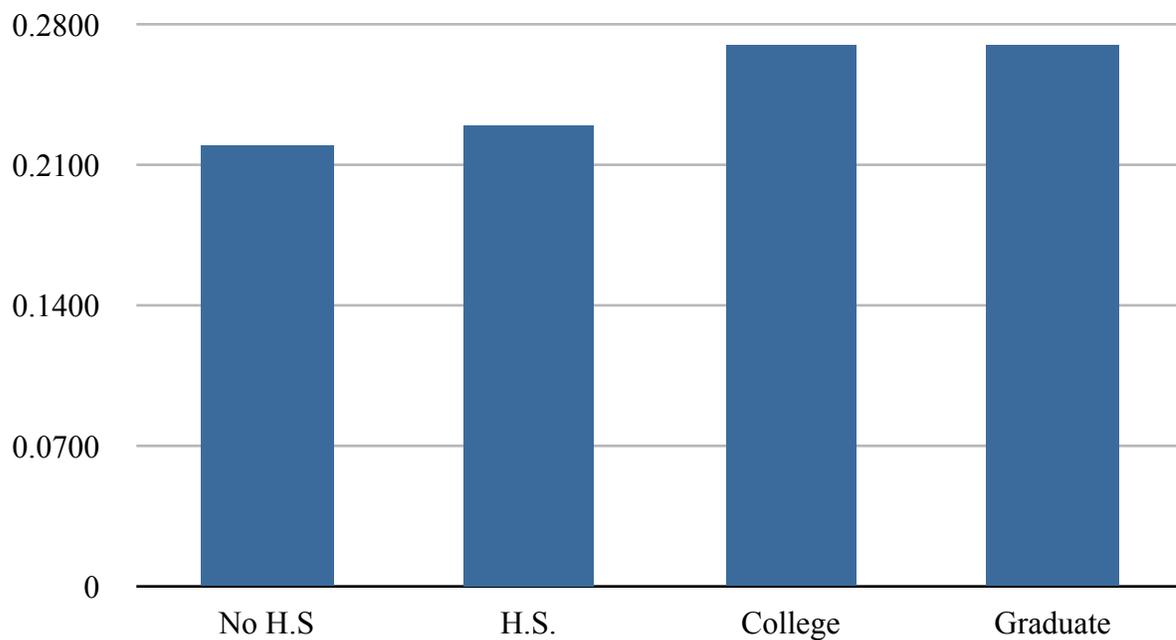
The population that the survey represents is located in the various local churches in Crescent City, FL that were predominately African American. The churches that are represented in the work are four National Baptist Churches, two African Methodist Churches, one Church of God in Christ, one Church of God by Faith, and two Nondenominational churches. The membership of these churches combined is approximately 300. It was necessary to approximate the membership because the church rolls of these churches were not up to date. They included members that were dead and some that had moved to another city. A total of 99 questionnaires were gathered, 10 telephone interviews, and 7 personal interviews. There was a number assigned to each response in the questionnaire. This was done to get a clear picture of the tendencies of responses. The questionnaire revealed 22% were ages 26-36, 23% were ages 37-47, 25% were ages 48-58, and 29% were 59 or older (see figure 1). The educational levels showed that 22% had less than high school, 23% were high school graduates, 27% graduated from college, and 27% finished graduate school (see figure 2). There was 32% male and 67% female, (see figure 3). 49% were married and 50% were single, never being married, divorced, or widowed, (see

figure 4). Denominationally, 29% were National Baptist, 27% were African Methodist Episcopal, 21% were Pentecostal, and 22% was other or Nondenominational, (see figure 5). Of the respondents, 21% have been in the church from 1-5 years and 78% have been in the church 5 years or more, (see figure 6). Of those surveyed, 35% were on the church staff or ordained and 64% were not, (see figure 7). When asked if they would be interested in theological training if it were available to them, 21% said they would and 53% said they were not interested. 25% of the 29% who claimed some theological training did not respond to the question of whether or not they would be interested in a theological education if it were made available (see figure 8). When asked on a scale from 1-5, (1 being very important and 5 not important) The writer sought to rate the importance of at least some theological training for church leaders, 22% said very important, 16% said important, 14% said not very important and 47% not important at all (see figure 9).

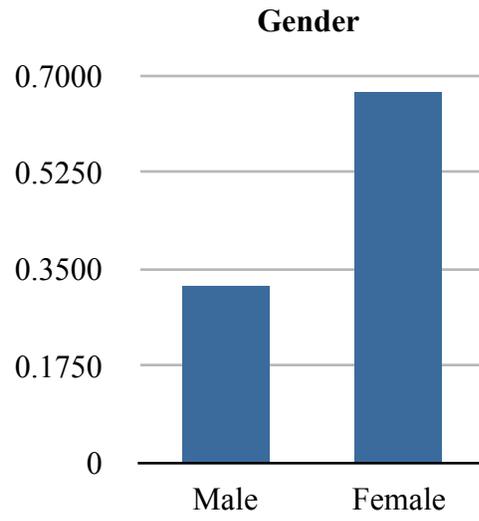
The research suggests that there is a problem with motivation for education as it relates to church leadership. The numbers suggest that a significant number of church leaders are not motivated to invest money or time to equip themselves for the work of the ministry. The personal interviews and telephone interviews suggest that most church leaders scoff at the idea of theological education, as if it is something that is demonic. Interestingly, in the interviews, most pastors acknowledge the need for everyone else in the congregation to get an education but them.

Age of Respondents

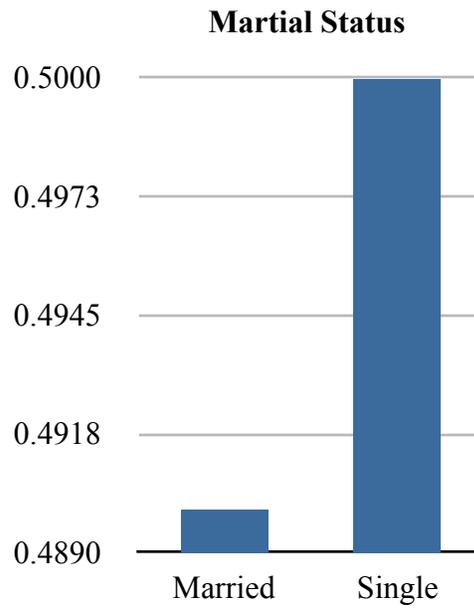
■ figure 1

Educational Level

■ Figure 2

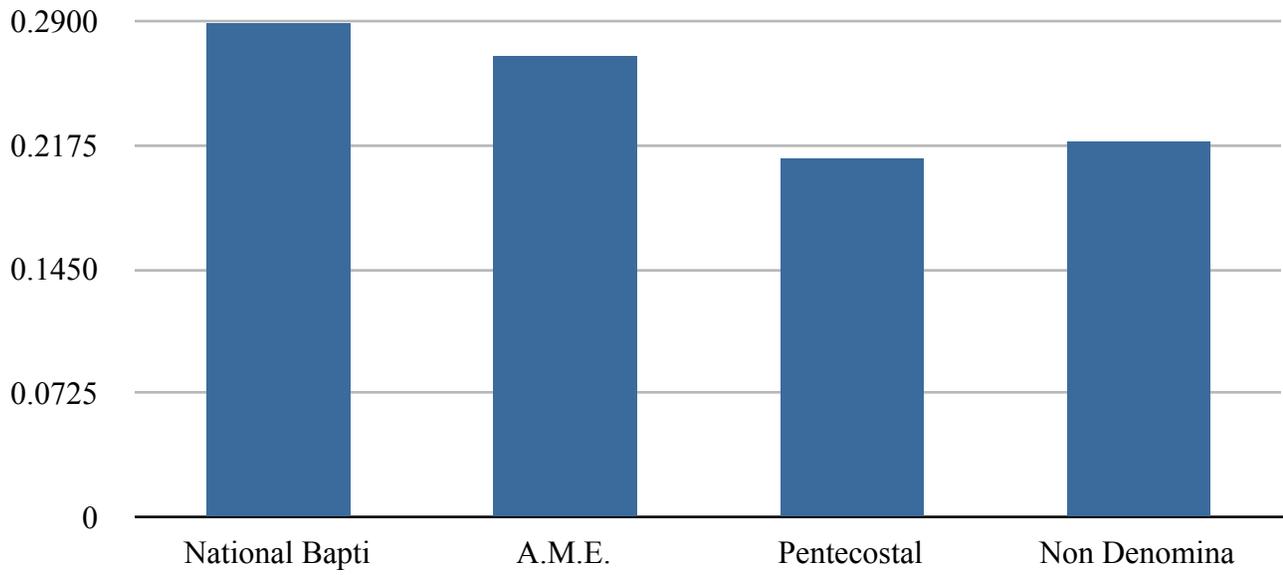


■ Figure 3



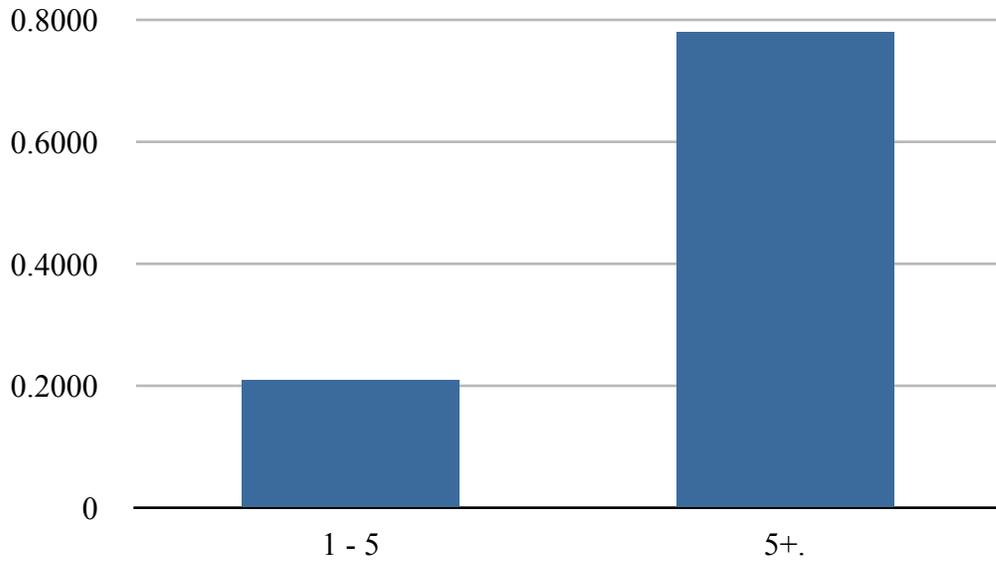
■ Figure 4

Denomination

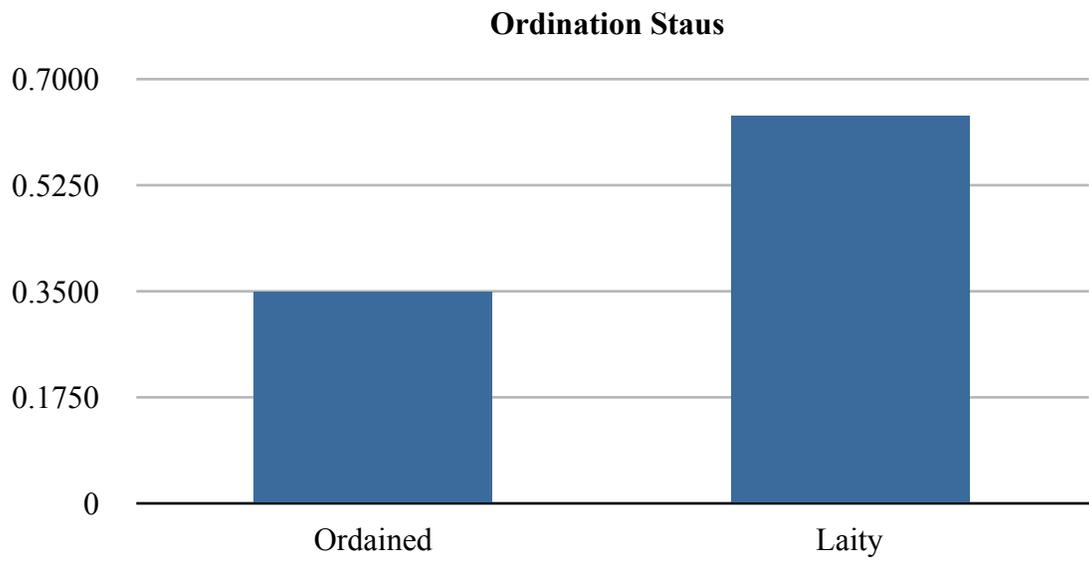


■ Figure 5

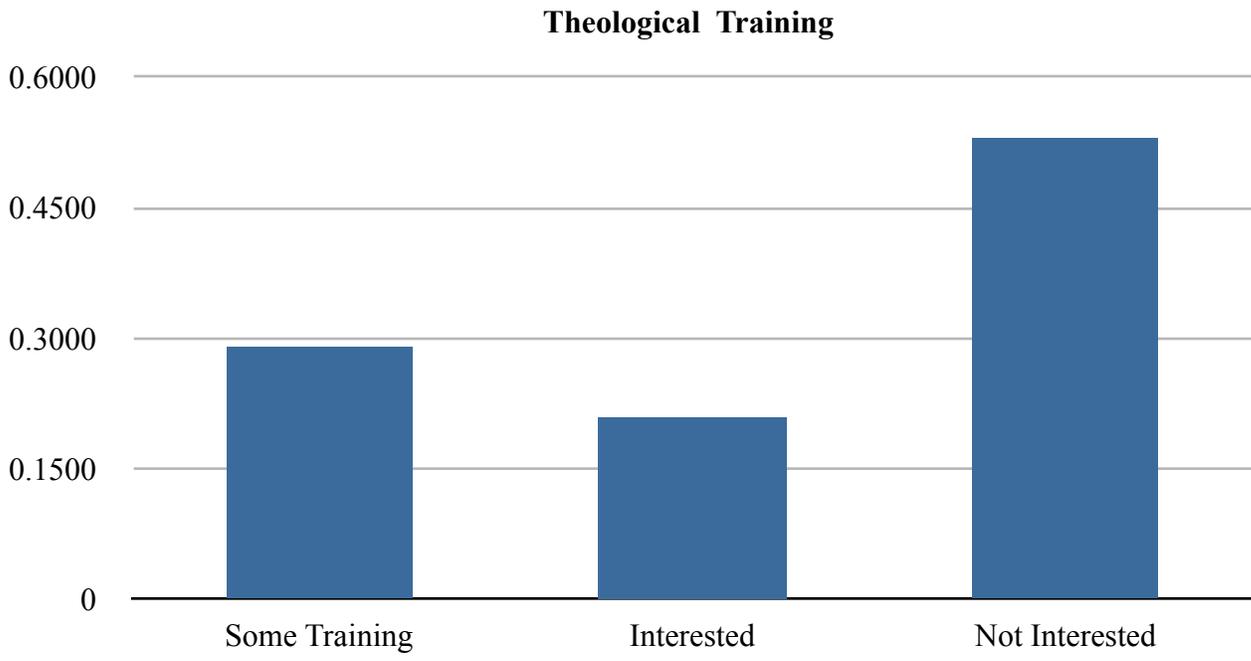
Years In The Church



■ Figure 6

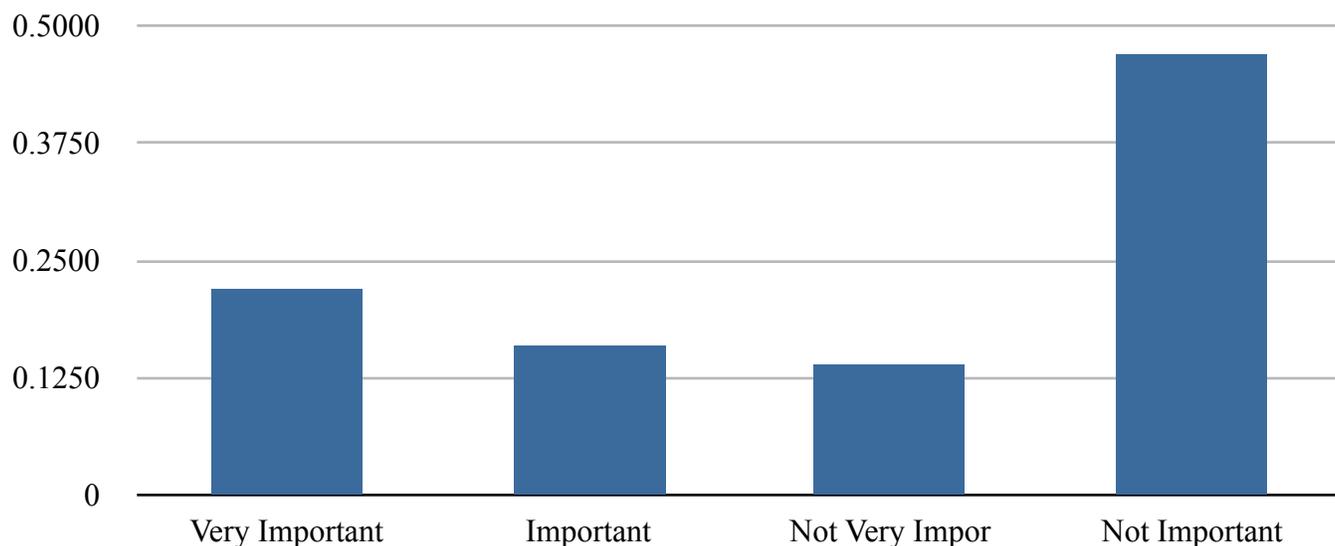


■ Figure 7



■ Figure 8

Importance of Theological Training



The Bible is replete with confirmation for the need to know. However, many rural church

■ Figure 9

leaders in Crescent City treat education as something that is anti-Christian.

One of the very interesting things that the survey revealed in the rural church in Crescent City, FL is the lack of young adults in the church. The age group of 18 - 25 is not represented in the church. Not one in that age group is represented in the survey. The lack of representation from a younger age group perhaps is indicative of there is no ministry catering to the needs of that age group. Most of the structure for ministry is that which has been passed on by predecessors. An example of this is found in what they call devotional service. This is usually done at the beginning of the worship service. The deacons would stand before the congregation, sing a hymn, and pray a prayer. Years ago, when the majority of the congregation could not read, the deacon would read the lyrics of the hymn as the congregation would sing line by line. The deacon would read a stanza and the congregation would sing that stanza. Today most of the congregation can read, but the deacons continue to practice what is called lining the hymn.

The results show a high level of graduate educational level among the respondents. This is the result of the African Methodist Episcopal Church pastor selectively choosing certain members of her congregation to fill out the survey. The persons surveyed in the African Methodist Episcopal Church were ordained people. Theological education in the African Methodist Episcopal Church is required for ordination within that particular denomination. The interesting thing about that is although all the clergy in the African Methodist Church are required to get training, not all of them value the training or find it necessary.

The writer was not able to isolate any variables that would establish a correlation, with the exception of one in particular. Areas of age, sex, marital status, educational level, and denomination were basically even within 5% of those who thought theological training for church leaders was important. Interestingly, the one variable that was amazingly contrasted as to the importance of education for church leaders was that of the ordained against the unordained. Of the 35% of the ordained that were surveyed, 14% thought that theological training was not important to the life and work of the church. On the other hand, 90% of the 64% of the non-ordained surveyed indicated that theological training for those in church leadership was important. Both the ordained and non-ordained were extreme in their position. The question read, "On a scale of 1-5, 1 being very important and 5 being not important how important is a theological education for church leaders?" Only a few respondents chose a number between one and five. Obviously, the population surveyed was either for theological education for church leaders or not, with little in between. Those that responded from three up to five were counted as esteeming a theological education as unimportant. Those who responded from one to two were counted as esteeming a theological education as important.

Interpretation of Research Results

The African American rural church in Crescent City, FL is not showing any signs of growth. Perhaps there is evidence that indicates some stability, but certainly no growth. The greatest age group represented in the survey was fifty-nine years and older. The writer is sure that the fact of people living longer may have some impact on the numbers, but that does not explain why the under-representation of the younger age groups.

One of the more pressing problems in the rural black community is the lack of positive engagement of its youth. Personal interviews have revealed a negative attitude about the ministry offered to youth in the African American rural churches in the Crescent City, FL area. The writer attended a youth program at the First Baptist Church in Crescent City. This church is a predominantly Anglo-Saxon church that has a lively youth department. This summer they employed a program called AWANA. It was filled with African American youth. On the other hand, the African American churches were non-active. The writer attributes this neglect of the youth, not to unconcern, but to lack of knowledge.

The writer went into the research not only expecting the ordained to acknowledge the importance of a theological education but also those who have a relative high level of education. Surprisingly 56% of the 54% that indicated they had at least a college education did not think theological training for church leaders was important. This suggests that a secular education does not necessarily open one up to the important things in the life and the work of the church.

There are various strategies for church growth and evangelism and none of them can be employed without knowledge of them, which requires training. Dr. Elmer Towns says, "Church Growth is that science that investigates the planting, multiplication, growth, function, health, and

death of churches. It strives to determine and apply the biblical and social principles in its gathering, analysis, displaying and defending of the facts found in the world of God and culture to the implementing of the Great Commission.”⁷ According to this definition, church growth happens by employing certain methodologies that can be duplicated and expected to produce similar if not the same results.

Dr. Elmer Towns offers some very insightful data as to the cause and effect of church growth in his work, *21st Century Tools and Techniques*. However, one key element not adequately covered is the idea of untrained church leaders’ particular pastors. Dann Spader and Gary Mayes say,

Carl Wilson writes, The step of Ministry training (equipping) is critical to the expansion of any movement. At this point most organizations and local churches reach their peak. If they do not train believers other than the pastor to evangelize and build disciples, their expansion stops. The maximum potential is reached without a continuing growth and broadening impact. True multiplication occurs only when disciples are trained in evangelism and disciple-building. No matter how dynamic the leader, no matter how financially stable and well organized the church, expansion will not continue if people are not trained to minister.⁸

In the above quote, it is assumed or implied that at least the pastor has some training. During the interviews, it was determined that within the National Baptist, Pentecostal, and Non-denominational groups, the way to enter the ranks of the clergy was to announce to the local congregation that one has received a call to preach. The congregation will then appoint a time to hear one preach and if they think the candidate can preach, they license him or her to preach until a church calls the candidate to be their pastor, then he or she is ordained. If the local

⁷ Elmer L. Towns, *21st Century Tools and Techniques* (Lynchburg, VA: Liberty University Press, 2010), 17.

⁸ Carl Wilson, *With Christ in the School Building* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1976), 101 quoted in Dann Spader and Gary Mayes, *Growing a Healthy Church* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1991), 123.

congregation does not require any training to qualify for pastorship, then that person becomes the spiritual leader of not just a local congregation but a community. Peter Scazzero talks about going on a trip and coming down with an illness that was common to the region. However, when he went to get treatment from doctors not familiar with the illness, they misdiagnosed him. Finally, he got to a doctor that understood the disease and the treatment for it. He says of the encounter, “These other doctors were not equipped to be counseling sick patients in the mountains of Colorado. Their wrong counsel almost ended my earthly life. In the same way, I realized, we pastors and leaders often give faulty counsel to spiritually sick people who fill our churches. Our training has been inadequate to address the deep needs underneath the surface of people’s lives.”⁹

A particular model for church growth suggests that the church falls in one of three church categories; the single cell church, the stretch cell church, and the multi cell church.¹⁰ Dr. Elmer Towns suggests that the single cell church is the family church.¹¹ This church is common in rural areas. The single cell church is attended by a few different families but is usually operated by one family. The pastor is seen as a hired hand and is not the leader of the congregation. The single cell church has no interest in numerical growth and in fact, if it is going to usher in change, they resist numerical growth. For the most part, church for this group is a place where the family gathers and the patriarchs and matriarchs exercise prestige and power. The pastor of

⁹ Peter Scazzero and Warren Bird, *The Emotionally Healthy Church: A Strategy for Discipleship that Actually Changes Lives* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003), 15.

¹⁰ Elmer L. Towns, “21st Century Tools and Techniques” Revisiting Church Evangelism, *Evangelism* 851, “(lecture, Liberty Baptist Theological Seminary, Lynchburg, VA, May 14, 2009), 22-24

¹¹ *Ibid.*

this church must be content with just preaching the gospel and supporting the leadership of the church.

The next type of church, according to Dr. Towns, is the stretch cell church. The stretch cell church is another type of rural church but can function in urban areas. The stretch cell church grows or diminishes in direct proportion of the pastor. This type of church depends on the leadership of the pastor and is what is called in the field as a pastor led church.¹²

Finally, there is the multi cell church. The multi cell church is an urban church but its principal can be employed to some extent in the rural church. The concept of the multi cell church is to develop leadership in the church and establish different groups or cells. Each cell is a small church of itself but yet not independent from all other cells or groups. The pastor is the central figure and unifying agent of the multi cell church. In the multi cell church, growth is not only welcome, but expected.¹³

The benefit of being associated with this type of church growth theory puts the pastor in a position to maximize the potential for the growth of the congregation as an organism and organization. One problem with church leadership having or attaining some type of theological training is that of motivation. There appears to be little or no motivation for church leaders in the rural churches studied to pursue any theological training. The churches themselves do not require any training and they offer no incentive for church leaders to gain or seek training. This probably is the result of them not really realizing any real or true benefit for the church. Only the African Methodist Episcopal Church in the rural area requires the clergy to have training, and they also offer workshops for the other church leaders throughout the year.

¹²Towns. 23-24.

¹³ Ibid.

The motivation within African Methodist Episcopal Church denomination is the opportunity for temporal growth by the pastor. Their form of church government is the episcopal form of government. This means it is a bishop led church. It is the bishop that makes the appointment of a pastor to a particular church. A certain amount of training is required for any person to be ordained in this denomination and the more education the pastor gets, the greater the opportunity is to “move up” in the church. The term “move up” gives reference to the pastor being in position for the bishop to appoint him or her to an urban ministry as opposed to a rural church where there is a greater level of monetary compensation. The motive for attaining education in the African Methodist Episcopal Church is really not connected to serving the congregation but it is to serve self. The writer comes to this conclusion through personal interviews with some African Methodist Episcopal preachers who all say the reason they seek to further their education is to be appointed to a larger church in an urban setting. There is nothing inherently wrong with wanting to be financially comfortable, however, the argument is that the rural church deserves just as much of a competent ministry as the urban church. Other denominations in the rural area, like the National Baptist, Church of God in Christ, and other Pentecostal denominations, only incentive or motive for theological training is self-motivation. These church denominations only require that the congregation likes the preaching style of the pastor and that the pastor’s character does not bring shame and embarrassment to the congregation. The pastors of these denominations only become self-motivated when they are able to make the connection between training and ability to the glory of God. Scripture demands us to, “Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed,

rightly dividing the word of truth.”¹⁴ The Scripture tells us that the motivation should come from having a desire to please God.

Many of the respondents indicated that they would peruse some theological training if it were available. Availability is crucial and is the foundation of which this work was endeavored. Upon doing the research, the writer became aware of the abundance of resources readily availability for anyone who seeks to get training in theological studies. There are a number of theological seminaries that offer free courses to those who are not seeking a formal degree. The uniqueness of this work is it can be used for all church leaders, no matter what their present educational level. It is a structured course of study that pastors may benefit from or use to teach the leaders in their congregation.

Availability is only practical when one is confident in reaching the desired objective. The free courses offered from the various seminaries are good but only for a particular group. If the church is going to take training seriously, it must offer diverse methodologies to obtain training. David Pratt said, “Instruction must take the initial status of the learner as its starting point. This involves ascertaining such student characteristics as background in the subject materiel, level of intellectual development and preferred learning style.”¹⁵ While the online free courses in theological training are good, they do not meet the needs of all who can benefit from some minimal amount of theological training.

Upon visiting the various churches in the Crescent City community, one thing stood out to the writer that was common among all of the churches. A somber spirit or mood seemed to

¹⁴ 2 Timothy 2:15.

¹⁵ David Pratt, *Curriculum Planning: A Handbook for Professionals* (Orlando: Harcourt Brace College Publishers, 1994), 149.

engulf the church. There was no excitement or attitude of joy among the congregations. Everything was rudimentary and quite mundane. The excitement of anticipation of growth was missing at all of the churches visited. When they did the invitation for Christian discipleship one could tell no one really expected anyone to join the church. The Christian faith requires growth to take place. The parable Jesus used to discourage apathy applies well to this scenario. The parable of the husbandman instructing the servant to cut down the unfruitful tree. The parable reads, “Then said he unto the dresser of his vineyard, Behold, these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and find none: cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground.”¹⁶

On one occasion Jesus called a teacher’s competence in to question on information he obviously should have had. When Nicodemus came to Jesus and had a conversation, Jesus put forth a theological explicate of the spirit life and Nicodemus expressed naivety about the concept Jesus put forth by stating, “...How can these things be? Jesus answered and said unto him, Art thou a Master of Israel, and knowest not these things?¹⁷ The mere fact of holding a certain position should suggest a certain level of competence. One of the more critical factors of the dysfunction of an organization, particularly the church, is when the leadership is not prepared to offer the level of leadership that the organization calls for. In the lack of or the desire for education, gender, age, and marital status are not determining factors. Denominational requirements and self-motivation seem to be the variables that swing the pendulum of desire for education in one direction or the other.

The question becomes how to motivate education when there is no obvious incentive if the denomination does not require a certain amount of training . One suggestion would be a

¹⁶ Luke 13:7.

¹⁷ John 3:9-10.

community ministerial association. One of the significant functions of a ministerial association would be to encourage and provide training for ministers and equipping the pastor for the work of his or her ministry.

CHAPTER THREE

DEVELOPING THE CURRICULUM MODEL

After examining the data of the research done, the writer intends to provide a skeleton curriculum designed to assist in the basic training of church leaders in the life and work of the church. It should be emphasized that this curriculum is only skeleton lectures and requires some creativity from the one teaching the material.

Church History

The beginning of the church is a very interesting and significant subject. The way in which the church started was a miracle in and of itself. At the very start, the church had to overcome some very trying situations and circumstances. If Jesus was only a good man or one of the prophets, as some would declare, it does not make sense that the church would suffer all that it has and still be alive today. If the church was not ordained by the Almighty God, it would not have endured over time the persecution and attempts to utterly destroy it that its enemies have vehemently attempted. Church history requires much discipline that beginning students may not have when it is studied as a list of events attached to time and dates. The approach that is taken in this work is an attempt to bring the information to the student in a biblical context so the student can apply the events that occurred throughout the history of the church within the paradigm of a holistic Christian education. As was stated in the introduction, the entire curriculum that is put together in this work will be interrelated so that one subject can and does overlap into another.

Church leaders should have an understanding of the continuity of the church from its earliest conception to the present. Church history is the ideal subject to begin a theological

education. To understand something fully is to know the history of it. Preferably, its beginning is the best place to start if the beginning can be historically documented. There are many different opinions as to the origins of the church among those who participate in the discussion. Some say the church was from the beginning of creation within the Omniscient, Omnipotent, and Omnipresent will of God. Others say it was founded by God in the Person of Jesus Christ in the time period that Matthew records it in chapter sixteen, verses sixteen and following, when Jesus declared to Peter that he would build his church. Still, others would claim the church had its beginnings at the day of Pentecost. It would be advisable that the lecturer would briefly examine the rationale behind some of these assertions; however, the primary focus in this work will begin with the man Jesus, who is the Christ. The term church itself brings with it much discussion as to its actual meaning.

The New Testament term, church, a translation of the word *ekklesia*, occurs infrequently, and its precise significance is the subject of scholarly disagreement. Historically, the term signified an assembly, but New Testament writers seem sometimes to refer to a local congregation and sometimes to the whole body of believers. When the term is used in the later sense, it is clear that the local congregation is not regarded as a part of the whole church as if the part were less than the whole. The local congregation is no less the church than the whole collection of congregations.¹

This Church History curriculum shall be ecumenical in nature while we examine the history of the “*whole*” church. We shall examine some of the major events of the church and their effect on the church. This course of study will have open classroom discussions about the social, economic, and political impact of the church, relative to the African American Christian Culture.

¹ Jerald C. Brauer, ed., *The Westminster Dictionary of Church History* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1971), 195.

It is generally the consensus of the African American community that the church has been one of the most influential voices in the African American experience. However, as was stated previously in Chapter One, its influence is on a decline. This course is designed to examine where the church is at present as it relates to time past. The student will learn to construct a general direction of the church based on where it has come from. The student must be willing to give him or herself time for study and reflection. They will need to read all assigned text and handouts when given. See Appendix D.

The following lecture has been taken from “Church History” by Everett Ferguson.²

Week 1: Jesus and the Beginning of the Church

Jesus was born, according to the modern calendar, about 4 BC or earlier, while Herod the Great, by the will of Rome, was King of Judea. There is no accepted record of Jesus’ childhood with the exception of Luke 2:1-52, the account of Jesus’ birth and encounter with the Elders in the temple.. Apart from his birth and the episode in the temple with the Elders, the biblical account of Jesus starts with the baptism of John when Jesus was about thirty years of age. Soon after John was imprisoned, Jesus took up John’s preaching, announcing that, “The Kingdom of God is near, repent and believe the good news!”³ Jesus began a ministry of preaching, teaching, and healing. He gathered a close circle of twelve disciples, who spent their time with him and on occasion were sent out in extension of his ministry. Jesus’ miracles of healing and his expelling of demons made people aware of a powerful presence among them. His ministry gathered a popular following and aroused hopes that God’s mighty intervention in the history of his people

² Everett Ferguson, *Church History: From Christ to Pre-Reformation*, vol. 1 (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005), 32-44.

³ Mark 1:15.

was imminent, which many persons understood in terms of throwing off Roman rule and bringing an end to economic and political oppression.

One of the reactions to Jesus was the confession of Peter that Jesus was the Christ, the long awaited anointed one of God who would bring deliverance to the Jewish people. It was a confession welcomed by some, doubted by others, and feared by still others in positions of power. Implicit in the title “Messiah” was a claim to Kingship. On this charge, the Jewish leaders in Jerusalem secured the sentence of death against Jesus from the Roman governor Pilate, who ordered his crucifixion, a punishment applied to the worst criminals and those considered politically dangerous. After his crucifixion, the hopes of Jesus’ disciples, even those closest to him, were crushed. Then the unexpected happened. When women went to the tomb on Sunday morning to perform the burial anointing that the rapid falling of the Sabbath day had prevented after his death, they found the tomb empty. An Angel announced to them, “He is not here; he is risen, just as he said.”⁴ These women, and later the other disciples, reported seeing Jesus after he was raised from the dead. The disciples, who were afraid and broken hearted, were transformed into courageous men full of joy.

The resurrection was God’s vindication of everything Jesus had said of himself and God. It confirmed that his death was not simply the death of another good man but had atoning significance. Those two affirmations, the atoning death of Jesus and his resurrection from the dead, became the pillars of the Christian faith. The resurrected Jesus commissioned his disciples to wait in Jerusalem for the coming of the Holy Spirit, and then proclaim his message to all. The

⁴ Matthew 28:6.

experience of the coming of the Holy Spirit, recorded in Acts 2, launched the church as a distinct entity on a mission of proclaiming Jesus as, “both Lord and Christ.”⁵

The Church in Jerusalem.

The appearances of the resurrected Jesus brought the disciples together and confirmed their faith in Jesus. There was initially no radical break with Jewish institutions. The early Jerusalem church frequented the temple and observed Jewish customs. It constituted a “synagogue” with some distinctive rites and beliefs, but there were other such groups in a broad spectrum of Judaism. Core Jewish beliefs remained at the bases of the faith of the early disciples: the one God who had revealed himself in the Hebrew Scriptures, this God as the creator and sustainer of the universe, a chosen people called into covenant relationship with God, and hope for end time blessings (eschatology).

To those core beliefs there was now added the conviction that the Jesus who had been rejected by the Jewish leadership and crucified by the Roman authorities was the promised deliverer through whom the end time blessings were beginning to be realized, notably the forgiveness of sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit.

The early church drew adherents from strict Law-observant Jews, from faithful Jews who were not so strict in keeping the Law, from Gentile proselytes, and from those more Hellenized, (i.e., relating to Greek history, language and culture), in their attitudes. Internal tension soon manifested itself between those designated by the culturally descriptive terms Hebrew (Hebraic Jews) and Hellenists (Grecian Jews).

⁵Acts 2:36.

With the scattering of the Hellenists following the execution of Stephen and the killing of the apostle James, brother of John, and the imprisonment of Peter by King Herod Agrippa I, increasingly James, brother of Jesus, came to prominent leadership in the Jerusalem church. His rise in prominence would have been quite unexpected during Jesus' ministry, but an appearance of the resurrected Jesus changed him from disbelief to devoted advocate.

Along with the elders, James provided leadership when the Twelve moved to other fields of activity. This arrangement provided a model for the second-century church's organization of a bishop assisted by elders in each city.

James's execution by Jewish leaders in AD 62, of which there are differing accounts, left the most conservative Jewish Christians without a respected and moderate leader.

The conversion of Saul of Tarsus, a promising rabbinic student in Jerusalem, brought a dynamic new impulse into the Christian movement. His conversion carried with it a commission from the risen Jesus to be an apostle to the nations. He reached an agreement with Peter and the leaders in Jerusalem that his call to go to the Gentiles corresponded to Peter's mission to the circumcised (Galatians 2.7-9). An opening had already been made to the Gentiles by Hellenists scattered from Jerusalem (Acts 11.20) and sanctioned by the experience of Peter in Caesarea (Acts 10-11).

The most significant controversy in the early church concerned the terms of acceptance of Gentiles into the Christian community: Must they come as full proselytes, receiving circumcision and an obligation to follow the Law, or was faith in Jesus and baptism sufficient to bring them under covenant? Paul became the protagonist for a Law-free gospel for the Gentiles; some

elements in the Jerusalem church insisted on the necessity of circumcision; Peter and James, each from their own perspectives, tried to mediate (Acts 15).

The departure from Jerusalem and other elements left the more religiously and culturally conservative Jews as the predominant element in the Jerusalem church. The Hellenizers found a center in Antioch of Syria.

The Church in Antioch

The church began in Antioch when believers from Jerusalem were scattered because of the persecution arising from the preaching of Stephen. These more Hellenized Christians brought the message of Jesus to Greeks, so that it was in Antioch that the new name ‘Christian’ (Acts 11.26) came into use to designate this new people that included both Jews and Gentiles and was beginning to be distinguished as being neither.

The dropping of the requirement of circumcision did not resolve, but rather intensified, the question of table fellowship between Jewish and Gentile believers. The question came to a head at Antioch, where Paul’s insistence on not binding Jewish food laws on Gentile believers, in contrast to Peter and Barnabas’s willingness to compromise (Galatians 2.11-14), made that city the center from which the Gentile mission of the church spread.

Under the initiative of the Spirit, Paul and Barnabas went forth from Antioch on journeys to spread the gospel of Jesus. Their mission took them to the synagogues of Diaspora Jews in the Greek cities of Cyprus and Asia Minor, preaching first to the Jews and then to Gentile adherents of Judaism who were associated in varying ways with the synagogues.

Although Paul continued to look to Jerusalem as the mother church, he found in Antioch a more congenial base of operations for his subsequent missionary travels.

Week 2: The Reformation

The following lecture has been taken from “The Story of Christianity” by Michael Collins and Matthew A. Price.⁶

Challenges to the Early Church

There were some practices in the church that were questioned by a class of people known in history as Reformers. There were deplorable practices in the western church, such as the sale of indulgences to raise money for dubious or doubtful causes. Martin Luther, a German theologian, publicly refuted such practices and thus precipitated the Reformation. Other Reformers were encouraged to follow his example for reform. The Catholic church refused to listen to any of these proposals, and the unity of Christianity became fractured once more. The reformation soon ceased to be a matter only for individual consciences: political rulers sensed the advantage of breaking the church’s political and territorial power and took sides. The Catholic church was slow to respond, and by the mid-seventeenth century, the religious map of Europe had been completely redrawn. These Christian divisions led to bloody wars as Catholic and Protestant nations battled against one another. Meanwhile, Catholic missionaries travelled to distant countries and continents where the gospel had yet to take root: Latin America, Africa, India, China, and Japan.

By all appearances, the church in the west at the dawn of the sixteenth century had successfully weathered many of the storms that had besieged it during the Middle Ages. Although Islam continued to spread in Africa and Asia, Western Christendom remained loyal to

⁶Michael Collins and Matthew A. Price, *The Story of Christianity: A Celebration of 2,000 Years of Faith* (New York: DK Publishing, 1999).

papal authority. The age of exploration had begun, and soon Catholic missionaries would be sent around the globe.

Local parishes everywhere had long suffered from symptoms of neglect, indifference, and uneducated and untrained clergy, who no longer met the expectations of many Christians in the age of rising literacy. The need for the church to refill its coffers or money box with ready money, led to a prevalence of the immoral customs of selling church offices and attempting to buy divine favor in the afterlife by purchasing indulgences. The practice of selling church offices was known as Simony, taken from the name Simon Magus (Acts 8:18), who tried to buy the power of conferring the gifts of the Holy Spirit. These practices were met with anger and in some cases fierce resistance by the peasant class, so by the sixteenth century, some Christians determined to bring about reform. The Dutch Christian humanist Desiderius Erasmus was one such example. Erasmus was a noted theological scholar and the articulate author of many books that became popular for their witty and satirical or sarcastic and critical attacks on the poor state of the church. He also sought a better knowledge of the original Hebrew and Greek texts of the Bible, hoping to rethink theological opinion with these accurate sources. His work helped pave the way for the Reformation.

At the very heart of the Reformation was a German Catholic priest and professor, Martin Luther. The catalyst of the Reformation was the despised practice of selling indulgences. The theology behind the granting of indulgences was the notion that the church had a “treasury” of good works built up by the Apostles and saints, along with the sinless life of Christ. Merit from this treasury could be granted to any church member to reduce or eliminate time they would spend in purgatory being purged of their sins before going to heaven. Indulgences could be

purchased through a financial donation or, as in previous centuries, by performing a service such as fighting in the Crusades.

In Germany, Johann Tetzel marketed indulgences with the promise that “as the coin into the coffer rings, the soul from purgatory springs!” Those who gave money were told that it would be used to rebuild St. Peter’s Basilica in Rome, as a type of building fund. Actually, only half of the donated money went to this purpose. The rest was used to pay off the debts of men such as Prince Albert of Brandenburg. Albert had paid large fees and bribes to be named the archbishop of Mainz. To gather the necessary money he secured a loan from the bank, promising that he would authorize Tetzel to sell indulgences in his realm.

When Martin Luther, who already preached against the sale of indulgences, became aware of the secret arrangement between Tetzel and Albert, he decided to bring his views into the sphere of public debate. On October 31, 1517, he nailed his Ninety-Five Theses to the door of the castle church at Wittenberg and, in the process, sent a thunderbolt to the heart of papal authority and launched a reformation. From his translation work as a professor, Luther had developed the theology of sola scriptura - that the Bible is the final authority for Christians - and sola fide - that salvation comes by faith alone and not by good works. He was also convinced that the Bible should be available to all people, not just to clergy and scholars, and that every Christian is a member of the priesthood of believers. Luther was excommunicated from the Catholic Church.

The Birth of Anglicanism

England experienced a Protestant upheaval, in the form of Henry VIII, although the causes began with politics. When Henry ascended the English throne in 1509, he married his

brother's Spanish widow, Catherine of Aragon, for purely political reasons. However, he later fell in love with an English woman, Anne Boleyn, and when Catherine failed to provide him with the son he wanted, he threatened divorce. Henry petitioned Rome for a divorce, although he was a devout Catholic and honored with the title "Defender of the Faith" by Leo X after writing a tract condemning Lutheranism. His efforts were in vain. Cardinal Wolsey was not able to get the petition through. Henry dismissed Wolsey and made Thomas Cranmer the Archbishop of Canterbury. Cranmer secured an annulment for Henry and all financial, administrative, and judicial ties with Rome were broken. An act of Parliament named the King Supreme Head on earth of the Church of England, and Henry married Anne in 1533. He condemned the Lutheran Reformation and continued to burn Anabaptist and Bible translators at the stake, and for a time maintained Catholic rites and doctrine in the Church of England.

However, many of those who served Henry in ecclesiastical affairs moved the nation closer to Protestantism. As vicar (member of clergy in charge of a church), Thomas Cromwell had Bibles placed in churches for public reading and closed most monasteries.

The throne moved into the hands of James I. A group called Puritans became angry about James I's attitude toward their observance of the Sabbath and freedom of their clergy from government interference. Archbishop William Laud tried to quell the growing Separatist and Puritan churches by enforcing uniformity and suppressing any public gatherings. Laud became a symbol of all those ecclesiastical rules and trappings that the Separatist and Puritans stood against. The result was a migration of believers from England to countries where they could practice their religion as they saw fit. In 1620, a group of Separatists and Puritans - later

commonly known as “the Pilgrims” - set sail for Virginia, although they actually landed at Plymouth, Massachusetts.

The Baptists are a group derived from the Anglican Church and their history will be covered in week four’s lecture.

Week 3: Christological Controversies

The following lecture has been taken from “Church History” by Everett Ferguson.⁷

The trinitarian conflict of the fourth century was associated with two councils that came to be regarded as ecumenical, and so was the Christological controversy of the fifth century. As an oversimplification, the relationship of these four councils can be expressed according to the following scheme:

1. Nicaea (325) emphasized the oneness of God (Jesus Christ is homoousios with the Father).
2. Constantinople (381) emphasized the threeness of God (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit).
3. Ephesus (431) emphasized the oneness of Jesus Christ (Mary is theotokos). Theotokos = the person who gave birth to God
Christotokos = the woman who gave birth to Christ
4. Chalcedon (451) emphasized the twoness of Jesus Christ (two physes or natures)

Week 4: The Global Church

This lecture was taken from Collins, Michael and Matthew A. Price, *The Story of Christianity: A Celebration of 2,000 Years of Faith*, (New York: DK Publishing, 1999).

⁷Ferguson, 255.

Technology has transformed all of society, including the church. Because of technology, the world has gotten a lot smaller and information is at our fingertips. Just like the world, the church is taking on more of a global nature and more inclusive than ever before. “Churches across Asia, Africa and South America has become self-governing and has grew so rapidly that they have become more numerous and dynamic than the European churches.”⁸ This calls for a new approach to evangelism and theology in general.

By the end of the twentieth century, despite two world wars, genocide, and revolution, the church has not only survived but has endeavored to reflect changes in society and adapt to the needs of different Christian denomination. At the beginning of the third millennium, Christians believe that the global church is still called by Christ to offer his support and assurance to humanity.⁹

As church leaders, it is our responsibility to engage our congregations into the life and work of the whole church.

Church Administration

A critical need for area churches is church administrative skills. “The Latin prefix ad - adjoined to the word minister meant ‘toward ministry.’ So management refers to the wise ordering of the believing community so that its mission to individual members and to the world can be fulfilled.”¹⁰ It is about getting the job done or carrying out the Great Commission. We often have no problem with identifying what needs to be done, but problems set in when we fail to ascertain how to get done what we have identified as having need to be done. Church Administration will primarily address management guided by a three-prong discussion. (1) The

⁸ Collins and Price, 203.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ James D. Berkley, ed., *Leadership Handbook of Management and Administration* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2007), 350.

mandate; do you have authorization to do ministry? (2) The mission; what is it that you have been authorized to do? (3) The method; how will you accomplish the mission you have been mandated to accomplish? Church administration carries with it a particular theological motif dependent upon the Administrator. Another area of Church Administration that has suffered tremendous neglect is that of minister and church staff income tax. It has been observed that, “Our theological colleges and seminaries do a very poor job teaching ministerial students about tax law and how it applies to them. Due to inadequate knowledge of tax law, many wrong decisions have been made.”¹¹ The lack of proper tax preparation is indicative of an uninformed clergy and if the minister is not abreast of the proper operation of the church where does that “lead” the church? Obviously, a fundamental knowledge of administration procedure and methodology is of tantamount importance to any basic theological training.

There can never be enough resources for the effective employing of the vocation of ministry. *Leadership Handbook of Management & Administration*, edited by James D. Berkley, is one of those resources. *The Leadership Handbook of Management and Administration* provides a comprehensive reference resource of a variety of aspects for ministry to those who manage and serve as administrators in the life and work of the church. Churches are so widespread and unregulated that literally anyone can establish or develop a church. It is to the advantage of the body of Christ to provide as much information and training as can be provided to those who would put themselves up as leaders in God’s Church. The Church is a critical part of any community and it is the one enterprise that is collectively owned by the community.

¹¹ B. J. Worth, *Worth’s Income Tax Guide for Ministers: 2008 Edition* (Nappanee, IN: Evangel Publishing House, 2008), 14.

The *Leadership Handbook of Management & Administration* is a very valuable resource covering a range of topics that are practical for day-to-day ministry and very useful to the active church administrator. James D. Berkley did a great job of compiling and drawing on some of the great minds and proven ministries in the church today. The list of contributors is a very impressive list. The most impressive thing about this list is it is comprised of men and women who are actively engaged in ministry and are contemporary in their approach to doing ministry.

The basic argument of the book is that ministry is purpose driven and involves a methodology, if it is to be effective in changing lives and reaching desired objectives to the glory of God. All one has to do is to scan the many topics the book addresses and the depth in which each topic is addressed to realize the value of the book. The various writers of the different topics are pretty much on target as it relates to their topic of discussion. A vibrant and successful ministry does not happen haphazardly but happens because of certain skills being employed either knowingly or unknowingly by those who are in leadership positions. *Leadership Handbook of Management & Administration* moves some of the guesswork out of the equation of doing ministry and reduces the trial and error period to a minimum.

The one idea in the book that embodies the spirit of the book is that the church has four basic needs, “a purpose, a place, people, and procedures.”¹² From this perspective, the handbook can find use in all types and kinds of ministry. The writer recommends this book to all clergy and lay leaders of the church, regardless of size, especially those who have no formal training from the academy. It should be a part of every church leader’s library.

Week 1: The Call to Ministry

¹²Berkley, 372.

The writer's father would often say, "If you can ever refrain from preaching, don't preach because that's a sure sign that you haven't been called."

The Call is an expression used to denote a very intimate encounter with Jesus by those compelled to do the work of ministry. Paul explained it thusly, "For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel!"¹³ In Paul's first letter to Timothy, he acknowledges that it is Jesus who placed him in the ministry. He says, "And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry."¹⁴ This gives us the understanding that it is Jesus who calls us to the ministry. However, no one can know of your calling but you and Christ.

Ben Patterson, the writer of the article "The Call to Ministry", suggests that a call is not a career. A career suggests that there is a set of steps I have the power to take that will land me in a particular predetermined position. The Call is the ability to hear God's instructions and follow them, often to undisclosed places and positions. There is a distinction between occupation and vocation. An occupation is something you do while a vocation is more of who you are. Patterson makes a statement that needs clarity. He says when speaking of ministry, "It primarily demands not professional credentials but the ability to hear and heed the call of God."¹⁵ At first glance, it may be presumed that Patterson is saying education is not important. That presumption is utterly false. Credentials and education are not the same thing. One can and sometimes does have credentials that do not reflect the level of their training. The "A" clause of the Scripture in Paul's letter to Timothy indicates that Jesus leads one to acquire the ability to

¹³ 1 Corinthians 9:16.

¹⁴ 1 Timothy 1:12.

¹⁵ Berkley, 40.

lead.¹⁶ The pursuit of training is the response to the Call! Petterson's essay on "Discerning the Right Voice" is a bit of oversimplifying a complex intimate relationship between Jesus and the called. However, one point worth noting is that he addresses the criteria for knowing the voice as having gladness. He says, "Gladness isn't necessarily emotional bubbles as much as it is a sense of significance, meaning, purpose, and seeing the work as worthwhile."¹⁷ Along the way while carrying out your Call, when you began to question your Call it comes in the form of questioning your significance, meaning, purpose, and if what you are doing is worthwhile. Many ministers leave the Called ministry because of the answer, in their minds, to the above questions.

Under the topic "Recognizing the Professional Realities", Petterson addresses some practical issues of fulfilling the Call. He eludes the idea that with the Call comes other realities, such as education, denominational requirements, and other items of preparation. Petterson says, "The best thing that education and professional standards can do is prevent disaster."¹⁸

Petterson talks about four qualifications for the Called servant of God: (1) Commitment, (2) Conviction, (3) Competency, and (4) Character.¹⁹ Each one of these four areas is worth discussion so that one is clear on what these four qualifications mean to them. Many clergy feel that ordination is the terminal requirement for ministry in God's church. It gives them an air of power and prestige. Petterson suggests a more purposeful and useful meaning as we seek to please the God who called us. Petterson says that what should be common to all ordinations in the church should be Recognition, Setting apart, Empowerment, and Accountability.²⁰

¹⁶ 1 Timothy 1:12.

¹⁷ Berkley, 41.

¹⁸ Ibid., 42.

¹⁹ Ibid., 44.

²⁰ Berkley, 46.

The Bible presents to us some specific modes of the Call to ministry. (1) A parent can petition God and prepare a child for the work of the Ministry. This model of the Call can be found in 1 Samuel 1:11, where Hannah promised the Lord that if he would give her a son, she would dedicate him to the service of God. (2) God create individuals to his service from their birth. An example of this method of experiencing the Call can be found in Jeremiah 1:5, where God declares to Jeremiah that he had been called to the service of God before he was born. (3) One can be placed in a circumstance where one can volunteer to serve God and God will sanction your desire into a Call. The example of this type of Call is found in Isaiah 6:1-9, where Isaiah was listening in on a divine conversation and volunteered for the Ministry. (4) Most ministers give a testimony that their Call came similar to that of Paul, where they were compelled with no option. For some reason, many think the latter form of the Call is more authentic than the other forms.

The Call is the basic foundation for ministry and it is the one predicate that all successful ministries hinge on.

Week 2: Responsibility to the Ministry

Ministry, or leading God's people, involves a lot more than standing out front and being a prominent figure. There is not a set of rules that will be suitable for every church because ministry is dynamic. No one set procedure will satisfy the needs of all congregations. There is no set procedure that will accommodate every particular church, because the church is in a constant flux and its needs change from day to day. This is particularly true for the pastor and thus affects the staff.

Douglas Webster says:

The wish list of what people want in a pastor is expanding in North America to include an impressive list of standard options. Pastors today need a warm, affirming style, managerial competence, computer technical skills, counseling expertise, excellent public-relations skills, the ability to raise funds, personal charisma, and platform presence. Not all churches are looking for these extras, but enough are, to the extent that the profile of the postmodern pastor is changing.”²¹

Ministry is more than just ability; it is a mixture of ability and gifts. Webster lists four areas that distinguish church leadership. He says that a person’s (1) spiritual gifts, (2) character, (3) training, and (4) support distinguish them and their ministries.²² Of the four listed, the minister can only be responsible for two: character and training.

Spiritual gifts are necessary for doing ministry. Not all knowledge is empirical. The knowledge that the church leader has to have to be successful is revelatory. That kind of knowledge can only come from God. It cannot be taught or bought, but rather it is a part of the Call. The minister is not responsible for that element. Support can be affected by the minister but it is not the minister’s responsibility. Jesus said, “The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest.”²³ Paul reminds us that one man plants, another waters, but it is God that gives the increase.²⁴ God will generate the support for those whom he has Called. A common saying among preachers of old is, if God called you to preach He will give you somewhere to preach.

The two that the minister is directly responsible for are character and training. Integrity is a part of character and is absolutely necessary for providing leadership in the church. Integrity

²¹ Berkley, 63.

²² Ibid., 64.

²³ Matthew 9:37-38.

²⁴ 1 Corinthians 3: 6-7.

is a direct composition of what the minister is called to do. Church leaders are in the business of telling the truth. They have a responsibility to both God and man to be honest and truthful as leaders in the house of God. Character is of the utmost importance. Training is also necessary for good leadership. It is the responsibility of the church leader to stay sharp by continuing the educational process throughout their life as leaders of God's people. The world is ever changing and so are the needs of the people and the expression of those needs. Church leaders cannot and should not attempt to lead from behind.

The idea of significant ministry is to work smart, not just work hard. Webster says, "When priorities are set and spiritual disciplines followed, a pastor is saved from spinning wheels in frustration. Much of what pastors do is not what they are called to do. They are exhausted because they are doing everyone else's job but their own."²⁵ This quote applies not only to pastors, but to all church leaders. More times than not, church leaders become bogged down in performing tasks that are not assigned to them and leaving their responsibility to the church undone.

Many church leaders are politically involved. The writer finds it distasteful for the senior pastor of a church to become political to the point of serving both politics and the church. Politics is a very real and significant part of our way of life but the church has a higher calling and in the writer's mind, you cannot be faithful to both the church and the world systems. Webster says, to paraphrase, the individual must test his or her motives for being politically involved and determine if it does anything to further the cause and purpose of the kingdom of

²⁵ Berkley, 66.

God.²⁶ In saying that, the church leader has to determine what his or her civic responsibility is, but only so as a church leader enlisted to serve God above all else.

What is the responsibility of the church leader to stay abreast of current issues in the society that he or she serves? Again, education cannot be emphasized enough. Webster says:

Continuing education can provoke controversy. Some congregations wonder why pastors need it, and some pastors fail to use it productively. Still the church member who may disapprove of the pastor's two weeks "away at some school" would not accept a physician who uses the cancer cures learned in medical school in the eighties. In this changing world, practitioners of any sort must have continuing education. That includes pastors.²⁷

The writer recently attended a Baptist association congress of Christian education. In the pastor's class the moderator and one of the leading pastors expressed disdain for the use of iPads in the pulpit. They called it opening up Pandora's Box. Education is imperative in this world of information that we live in.

Week 3: Crisis and Conflict

Paul says, "I hear that when you come together as a church, there are divisions among you, and to some extent I believe it."²⁸ The word conflict comes from the Latin *fligere*, meaning literally "to strike together." Whenever two or more people pursue mutually exclusive goals, or whenever one person's needs collide with another's, conflict results. If there were no effort among humans to fulfill ideas, goals, or desires, there would be no conflict.

William H. Willimon goes on to inform us that:

²⁶ Berkley, 70.

²⁷ Ibid., 71.

²⁸ 1 Corinthians 11:18.

In Church fights, Speed Leas and Paul Kittlaus describe three ways in which conflict is experienced: Intrapersonal conflict: The contest one has when different parts of the self compete with one another. I want to be a beloved pastor; but I also want to be a preacher who speaks the truth. Interpersonal conflict: personality differences that are not related primarily to issues. I like to think of myself as a strong, independent person, but my board chairperson treats me like an incompetent who must be told what to do. Substantive conflict: disputes over facts, values, goals, and beliefs. I think we ought to put a new roof on the church but the social-concerns committee wants to open a clothes closet for the poor.²⁹

These conflict types are not exclusive but inclusive. In fact, it is more likely to have more than one of these conflicts going on at the same time. A substantive argument over the use of the benevolent fund or feeding program may conjure up intrapersonal doubts about my effectiveness as a pastor.

Willimon helps us to be more conscious of the mistake of asserting Christian principal as opposed to your personal feelings and needs. We tend to move the conflict from a human disagreement to a question of false faith verses true faith. Willimon shares with his readers four identified kinds of substantiative conflicts:

Conflicts over the facts of a situation. Is there enough money in the treasure to complete a task? Conflict over methods and means. How do we distribute the benevolent funds? Conflict over ends or goals. Should the church be involved in political action or should that be left to the individual? Conflict over values. Should a Christian ever be engaged in confrontation and agitation or should a Christian be reconcilers and peacemakers in every situation?³⁰

Surprising as it may seem, conflict has a positive role to play in the congregation. In conflict, a group is energized. Willimon said that an old pastor once told him, “You can put out a fire easier than you can raise the dead.”³¹ Conflict can bring new vision and life to the church and through

²⁹ Berkley, 215.

³⁰ Berkley, 216.

³¹ Ibid., 217.

the pain of resolution, the church can and often does experience growth that would never be realized without conflict. The problem is not so much the conflict; the problems lay within the realm of the resolution or lack thereof.

The first order of resolving a conflict is to assess it. There is an example in the Bible that helps us with the idea of assessment. There was a man that brought his son who was possessed with a demon spirit to the disciples of Jesus but they were unable to heal the boy. When they took him to Jesus, he healed the boy of the demonic spirit. When the disciples were alone with Jesus they asked him, "...Why could not we cast him out? And he said unto them, This kind can come forth by nothing but by prayer and fasting."³² In order to resolve a conflict, you must first determine what kind it is. It is best to avoid some conflicts and let them work themselves out. Some conflicts require that the pastor should intervene. The goal for avoiding conflict is to guide and affect potential situations without allowing them to destroy the church. Willimon gives several steps to use for assessing potential conflict in the earliest stages:

(1) Obtain as much information as possible. Many conflicts are the result of misinformation or poor communication. The initial step is a relatively non-threatening gesture toward the parties of the conflict, whereby one is only seeking better understanding of what is at stake. (2) Buy as much time as possible. When people are under pressure to reach a quick decision, there is little time to work out differences and seek alternatives. Delay is a means of creative avoidance whereby time is gained to function wisely. (3) Make an assessment of the individuals involved in the potential conflict. Is this the work of isolated, chronic troublemakers trying to create a congregational crisis where none exist? We need to identify these people to offer individual care. However, since it is tempting to label people as troublemakers to avoid facing legitimate differences within the congregation, we must examine our motives. (4) Take the emotional temperature of the conflict. If the anger level is high what can we do to initiate a cooling off period? Humor or distraction with some other activity can help bring emotions down to more manageable levels.³³

³² Mark 9:28-29.

³³ Berkley, 218.

At the beginning stage of potential conflict, usually a conference with concerned parties or some pastoral care and counseling will suffice. However, if the conflict becomes an issue for the entire congregation, a passive approach can be damaging to the pastor as being seen as a person in control and either unwilling or unable to intervene in a constructive manner.

Willimon offers steps in managing conflict that has become public. He employs a model from Larry McSwain and William Treadwell in their work in Conflict Ministry in the Church.

(1) Be sure everyone in the group knows the facts of the situation. (2) Ask someone to explain the history of the conflict. (3) Refer the conflict to the proper committee for discussion and recommendation. (4) Add people who can help move the conflicted group to a constructive engagement. (5) Delay action until there has been time to manage the conflict.³⁴

When the conflict is in control and the parties are settled enough not to bring disruption to the spirit and order of the church, the group concerned with the conflict can move to what Larry McSwain and William Treadwell call problem-solving analysis. They say,

At this stage we can: Consider all the gathered facts, feelings, and opinions about the conflict; List options to the problem, considering the potential positive and negative consequences of each; List each option in order of priority; Depersonalize the option, since we are not voting on the personalities of those involved; Develop a consensus for the option that most nearly resolve the conflict, even if it involves compromise.³⁵

Conflict is inevitable in the life and the work of the church and it would make one wise to develop knowledge and methods for resolving reoccurring conflicts in a way to keep the church healthy.

Week 4: Tax and Law Considerations

³⁴ Ibid., 219.

³⁵ Berkley, 219.

One of the most vulnerable areas in the work and life of the church is in the area of tax and law. Because of technology, the rural church is accountable in ways that it was not in the past. Liabilities for both individuals and the church as a congregation are topics worth the church leadership becoming familiarized.

Incorporation is an area that the church should address. The benefits of incorporation are numerous and shall be discussed in class. Liabilities like child abuse and slip and falls are among many potential liabilities.

When does the church report income paid out and does the church pay social security for its employees? These questions have been reserved for the urban pastor. However, with technology as it is, it would behoove the rural pastor to get a fundamental understanding of these issues.

Because of the nature of this topic, it is suggested that the assignment to read the textbook, pages 537-544 be mandatory and class discussion take place so that a hands on learning experience can take place. Example copies of Articles of incorporation, W-4 form, IRS Circular E, form 8274, form 941 and 941E, W-2, W-3, and a 1099 form should be in class during class discussion. It would really enhance the learning experience if a visiting tax preparer were to present and explain these forms.

Theology

The writer's spouse declares that she never feeds the writer anything she has cooked without first tasting it herself. The question within this context is whether pastors have tasted the food they have prepared for God's people? Theological constructs are imperative for church leaders to have if the church is going to be an effective force for change and godly reform. The

church is failing to interpret the times in a way that is helpful to society at large. Church attendance is decreasing in America by all statistical analyses. People are trying to find the relevance in church attendance and how benefits them to invest in its existence. “What our world desperately needs are communicators, people who have a deep knowledge of the subject and can speak to the lawyers, doctors, social policy makers, government officials and ordinary people on the street about why religion matters.”³⁶

There several different methodologies for doing theology; however, the writer will introduce in a very brief and basic way three methodologies of doing theology. They are: (1) Historical, (2) Systematic, and (3) Practical theology. The lecture for this course is taken from *The Doctrine of Providence & Revelation An Introduction to Philosophy and Theology: A Series In Postmodern Studies* edited by Edward L. Smith, and *The Case for the Resurrection* by Gary R. Habermas and Michael R. Licona. See Appendix F.

Week 1: What Is Theology?

What is theology? Often, preachers will get before the congregation and declare that they are not theologians. They do so with an air of belittling the discipline as if it is anti-Christian. As a profession, they are right. They are not theologians. However, as teachers and preachers in the church, they should have a system of theological thought and be able to articulate that thought in a consistent manner each time they address God’s people as God’s spokesperson. In an oversimplified way, theology it is the study of God. This definition is too broad to mean anything that can be grasped by human intellect or applied in a purposeful way. Just as the

³⁶ Kwok Pui-lan, “2011 Presidential Address: Empire and The Study of Religion,” *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 80, no. 2 (June 2012) <http://jaar.oxfordjournals.org/content/early/2012/04/09/jaarel.lfs003.full> (accessed August 1, 2012).

context of philosophy is universal in principal so is theology innately universal in principal and practice. There are many theological positions that are held either purposefully or incidentally by all who entertain the question of life and attempt to give an explanation for their worldview.

In spite of all the contradictions and nuances that were to emerge in the understanding of this concept in various Christian confessions and schools of thought, a formal criterion remains constant: theology is the attempt of adherents of a faith to represent their statements of belief consistently, to explicate them out of the basis (or fundamentals) of their faith, and to assign to such statements their specific place within the context of all other worldly relations (e.g., nature and history) and spiritual processes (e.g., reason and logic).³⁷

It is mandatory that church leaders have a foundation in describing what they believe about God and nature and why they believe it. One of the primary spiritual functions of church leaders is to preserve and transmit the faith. That task is only accomplished by teaching and preaching a thought out belief system about the nature of God as it relates to creation. The fact is, the most important question a person will ever have to answer is a theological question, “Whom do men say that I the son of man am?”³⁸ One writer said, “Theology has a correlative structure because its task is to work out a fully reflective understanding of the Christian witness of faith in terms that are intelligible and relevant to human existence.”³⁹ The operative phrase in this quote is, Fully Reflective Understanding. Paul told Timothy to, “Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of

³⁷ Quartz Hill School of Theology, “What is Theology?” <http://www.theology.edu/theology.htm> (accessed July 31, 2012)

³⁸ Matthew 16:13b.

³⁹ Edward L. Smith, ed., *The Doctrine of Providence and Revelation: An Introduction to Philosophy and Theology: A Series In Postmodern Studies*, vol. 7 (Atlanta: ITC The Research Center Press, 2001), 1.

truth.”⁴⁰ In order for one to explain the word of truth correctly, one must have spent time in studying the word and fully reflecting upon it.

Theology is the disciplined study of the Christian witness of faith informed by the Bible, other Christian writers, and oral traditions. It is the arranging of particular subject matter in the faith into a homogeneous expression of one’s belief system. To accomplish this, one must listen to oneself and establish the foundation whereby one would make assertions about God and creation.

Historical Theology is concerned with what the Christian faith has already been. It includes properly exegeting the Scripture and examining what would be considered historical facts based on what the discipline of history calls true. It reflects on the cohabitation of Christianity and the history of humankind. “To say, then, that the question of historical theology is what the Christian witness of faith has already been is to say that it is concerned with the reflective understanding of the history of the Christian religion, its belief, rites, social organization, and theology, together with the rest of human activity and culture so far as historically shaped thereby.”⁴¹

Systematic Theology is also concerned with what the Christian has been just as historical theology. However, it is also concerned with what it means in contemporary terms. It is a coherent expression of the Christian witness of the faith in terms that give establishment to its truth and relevancy. “The distinctive task of systematic theology is to express at the level of full

⁴⁰ 1 Timothy 2:15.

⁴¹ Smith, 6.

reflectiveness the understanding of faith, and hence the understanding of reality itself, decisively attested by the Christian witness.”⁴²

Practical Theology is that which informs us about what should be as regarding to the Christian faith and how it is lived or practiced. It informs the Church on what its mission is and how to carry the mission out best. Practical theology is inherent in the preaching, worship services, and care of the congregation by those assigned to provide care.

Edward Smith says of the three types of theological methodologies, “While all three of its disciplines reflect the same correlation, each stands in different relation to its two poles. Systematic theology is distinctive in that it reflects neither pole in itself but precisely their correlation, whereas historical theology peculiarly reflects the pole of witness, practical theology, that of existence.”⁴³ In other words, historical theology reflects the witness of faith, systematic theology reflects its significance, and practical theology reflects its existence.

Week 2: Doing Theology

The actual task of doing theology is a very involved task that incorporates several disciplines. However, the primary discipline necessary is that of biblical exegesis. This discipline is concerned with what the text says, and what it meant when it was said. To fully reflect upon a Scripture that supports a position, several questions must be addressed: What was said, when it was said, who said it, who it was said to, what context it was said in, and how it can be put in context in current times as it is attempted to be applied to the life and the work of the church. The crucial tenant of theology is establishing the meaning of the text. The question for

⁴² Ibid., 7.

⁴³ Ibid., 10.

the person doing theology is whether the original meaning of a text can be known. This is true for all believers, but especially for church leaders. Kevin Vanhoozer says, “Nevertheless meaning and interpretation are too important to be left to specialists. Indeed, it follows from the Protestant emphasis on the priesthood of all believers that every Christian wrestles for himself or herself with the complexity of biblical interpretation. Reading Scripture is both privilege and responsibility.”⁴⁴ Scripture reading is not commonly seen as a responsibility but it is as much of a responsibility feeding your children a healthy diet for proper growth and development. Things can go terribly wrong when Scripture is given the wrong theological interpretation. C. S. Lewis informs us with an example of the tragicness of bad theology. He says,

There were in the eighteenth century terrible theologians who held that God did not command certain things because they are right but certain things are right because God commanded them. To make the position perfectly clear, one of them even said that though God has, as it happens, commanded us to love Him and one another, He might equally well have commanded us to hate Him and one another, and hatred would have been right. It was apparently a mere toss-up that He decided on. Such a view of course makes God a mere arbitrary tyrant. It would be better and less irreligious to believe in no God and to have ethics than to have such an ethics and such a theology as this.⁴⁵

There are some church leaders with this type of theology with no biblical bases for it. Jesus gives a parable about two boys asked to go work in their father’s vineyard. One boy said he would and later did not go and the other boy said he would not and later did. Jesus then asked who did his Father’s will: the one who said he would and did not or the one who said he would not but later did. ⁴⁶

⁴⁴ Kevin J. Vanhoozer, *Is There Meaning in This Text* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1998), 10.

⁴⁵ C. S. Lewis, *The Beloved Works of C. S. Lewis: Surprised by Joy, Reflections On The Psalms, The Four Loves, The Business Of Heaven* (New York: Inspirational Press, 1986), 162.

⁴⁶ Matthew 21:28-31.

Week 3: The Resurrection

Perhaps the most important tenant of the Christian faith is the resurrection. The unique thing about Christianity that distinguishes it apart from all other religions is the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Paul says, “And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain.”⁴⁷ As church leaders, we must be able to articulate our faith in an understandable and intelligent way. In an age of information, it is important to the institutional church that its leaders be able to present their argument on the stage of theological debate. Peter said it this way, “But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear.”⁴⁸ No other religious group leader offered a test of such magnitude to their authenticity as Jesus did in the resurrection. It is the one fact that sets apart any claim of any religious organization. Other organizations claim their canon is proof of divine origin, while still others claim special revelation as their proof of divine authority. However, when asked for a sign, Jesus said to his critics he would give the sign of Jonah. Jesus said, “For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale’s belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.”⁴⁹ In Scripture, Jesus clearly predicted his death and resurrection. We as church leaders should be able to explain this claim and offer a reasonable argument for what Habermas and Licona calls “The Case for the Resurrection of Jesus.” Habermas and Licona have done the legwork for us and established a system based on the secular historical method to determine if an assertion is more probably true or false. “In historical inquiry, professional historians talk in

⁴⁷ 1 Corinthians 15:14.

⁴⁸ 1 Peter 3:15.

⁴⁹ Matthew 12:40.

terms of strength of probability that an event occurred. In fact, we can think in terms of a line graph with a full spectrum of historical certainties: Very Doubtful _____ Quite Doubtful _____ Somewhat Doubtful ____ Uncertain _____ Somewhat Certain _____ Quite Certain _____ Very Certain.”⁵⁰

There are five historical principles that speak to the very certain position on the professional historians’ spectrum of historical certainty line. They are (1) Multiple, independent sources, (2) Attestation by an enemy, (3) Embarrassing admissions, (4) Eyewitness testimony, and (5) Early testimony. Let us discuss what each of the principles mean according to Habermas and Licona.

Multiple independent sources suggest, “When an event or saying is attested by more than one independent source, there is a strong indication of historicity.”⁵¹ Independent source means they are giving an account of what they have witnessed firsthand and not hearsay. Attestation by an enemy suggest, “If a testimony affirming an event or saying is given by a source who does not sympathize with the person, message or cause that profits from the account, we have an indication of authenticity.”⁵² In other words, when someone who dislikes you says something positive about you or substantiates a claim of yours, it is most probably true. Embarrassing admission suggest that, “An indicator that an event or saying is authentic occurs when the source would not be expected to create the story, because it embarrasses his cause and weakened its position in arguments with opponents.”⁵³ Eyewitness testimony is when the individual telling

⁵⁰ Gary R. Habermas and Michael R. Licona, *The Case for the Resurrection* (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 2004), 31.

⁵¹ Habermas and Licona, 37.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 37-38.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 38.

the story actually witness the account first hand. Early testimony suggest that, “The closer the time between the event and the testimony about it, the more reliable the witness, since there is less time for exaggeration, and even legend, to creep into the account.”⁵⁴

Week 4: The Resurrection

How does the Jesus experience according to the Scripture line up with historical tools of determining whether the account of an event in the past actually occurred? Within the discipline of history:

Some testimony is stronger than other. Historians employ a number of common-sense principles in assessing the strength of a testimony. Here are five of those principles: 1. Testimony attested to by multiple independent witnesses is usually considered stronger than testimony of one witness. 2. Affirmation by neutral or hostile source is usually considered stronger than affirmation from a friendly source, since bias in favor of the person or position is absent. 3. People usually don't make up details regarding a story that would tend to weaken their position. 4. Eyewitness testimony is usually considered stronger than testimony heard from a second or third hand source. 5. An early testimony from very close to the event in question is usually considered more reliable than one received years after the event.⁵⁵

Let us examine some Scripture and see how we can line up with the criteria for historical probability of an event. First, let us consider testimony attested to by multiple independent witnesses. There are at least two gospels that can be considered independent witnesses, John and Matthew. Both John and Matthew were disciples of Jesus and in their writings, they attest to the resurrection of Jesus. Paul, at first was an enemy of Christianity, attested to the resurrection of Jesus, and Acts gives an account of over five hundred people seeing him after he was resurrected from the dead. The affirmation of hostile sources is seen in that those who opposed Jesus are those who acknowledged that the tomb was empty. It certainly weakens the religious authority's

⁵⁴ Ibid., 39.

⁵⁵ Habermas and Licona, 40.

position to acknowledge that the body of Jesus was not in the tomb and that they were unable to come up with it. It does not make sense that men and women would endure the persecution and even death for a lie if they had stolen the body of Jesus or if they were not sure of his resurrection. Paul was an eyewitness who said he encountered the Lord after his death on the cross. It is recorded that his disciples saw him and testify to the same. The testimony of Jesus being resurrected is very early in reference to the event. It was not much time for legend or myth to set in because of the short period between the story and the event.

Christian Ethics

The subject of ethics is a very significant subject for the church. In these postmodern times, the idea of right and wrong within society has gotten very vague. Particularly, the Church has to be a beacon of light that declares a clear ethical stance. By stance, the writer means, “The perspective from which one views all moral reality.”⁵⁶ The idea of right and wrong is fundamental to the Christian witness. Therefore, it behooves church leaders to understand what their moral stances are and be able to explain and/or defend them. The curriculum of this course of study is designed to provoke some intentional thought as to why the student holds the stance they do about the moral question of right and wrong. The course seeks to have the student develop an informed stance of ethical decision-making. “The stance gives us a basic orientation and way of looking at the moral life.”⁵⁷ The idea of Church leaders developing an ethical stance

⁵⁶ Charles E. Curran, *The Catholic Moral Tradition: A Synthesis* (Washington, D. C.: Georgetown University Press, 1999), xii.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

is significant in the life and work of the Church and enhances the vigor and overall health of the Church.

The lecture for this course will primarily take from the work done in *An Introduction to Christian Ethics: Goals, Duties and Virtues* by Robin W. Lovin. Lovin's book is very well written. The way he approaches the study of ethics is unique in that he affirms the student's natural knowledge of the subject matter and gives confidence to the student in being able to grasp the concepts and ideas put forth in his book.

You were introduced to ethics without a textbook, assignment, or exams - except maybe for the real-life texts that come along when you find out whether you are actually going to live by the rules and values you say you accept. Ethics is like that. The introduction is part of life, before you open a book or sit in a classroom. So an introduction to Ethics is not like an introduction to quantum physics, where you learn ideas and equations that belong to a world very different from the world of ordinary experience. In fact, you are not really ready to begin the academic study of ethics until you have had some of the experiences like the ones I just described.⁵⁸

This approach to teaching the introduction to Ethics gives the student a certain empowerment and connection to the subject matter. The book is compartmentalized into specific subject matter than can be approached as part of the whole or as individual subject matter. The curriculum for this course is directly designed by the content of the book *Introduction to the Origin of Ethics, Goals, Duties, and Virtues*. See Appendix G.

Week 1: The Origin of Christian Ethics

Christian ethics suggest a study about how people think about moral questions from a Christian perspective. Questions about right or wrong, good or bad, and what should or should not be done are all ethical questions. Many of us grow up placing value on certain behaviors or

⁵⁸ Robin W. Lovin, *An Introduction To Christian Ethics: Goals, Duties and Virtues* (Nashville: Abingdon, 2011), 10-11.

not valuing certain behaviors because of what we have been taught. As we live life and experience different things in life for ourselves we began to question our ideas and values. We question the motives of those who taught us what they did and whether what they taught us is reality or some personal value or agenda they are putting forth. The point of this course is to help students organize their thinking, provide a vocabulary for some questions that they are probably already asking, and show them how others have dealt with those same questions in the past. Every student in this class already has a lot of knowledge about the subject of ethics. To make sense of this course they will have to draw on that knowledge and connect the kind of thinking that they already do every day to ways of thinking that began in ancient Athens, in the early days of Christianity, or in a medieval university. The approach to ethics is led by questions of life. Why would one want to be or do good as opposed to doing or being bad? Who defines what is good or bad?

The Christian faith was not developed in a vacuum. There were many philosophies that were around and influenced the trend of thought during the era of Christian development. There were a few schools of thought in the Hellenistic culture that were both prominent and significant. “There were many different ways to think about good and bad choices, and various ways of understanding how those choices relate to the world of nature or the purpose of God”⁵⁹ In the Scripture, we are told that the Apostle Paul debated with Epicurean and Stoic philosophers when he carried the message of the resurrection of Jesus to Athens, Greece.⁶⁰ According to Robin Lovin, the Major Schools of Greek Philosophy were:

⁵⁹ Lovin, 59.

⁶⁰ Acts 17:18.

Neo-Platonists developed Platonic ideas in the third century CE. Plontinus (204-270 CA), his disciple Porphyry (232-305 CE), and their followers believed that the good life is achieved when the soul reaches its proper place among unchanging realities through disciplined meditation. Another group was the *Epicureans*. This group was influenced by the atomist philosophy of Democritus, and believed that happiness is found in enjoying the pleasures of this life. They believed that atoms are the basic substance of reality, including the soul. At death, the atoms of the soul will be dispersed, so that the soul ceases to exist at death. Important thinkers include especially Epicurus (341-270 BCE) and Lucretius, who lived during the first century BCE. Finally, there were the *Stoics*. The Stoics believed the good life should be guided by reason, and they held the distinctive view that reason is equally present in all people. Important Stoic philosophers include Cicero (106-43 BCE), Seneca (4 BCE - 65 CE), Epictetus (55-135), and Marcus Aurenlius (121-180).⁶¹ There were many more ideas floating around during the birth of Christianity; however, these three were the dominant line of thought in that era. The Stoics stressed self-control. Epicureans focused on enjoyment and moderation. Platonist praised contemplation, while Aristotelians sought a balanced life that avoided extremes. In the midst of these ethical stances, Christianity developed its own unique stance that was independent of any existing worldview. Even though Christianity has different schools that approach the faith with different emphasis, Lovin identifies five ways that are necessary for Christian ethics that distinguish Christians from any other faith. “They are: Creation, sin, incarnation, redemption, and resurrection destiny.”⁶²

This lecture ends with an open discussion of Lovin’s rendition of how these five ways that are necessary for doing Christian ethics speak to the Christian’s worldview.

Week 2: Goals

Life is full of having to make decisions. Decisions, for the most part, are not made haphazardly. Even the most mundane decisions are determined by particular stances held by the one making the decision. What are the references we use to make the decisions that affect our everyday life? Those who study ethics systematically organize the subject into three basic categories: deontology, a system of ethics based on duties; teleology, a system of ethics based on

⁶¹ Lovin, 53-54.

⁶² Lovin, 72.

goals; and areteology or virtue ethics, a system of ethics based on personal characteristics like humility, generosity, honesty, and courage.⁶³

Some people place emphasis on goals in life and thus they identify the goal in life as the good in life. The word used for this type of reasoning is teleology. “Teleology uses reason to guide actions toward the achievement of a good goal. What makes an action right is that it aims at good results. What makes a person good is that he or she accomplishes good things.”⁶⁴

Aristotle claims happiness to be the ultimate goal of humanity and that is what people seek after. It can be described as a kind of happiness ethic. According to this kind of thinking, all activity revolves around achieving goals that will help one to experience well being in the total life experience. This is accomplished in stages as one stage supports the next stage until the individual reaches his or her goal of a secure state of well being, which is called happiness.

Christian ethics differs with this kind of ethic in that happiness is found in being obedient to God. The pursuit of happiness in things and people poses an unsolvable problem. “The problem with happiness is not that the world is full of bad things that people want. The problem is the same one that many Greek philosophers and poets who came after Aristotle also noticed: The good things that people think are essential to happiness are easily lost.”⁶⁵ To compound the happiness problem, “What makes us unhappy is not just the loss of good things, but the fear that we might lose them.”⁶⁶ Christian Ethics addresses the same questions as Aristotle’s ethic, but Christian Ethics offers a solution to the happiness problem. Christian ethics is directly tied into a

⁶³ Ibid., 165-166.

⁶⁴ Lovin, 171.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 90.

⁶⁶ Ibid., 91.

right relationship with God and not the pursuit of things. Psalms 1 reads, “Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditates day and night.”⁶⁷ Jesus teaches in Matthew 5 what things lead to happiness and they are all directly associated with a relationship with God. Jesus poses the question in Matthew 16:26, “For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?”⁶⁸ God is the center of all that is in the Christian’s life. All choices are referenced by one’s relationship with God. Lovin says of St. Augustine that:

Augustine makes this explicit when he discusses true happiness. Like other Christians who know philosophy, he assumes that happiness is what everyone is seeking. But he knows that happiness will have to be reinterpreted in light of Christian experience. As we have seen, he argues that the things we expect to make us happy actually make us anxious, because we are afraid that we might lose them. If we are really going to be happy, we must find a good that cannot be lost, even in death. Only one good fits that description. True happiness is a relationship to God.⁶⁹

It should be emphasized at this point that true happiness is dependent on a true relationship with the true God. Lovin says that the contemporary problems in Christian ethics, as observed by H. Richard Niebuhr, are “that many people, even in the modern world, polytheists of a sort. . . . They seek many different, competing goods, and they have many different loyalties. They may sincerely say they believe in one God, but it would be hard to see what difference that makes in shifting patterns of their goals and actions.”⁷⁰

⁶⁷ Psalms 1:1-2.

⁶⁸ Matthew 16:26.

⁶⁹ Lovin, 174.

⁷⁰ Ibid., 178-179.

As church leaders, it is very important to be able to articulate the faith of our tradition. Tradition is defined as “a set of ideas and practices worked out over many generations, and people turn to it with the expectation that they will find answers they can use from those who share their beliefs and who have dealt with problems similar to their own.”⁷¹

Week 3: Duties

Goals are very important when making decisions about what is right and what is wrong, what ought to be done and what ought not to be done. Another underlining motivation for decision making about behavior is duties. A sense of duty carries with it commitment, responsibility, and dependability, all of which are necessary ingredients in a good life of a society. All of our sense of well being is directly proportional to our sense of duty. As a society, we depend on men and women to act on a sense of duty more so than personal goals. Duty brings with it the idea of right and wrong, while goals are oriented towards good and bad. In other words, right and wrong are functions of law and good and bad are functions of objectives. The law that gives a sense of duty is self-regulated rather than judicially regulated. Lovin quotes, “The German philosopher Immanuel Kant that, argued that this autonomy or self-legislation is what distinguishes genuine moral duties from all the others which are imposed on us by something other than reason, whether that other power is an outside authority or simply the force of our own desires.”⁷² This way of looking at ethics is called deontology. “Rights and duties are the language of deontological ethics, in which right actions are identified by

⁷¹ Ibid., 83.

⁷² Lovin, 261.

obligations, rather than by goals we are pursuing.”⁷³ Lovin draws on Thomas Aquinas’ *summa theologiae* to establish three things that will identify a law: “Law is a rule of reason directed toward the common good; Law is given by the proper authority; Law must be published and made known.”⁷⁴ At first glance, it would appear that law is teleological because it is oriented toward the goal of a common good for society. However, law is determined to be deontological in nature. This is because law is more bent toward duty than it is individual goals. Lovin cites Aquinas in identifying four kinds of law: “The first is eternal law, the second is natural law, thirdly is human law, and fourth and last is divine law.”⁷⁵

Week 4: Virtues

Lovin’s final stance whereby decisions are made is what he calls virtue. “Nearly all writers discussed four important virtues—prudence, courage, justice and self-control.”⁷⁶ The writer has briefly discussed the reasoning of making decisions based on goals and rules. Clearly, the potential conflict is apparent when individual goals collide or conflict with another. This gives birth to the idea of laws or rules that has the greater good in mind for the greater number being affected. Virtue, on the other hand, has components of both goals and laws, yet is independent in its essence. There is a teleological component in virtue, in that virtue can be a goal of an individual in that a person can make decisions based on the goal of being a virtuous person. On the other hand, while virtue cannot be legislated, it does have a type of deontological status. In this way, virtue is set up to be the components of the society as a whole for the well

⁷³ Ibid., 263.

⁷⁴ Lovin, 272.

⁷⁵ Ibid., 273-274.

⁷⁶ Ibid., 395.

being of all. Virtue holds its own stance in that it is categorically named as areteology. *Arete* is a Greek word meaning virtue. “In this way of thinking, it is the good person who provides direction in selecting the right action, in contrast to teleology and deontology, which suggest that a good person is someone who achieves the goals or performs the duties that moral reasoning picks out as the right actions.”⁷⁷ This type of reasoning can be most evident in a common quote that many Christians use when making decisions: “what would Jesus do?” “Moral thinking is about the use of reason to understand and develop the habits that make you a good person. What makes an action right is that it is the sort of action that a good person would do.”⁷⁸

Evangelism

One of the more important or significant functions of the church is evangelism. There are different definitions of what evangelism is. However, “The most succinct definition we know appears in the Practical Encyclopedia of Evangelism and Church Growth: Evangelism is communicating the Gospel in an understandable manner and motivating a person to respond to Christ and become a responsible member of his church.”⁷⁹ Using this definition, the idea of communication is paramount to accomplishing the goal of evangelism and motivating a person to respond to Christ and become a responsible member of the church. There are different genres of communication. Not all communication is verbal and church leaders would do well to understand the ways that they communicate the gospel to others. One approach to this is to determine what things would hinder the effort to share the gospel and invite others into the

⁷⁷ Lovin, 398.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Elmer Towns and Ed Stetzer, *Perimeters of Light: Biblical Boundaries* (Chicago: Moody Press, 2004), 130.

fellowship of believers. Towns and Stetzer call these hindrances to communicating the gospel barriers. They list four barriers in particular and label them E - 0 to E - 3:

The E - 0 barrier describes evangelizing those who are already in the church, i.e., unsaved children born in the church or those churchgoers who have transferred in their membership but have not experienced conversion. The E - 1 stained-glass barrier describes the difficulties of external things that keep people from becoming saved or even attending our churches, i.e., location, facilities, name lack of equipment, and lack of services. E- 2 are the cultural and class barriers that hinder the presentation of the gospel to people in their ethnic customs or culture. . . . Finally, E - 3 is a language barrier.⁸⁰

Church leaders are responsible for moving the church in the right direction. The church is given the mandate by Jesus to evangelize. Jesus said, “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.”⁸¹ Church leaders should have a solid foundation of the evangelistic duty of the Church. Spader and Mays say that the church leader “as a shepherd he is working to guard, guide, and nurture the segment of the flock entrusted to his care. He is eager to learn how to multiply the ministry by equipping others.”⁸² In order to lead, one must be confident in the direction he or she is leading and understand the objectives of the body that he or she is assigned to lead. It is important to keep in mind, those who are in leadership positions in the church, must possess the moral substance or character conducive to church leadership. “The overall health of any church or ministry depends primarily on the emotional and spiritual health of its leadership. In fact, the key to successful spiritual leadership has much more to do with the leader’s internal

⁸⁰ Towns and Stetzer, 136-137.

⁸¹ Matthew 28:19-20.

⁸² Dan Spader and Gary Mayes, *Growing a Healthy Church* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1991), 28.

life than with the leader's expertise, gifts, or experience."⁸³ The church does operate to a degree off of sound business principles however, it must be kept in mind that the church is an unique organization in that it is of God and he will supply all that is needed to carry out the assigned task he gives to his servant, if he or she has the proper attitude.

With the idea of evangelism comes the consequential results of church growth. The writer believes that church growth happens when proper planting and watering is done then God will give the increase.⁸⁴ Evangelism should be approached with a passion to lead people to a right relationship with God through Jesus Christ and His Church. Every tool that does not contradict the the teachings of scripture and the moral standards of the Christian world view should be employed to evangelize the world. When we give special attention to understanding the dynamics of Evangelism and Church growth we contribute to the well being of people and communities in ways that could not be counted. The church will be served well by those who approach the mandate to evangelize and facilitate church growth from a scientific and artful body of knowledge rather than guess work often erroneously called being lead by the spirit. This is not to say one should not be Spirit lead but it is to say there is no excuse for ignoring the labor and findings of others as it relates to church growth and evangelism. The following lectures have been prepared from Mark McClosky's book, "Tell it Often Tell it Well." (See appendix H). The following lectures have been prepared from Mark McClosky's book, "Tell it Often Tell it Well." (See appendix H)

Week One: The Shocking News

⁸³ Peter Scazzero and Warren Bird, *The Emotionally Healthy Church: A Strategy for Discipleship that Actually Changes Lives* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003), 20.

⁸⁴ 1 Corinthians 3:6, 7.

A particular problem that arises in the application of evangelism is convincing the hearers of the consequences and absolutism of the contamination of sin. Many people cannot connect with the effects of sin. Perhaps this is because they don't readily experience the damning effects of sin. Chapter one of "Tell it Often Tell it Well," presents a very good parable that speaks to the seriousness by which the consequences of sin is to be taken. McClosky gives a picture of a researcher coming upon a fatal virus that has infected all of humanity and of which many are dying daily. Further research is done and a cure is found that really works with no side effects and is guaranteed to work. McClosky concludes the story with:

Now you must consider the question: How can I convince the sick of their condition? I can't pour the cure down their throats; they have to want to take it, you reason. The crucial necessity is to open their eyes to their need so they will embrace the cure. Through wise reasoning and persistent efforts, you reveal and communicate the nature of the disease and the marvelous effectiveness of the cure, and some are convinced. They take the remedy. Then they join you in the cause of convincing a sick world, blind to its sickness, of the great hope found in the only cure.⁸⁵

The good news or the gospel speaks to every area of human existence. It is the total remedy for humankind's sin sick condition. Human well-being entails the health and safety of the person in a holistic way. John says, "Beloved, I wish above all things that you mayest prosper and be in good health, even as thy soul prospereth."⁸⁶ The must be made relevant and contemporary contextually to be effective and compelling. McClosky frames this concept with the idea of the gospel as being multidimensional. He say, "The gospel is a multidimensional message speaking to the height, breadth and depth of the need of the human heart. " In other words, the gospel can be applicable to any person in any situation. The genius of the gospel is

⁸⁵ Mark McClosky, Tell It Often Tell It Well: Making the Most Of Witnessing Opportunity, http://www.internetevangelismday.com/dayframeforlinks.php?id=http://www.greatcom.org/resources/tell_it_often_tell_it_well/default.htm&referer=/engel-scale.php&des=Tell%20It%20Often,%20Tell%20It%20Well,%20by%20Bright%20and%20McCluskey, (accessed March 28, 2013).

⁸⁶ 3 John 1:2.

found in the fact that although it is multidimensional it is precise. The good news of Jesus' atoning work in his life, death and resurrection is the precise message of the gospel and this message effects every facet of existence.

Week 2: Evangelism as an Event and Process

The idea that evangelism is an event as well as a process can be understood with the metaphor of planting a seed and providing the condition for it to grow and bare fruit. The seed planting is very critical to the initial evangelistic process of a person. This beginning stage is perhaps the first call of the individual that he or she hears in the soul. It is important that the medium that is used to present the gospel is one of authenticity and purity in Christian doctrine.

Relating to the event of evangelism McClosky writes:

Evangelism as an event could be defined as the communication of the gospel, both in a proclamation or persuasive dialogue context, in such a manner that an informed decision for Christ is appropriately called for. The hearer(s) may or may not be ready to believe, but nonetheless the crucial and decisive nature of the gospel has been clearly, boldly, sensitively and persuasively communicated.⁸⁷

Evangelism as a process is modeled in the scripture that says, "And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers."⁸⁸

The idea is continued in the study and atmosphere that would provide the substance for growth and development in the body of Christ. As Christians we are called to grow and produce fruit to the building and sustaining of the kingdom of God in cooperation with the Spirit of God and other Christians. This idea of process is not to be used as an excuse for lack of development, A common cliché that is used to excuse spiritual irresponsibility is, *God is not through with me yet.*

⁸⁷ McClosky, Chapter 5.

⁸⁸ Acts 2: 42.

That is, for all practical purposes, a true statement in context but the spirit of the phrase is often used to excuse some behavior that is contrary to the behavior of a disciple of Christ.

Week 3: The Art of Other - Centered Communication

Communicating the gospel is of such a serious nature that it is worth putting in many work hours in being able to get it right to maximize the effectiveness of a given opportunity. The science of evangelism has grown dramatically over time but the principals remain unchanged. There are other disciplines that help us to better interpret what Jesus had already taught his discipline while on earth. Disciplines like psychology, sociology, anthropology, communications and medicine to name a few all are useful as tools in the event and process of evangelism. McClosky says, "There is much more to effectively communicating the gospel than merely penetrating physical ears with the sound waves of our voice. Rather, we must speak the gospel in a way that is meaningful to the hearers. It must speak not only to the mind but also to the heart, for this is where the seeds of the gospel take root, germinate and bear the fruit of eternal life."⁸⁹ Evangelism is much more than phonics it is the call to live. Because of this critical call the communicator must be skilled enough to avoid conflict when presenting the gospel. One must realize it is not about the communicator but its about Jesus and his offer to eternal life. As a communicator your primary objective is to do nothing that would hinder the positive response to the call of God. Paul says it best when he says, "Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time. Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man."⁹⁰ One of the more damaging activities to both the evangelist and the hearer is someone attempting to evangelize and person without the tools or

⁸⁹ McClosky, Chapter 18.

⁹⁰ Colossians 4: 5-6.

skills to be effective communicators of the gospel. Evangelism is such an integral part of what it means to be a Christian and to be the church, training in this area is imperative for the survival and growth of the body of Christ. McClosky says, “ The growth of any movement, secular or spiritual, is based on its ability to mobilize its membership in effective, continuous, expansion-related activity. The church is no exception to this rule in its calling to the work of evangelism.”⁹¹

Week 4: Engal’s Scale

Engal’s scale is a very good tool to visualize the process involved in the conversion process. It can provide the evangelist with a marker to asses the progression of an individuals spiritual journey. It can be a valuable tool in equipping the evangelist with systematic strategy in communicating the gospel to others (see figure 10).

A vital part of evangelism is the making of disciples. Engal’s scale addresses specific categories of moving towards discipleship as opposed to mere church membership. According to Engal’s scale the point on the scale that is represented by +2 is the position most people remain after the event of being evangelized into the church. The responsibility of church leaders as to gradually move the parishioner fro church membership to discipleship.

⁹¹ McClosky, Chapter 20.

Engel's Scale of Evangelism

- 10 Awareness of the supernatural**
- 9 No effective knowledge of Christianity**
- 8 Initial Awareness of Christianity**
- 7 Interest in Christianity**
- 6 Awareness of basic facts of the Gospel**
- 5 Grasp of implications of the Gospel**
- 4 Positive attitude to the Gospel**
- 3 Awareness of personal need**
- 2 Challenge and decision to act**
- 1 Repentance and faith**

0 A Disciple is Born!

- +1 Evaluation of decision**
- +2 Initiation into the church**
- +3 Become part of the process of making other disciples**
- +4 Growth in understanding of the faith**
- +5 Growth in Christian character**
- +6 Discovery and use of gifts**
- +7 Christian life-style**
- +8 Stewardship of resources**
- +9 Prayer**
- +10 Openness to others/Effective sharing of faith and life**

What's Gone Wrong With The Harvest? James F. Engel & Wilbert Norton - Zondervan 1975

Figure 10

Pastoral Care and Counseling

Pastoral Care is arguably the most significant ministry of the church, particularly in the African American community. The history of the African American Church is a rich history with powerful nuances imbedded in the value of Pastoral Care. When African slaves were transported to the shores of America, they went through a process of indoctrination into a subhuman role. During this time, African Americans did not have the same protection under the law as whites did and to be black was not a good thing in America. To make matters even worse, blacks often turned against each other to disassociate themselves with each other. E. Franklin Frazier says about the assimilation of new slaves to the older slaves, “Apparently from all reports, these new slaves with their African ways were subjected to the disdain, if not hostility, of Negroes who had become accommodated to the plantation regime and had acquired the ways of their new environment.”⁹² The above quote is indicative of the mindset of the African American as it relates to socialization. During the slavery process, the social cohesion of the African slave was corroded to the point of passing negative effects even to the present. Frazier says, “It is evident, then, that the manner in which Negroes were captured and enslaved and inducted into the plantation regime tended to loosen all social bonds among them and to destroy the traditional basis of social cohesion.”⁹³ The Black Church is the only institution that African Americans own collectively and the very life of the church is predicated on social cohesion. It is imperative that

⁹² E. Franklin Frazier, *The Negro Church in America* (New York: Schocken Books, 1968), 3.

⁹³ *Ibid.*

church leaders understand this concept and endeavor to bring healing from the negative influences of slavery to the African American community through Pastoral Care in the church. Many scholars disagree on the effects of slavery, but they all agree on the unique position of the African American Church to be an agent for human well being.

The following lectures have been prepared from Edward P. Wimberly's work, "African American Pastoral Care and Counseling: The Politics of Oppression and Empowerment" and Ron L. Deal's work, "The Smart Stepfamily." In addition to these two books, it is suggested that the student read *Integrative Family Therapy*, by David C. Olsen (See Appendix I).

Week 1: Pastoral Care and Counseling as Political Process

At first glance, it would appear that politics has no common ground with pastoral care and counseling. However, the African American community is unique in its history in America and its needs are just as unique. What comes to mind when one mentions Pastoral Care? Is it something that only the minister does, is it done on a one on one confrontational basis, is it done only by professionals? There are many definitions of pastoral care. Some cater to the model of an activity done by the clergy, while others see it as something the church does inherently. No one disagrees that pastoral involves the care for God's people. The discussion however, is about what does caring for God's people look like. Gerkin says, "Care for the people of God involves care that confronts issues of Justice and moral integrity in the life of the people."⁹⁴ We can see within the biblical motif that the theme of justice is of paramount importance to the concern of God for his people. On the other hand, politics has to do with the well being of human kind. With this approach or connection between politics and pastoral care, Wimberly suggest that,

⁹⁴ Charles V. Gerkin, *An Introduction To Pastoral Care* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1997), 25.

“African American pastoral care and counseling are inherently political processes.”⁹⁵ African American pastoral care is not the description of an independent discipline from pastoral care but a description of a focused methodology of pastoral care. Robert M. Franklin, Presidential Distinguished Professor of Social Ethics at Candler School of Theology, Emory University, said in the foreword of Wimberly’s book, “This book could advance a much needed approach to a complicated conversation about the kind of care best suited for people who have known racism, sexism, poverty, and religious abuse.”⁹⁶ Care to a population of people must address the particular concerns and issues of that particular community. When the disciples of Jesus were not able to cast the demon out of the boy as requested by his father and Jesus came and cast the demon out, they later asked Jesus why they were not able to do it. Jesus responded, “This kind can come forth by nothing, but by prayer and fasting.”⁹⁷ The point here is that not all are the same kind and each kind calls for a unique response. Wimberly suggests that pastoral care in the black church is a political process. He says, “By political process I mean the process that enables human beings to become fully involved and engaged in life so that each person can identify, develop, and exercise his or her full human capacities while at the same time enabling others to do likewise for the purpose of contributing to the common good.”⁹⁸

What are the needs of the community in which the local church is located? Issues of day care for both children and the elderly, education of children and adults, and jobs or joblessness are just a few issues that directly affect the people the church serves on a daily basis. How

⁹⁵ Edward P. Wimberly, *African American Pastoral Care and Counseling: The Politics of Oppression and Empowerment* (Cleveland: The Pilgrim Press, 2006), 11.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 10.

⁹⁷ Mark 9:29.

⁹⁸ Wimberly, 21.

should the church respond to these issues? What other issues can be cited? How should the church provide care to God's people?

Week 2: Parish Context of African American Pastoral Counseling

There are issues within the African American community that are a direct result of the experience of slavery. This is not to stereotype the entire African American community but it is to say that all of America is affected by the woes that plague the African American community as a result of slavery. The prevailing idea of Africans that were forced to America during the slave trade was that they were intellectually inferior to other humans, especially whites. This attitude promoted a type of biased thinking among the general population of America called racism. It is one thing for people to think that you are inferior to them as a person but it is an altogether different thing when people feel inferior within themselves. Pastors must ask the question of how one starts to lose their self-esteem in such a dramatic way. Wimberly suggests that conversation is the primary conduit of low or healthy self-esteem. It is interesting to note that Dr. Wimberly says, "Racism, however, seeks to limit this participation for African Americans primary through recruiting African Americans into negative self-images, identities, and stories. Such recruiting leads African Americans to internalize oppression, keeping them in psychic bondage without even needing overt forms of oppression to reinforce racism."⁹⁹ He goes on to say of pastoral care and counseling that, "The most fundamental role of pastoral counseling with this clientele is therefore to liberate African Americans from the negative images, identities, and

⁹⁹ Wimberly, 11.

stories into which they have been recruited, and to accompany them in discerning how best to make use of their resulting personal and political agency and efficacy.”¹⁰⁰

Wimberly sees the role of pastoral care in the African American community as being one of liberation from a negative self-image induced by the conversation internalized by the community, for example, the ethos that black people are habitually late to functions and engagements. This phenomenon is called Colored People Time. Another example is the idea that black men are only being men when they are unfaithful to their spouses, and black children are not capable of learning at the rate of white children. These myths have become a part of the African American community’s reality because of the conversation we have with others, and more importantly, the conversation we have with ourselves. One of the most notable forms of engaging the black community in negative self-images is the media. “Negative media portrayals stimulate internal conversations and lead us to deny our own worth and value, as well as to put down our own institutions and communities.”¹⁰¹ Wimberly suggests that the role of pastoral care is to change or edit the conversation.

In this context of internalized racism, the role of pastoral counseling is to enable individuals, married couples, families, and mediating structures that bridge between the individual and the wider society to edit or re-author the negative internalized stories and identities that African Americans have embraced. The editing needs to facilitate and enable us to participate fully in society.¹⁰²

Giving attention to the ethos of the community that the church leader is serving is of grave importance. There was a sincere preacher who advocated going on the street corner and ministering to the drug dealers, prostitutes, and gangsters. The problem was he was in a rural

¹⁰⁰ Wimberly, 11-12.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 22.

¹⁰² Ibid.

community and there were not any such people hanging on the corner. “Pastoral counseling that takes place within the context of a local African American congregation is influenced by the dominant beliefs and convictions of that congregation, particularly about the nature of human beings and about the way human beings are empowered to participate in society.”¹⁰³ The church leaders of a congregation should be trained to contribute to the conversations and images of the people by affirming the worth of every individual and maximizing each individual’s full participation in the social, political, and religious sectors of life.

Week 3: The Smart Step Family Part 1

One of the rapidly emerging populations of the church is what is called the stepfamily. According to the Smart Stepfamilies web site, “1300 new step families are forming every day, over 50% of U.S. Families ends in divorce, 75% remarry, and 66% of the remarried break up when children are involved.”¹⁰⁴ African Americans are leading in every category that addresses issues of stepfamilies (see Appendix J). Given these statistics, it is reasonable to conclude that the church would do well to be a support resource for this segment of the community. Many people enter into remarriage with guilt and shame because they feel as if they have let God down by not living out the vow of marriage until death do us part. However, Deal helps us to deal with the issue by asserting that, “. . . Avoiding divorce by tolerating a miserable marriage does not honor God.”¹⁰⁵ Deal offers seven steps to a healthy marriage. Step One is what he calls, “Step Up! Discover a redemptive God who loves, forgives, and provides strength and direction for

¹⁰³ Wimberly, 57.

¹⁰⁴ The Stepfamily Foundation, “Stepfamily Statistics,” <http://www.stepfamily.org/statistics.html> (accessed February 2, 2013).

¹⁰⁵ Ron L. Deal, *The Smart Step Family: Seven Steps to a Healthy Family* (Minneapolis: Bethany House, 2002), 21.

journey.”¹⁰⁶ God is the center of all that is good and right, including marriages. As Christians, we believe that God is pro-family and we petition His blessings upon our families. Stepfamilies must believe that God is with them and honors their marriage if they are to experience a healthy Christian marriage. There are some that would suggest that the promotion of a healthy stepfamily somehow undermines original families. To this idea, Deal says:

However, the rally cry response has been met with some opposition by those who are concerned that step family ministry somehow condones (or encourages) divorce or adultery. In addition, there is hesitation from a few who wonder if ministering to the remarried is the equivalent of abandoning God’s design for marriage. Let it be understood that I want to uphold and teach God’s ideal that one man and one woman be married for life (and any remarried person with a Christlike perspective on life will agree that God’s ideal is best.) In no way should we compromise God’s plan for the foundation of our homes. My desire to educate and equip stepfamilies, then is not about condoning a past. It is, rather, an effort to help stepfamilies walk hand in hand with their Lord in the present.¹⁰⁷

He goes on to say, “You see, the problems and pressures of stepfamily life are a distraction from that which really matters - Making Jesus the Lord of your life and sharing your faith with the children under your care.”¹⁰⁸

Step Two is, “Step Down; Adjust your expectations and learn how to cook a stepfamily.”¹⁰⁹ This step has to do with helping the stepfamily to avoid unrealistic expectations and offer suggestions on realistic and reasonable expectations. When offering care to potential stepfamilies, it is imperative that the caregiver lead the family into realistic expectation. Deal ingeniously uses the metaphor of cooking to engage the thought process of issues facing stepfamilies. The metaphors he uses are:

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., 51.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., 52.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹ Deal, 61.

Blender, (This assumes each ingredient will relate to the others in the same uniform fashion), Food Processor, (These step families chop up one another's history and attempt to instantly combine all ingredients with rapid speed), Microwave, (These families refuse to be called step family and seek to heat the ingredients in rapid fashion so as to become a nuke-lear family (pun intended)), Pressure Cooker, (This family cooking style results in ingredients and spices (that is, rituals, values, and preferences) being put under pressure to meld together completely), and Tossed, (Like a salad, this style throws each ingredient into the air with no consideration as to where it might fall.¹¹⁰

It will do well to expose the stepfamily to these concepts of general potential problems in developing a healthy stepfamily. However, not all is negative. A model using the cooking metaphor that Deal suggests to be used in developing a healthy stepfamily is, the Crockpot. "Stepfamilies choosing this style understand that time and low heat make an effective combination."¹¹¹

Step Three is, "Two - Step, your marriage must be top priority."¹¹² One very real potential for disaster in a stepfamily is the feeling of guilt by the biological parent to placed loyalty. Competition for loyalty of the biological parent between the stepchildren and the stepparent can and often does destroy the marriage. "When push comes to shove, the allegiance (or loyalty) between parents and children often wins out over the marriage unless the couple can form a unified position of leadership. If they cannot govern the family as a team, the household is headed for anger, jealousy, and unacceptance."¹¹³ Balance is the key and the care of the children is a priority, however, this can only occur when the marriage is solid and provides a model of what a healthy marriage looks like for the children.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., 65-68.

¹¹¹ Ibid., 69.

¹¹² Ibid., 76.

¹¹³ Deal, 90.

Week 4: The Smart Step Family Part II

Step Four is, “Step in Line; With the parenting team.”¹¹⁴ This issue is one of the greatest importance of issues for the children that are victims of divorce and concerns of the family. This issue has to do with the biological parent that is still in the life of the child while family stability is being sought by the stepfamily. “This is often called co-parenting. In fact, one of the great ironies of divorce is that you may have hated your ex-spouse at the time of divorce, but now you have to find a way to cooperate with him or her for the sake of your children.”¹¹⁵ There are some very real issues to address in the area of co-parenting. “There was a time in America when parents had lots of children; today we say children have lots of parents. The parenting team is comprised of everyone who shares responsibility for child rearing tasks.”¹¹⁶ Necessary reading for discussion on Step Four is pages 144-161 in *The Smart Step Family* text.

Step Five is, “Side Step; The pitfalls common to stepfamilies.”¹¹⁷ This step incorporates the insights of the previous steps and avoiding known pitfalls. A list of these pitfalls can be read on page 165 in the text *The Smart Step Family*.¹¹⁸ Included in the list of concerns is the event of death. What should be the role of the stepparent in the event of death in the original family? How would the grieving process affect the stepfamily? “The challenge of understanding involves stepping into the shoes of others to experience what troubles them.”¹¹⁹

¹¹⁴ Ibid., 101.

¹¹⁵ Ibid.

¹¹⁶ Ibid., 103

¹¹⁷ Deal, 164.

¹¹⁸ Ibid., 165.

¹¹⁹ Ibid., 166.

Money matters are an item of concern in the stepfamily. How will the family's finances be handled? Do they establish separate accounts, joint accounts, or both? How are the accounts to be managed? These issues should be brought to the front in establishing a healthy stepfamily. Step Six is, "Step Through; The wilderness: overcoming special challenges."¹²⁰ This chapter in Deal's work *The Smart Step Family* primarily addresses the issue of sexuality within the stepfamily. If there are children from both parents that are expected to blend into one family, they should be coached about what the established boundaries are. Deal says:

When two families come together, there is an assumption that people will do just that - come together. This creates an unspoken expectation that relationships develop and bonding occurs. Displays of affection, warmth, and hugs of endearment are non-sexual ways of communicating this coming together."¹²¹

These expressions can develop into sexual thoughts to someone who is not grounded in a healthy sexuality. This is an area for discussion with the family and should not be avoided nor taken for granted.

Step Seven in developing a healthy step family is, "Step Over."¹²² This involves taking the experience of others to use to your benefit. Talking to others who are going through or who have gone through what you are endeavoring is always rewarding. Developing a ministry that supports stepfamilies is a need in our community and will prove to be of an inestimable value to the family, the church, and the community.

¹²⁰ Ibid., 193.

¹²¹ Ibid., 194.

¹²² Deal, 214.

CHAPTER FOUR

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

After the writer attended some of the local African American churches in the Crescent City area, one thing was apparent, there is a marked decline in church attendance in an area where there is not much competition for church attendance. There are no movies, ballparks, beaches, or any extracurricular activities competing for the attendance of the population. However, in the predominantly white churches, church attendance appeared to be stable, according to the pastors of those churches. One difference in the leadership of the white churches as opposed to the black churches is academic training of the pastors of the white churches. The pastors of the white churches in the Crescent City area have a minimum of a Master of Divinity and a few hold Doctor of Ministry degrees. On the other hand, not one African American pastor in the Crescent City area has any seminary training. Not all the people that have stopped attending the African American churches in the area have stopped going to church altogether. Many are commuting to other areas on Sunday morning. When asked why they travel so far to church and bypass the churches in the area, their response is, "I'm not being fed." After further inquiry, the respondents use the term not being fed to denote a lack of significant ministry in every area of ministry in their lives. This produces a phenomenon that is described by the expression, "the pew catching up with the pulpit," except in this situation the pew has passed the pulpit.

Having observed this trend, the writer questioned what could be done to help the situation. How could the writer serve to help remedy the problem rather than just be a spectator? The answer to those soul-searching questions gave birth to this work. The writer has endeavored

to create a work that would serve the church in an attempt to expose the clergy that have no seminary training to the different disciplines of theological training. However, the writer came to realize during the research that one of the critical challenges at hand was to get the church leaders to make themselves available to the training. The research, interestingly enough, showed that the clergy did not think theological education was necessary while the laity felt there was a great need for theological education among the ranks of leadership in the church. Why this disparity? The writer believes the expression of the clergy that there was no need for theological education was, in fact, an expression pointed towards availability. The writer believes that if a theological education and the likelihood of the participants of completing the course work were made available the statistics of desire for a theological education would change dramatically.

The writer makes the connection between vice in the community and lack of equipped ministries to serve, is in direct proportion. The research shows that the same population that participants in illicit drug use, alcohol abuse, sexual promiscuity and other anti social behavior is the population that indicate that the church is the greatest institution of influence in their lives. It is apparent to the writer that the rural church in Crescent City Florida is squandering the opportunity to make a positive affect on the lives of the people it serves because of a lack of training among its leaders.

There perhaps are other variables that may account for the drastic decline in church growth and vice in Crescent City among African Americans, like economics and cultural barriers . However, this research sustains the premise that the lack of training among the church leaders in the African American Church is a significant reason for the decline of church attendance and the vice exhibited in behavior among the African American populations in

Crescent City, FL. Armed with this understanding a proposed solution to the problem of church attendance decline and vice would be to train the church leaders. The research revealed some very interesting suppositions that deserve further research. One in particular would be to give the training to the church leaders and measure the growth, and crime rate in contrast to the level of training the church leaders avail themselves to. Another interesting subject of interest to the writer that would require further research is, why does a large per cent of the African American Clergy in Crescent City indicate they have no need for further training and on the other hand the laity acknowledges in a large per cent the need for further training. Perhaps the metaphor of the fox and the grapes would be appropriate in explaining the issue none the less more research is needed.

The prognosis for the health and growth of the rural church in Crescent City, FL is not good from the writers perspective. First, the existing clergy does not see a need for further training. Second, the likelihood of trained clergy in the African American churches to come to Crescent City is not good. Third, if trained clergy were to come to Crescent City it is more likely that they are here on a very temporary time frame.

The writer has some hypothesis that would perhaps help with the problem. If perspective denominations would offer assistance in the area of compensation to ministers in the rural the problem of untrained clergy in rural Crescent City could be minimized. If the churches themselves would require and assist church leaders to get basic theological training of substantive content could help address the issue. However, the writer is well aware that God can do anything and He will provide for His Church.

In conclusion, the rural church is suffering from a lack of professional approach by its leadership in doing ministry. The result of such a tragedy is the demise and literal destruction of the people the church serves. The churches are empty and the jail houses are full. Teen pregnancy is rampant and illicit drug abuse is a common activity among the young and old.

The clergy that serves this particular geographical area appear to be unaware or unconcerned about the affects of their refusal to address the issue of equipping themselves to serve in the name of Jesus Christ.

Every attempt has been made to keep the curriculum basic and significant. Church history was selected as part of the curriculum to inform the student of where the church has come from and some of the kairos moments in its development. Church administration is apart of the curriculum because of the importance of keeping the church solvent as a business. Theology is addressed to make sure the student can articulate and transmit the faith in an understandable and intelligent way. Ethics is also a course of need to equip the student in thinking through the values, goals and duties of their personal selves. Evangelism is a critical course of inquiry for any theological education. Lastly Pastoral care is what the church is all about and any church leader should be conscious of caring for the people.

The writer is persuaded that if these discipline are introduced to the student in the most basic context will give the student a resource for doing ministry that will engage the population it serves, increase church attendance, and reduce the vice that is corroding the community.

If this work stimulates some to do further work in this area and others to pursue a more detailed and complete theological education, it would have served its purpose. It is hopeful that the format used in this thesis will afford the busy teacher with a skeleton curriculum that they

will find useful and that students will feel no intimidation to the content, but that it will actually encourage them to engage in further study.

The writer is grateful to God for the opportunity to serve in the life and work of the church and hopeful that this work will be of some use to the building of God's Kingdom.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Abogurin, S. O. "The Modern Search for the Historical Jesus in Relations to Christianity in Africa." *Africa Theological Journal*, no. 3 (1980): 18-20.
- Antiya, Aniz S. *History of Eastern Christianity*. Notre Dame: University Press, 1967.
- Beadle-Holder, Michelle. "Black Churches Creating Safe Spaces to Combat Silence and Stigma Related to AIDS." *Journal Of African American Studies* 15, no. 2 (June 2011): 248-267. *Academic Search Complete*, EBSCOhost (accessed February 19, 2013).
- Berkley, James D., ed. *Leadership Handbook of Management and Administration*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books) 2007,
- Berry, Wendell. *The Unsettling of America: Culture and Agriculture*. New York: Avon Books, 1977.
- Compiled by Bess, Twiston Davies. "Rural Children, Rural Church." *The Times*, Feb 03, 2007. 70, <http://search.proquest.com/docview/319696438?accountid=12085>.
- Brauer, Jerald C., ed. *The Westminster Dictionary of Church History*. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1971.
- Bright, John. *A History of Israel*. 3rd ed. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1981.
- Brown, Emma J. "The Integral Place of Religion in the Lives of Rural African–American Women Who Use Cocaine." *Journal Of Religion & Health* 45, no. 1 (Spring 2006 2006): 19-39. *Academic Search Complete*, EBSCOhost (accessed February 18, 2013).
- Brunner, Edward. *Church Life in the Rural South*. New York: George Doran, 1923.
- Butterfield. *The Country Church and the Rural Problem*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990.
- Carson, Clayborne., ed. *The Autobiography of Martin Luther King, Jr.* New York: Grand Central Publishing, 1998.
- Collins, Michael and Matthew A. Price. *The Story of Christianity: A Celebration of 2,000 Years of Faith*. New York: DK Publishing, 1999.

- Crabb, Larry. *Connecting: Healing for Ourselves and our Relationships*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1997.
- Crescent City, Florida Demographics. *Crescent City Educational Level Profile and Enrollment Statistics*. http://www.clrsearch.com/Crescent_City_Demographics/FL/EducationLevel-and-EnrollmentStatistics (accessed June 9, 2012).
- Curran, Charles E. *The Catholic Moral Tradition: A Synthesis*. Washington, D. C.: Georgetown University Press, 1999.
- Daniels, Steven J., Sr. "A 21st Century Model for Church Revitalization in a Rural Setting." United Theological Seminary, 2012. In PROQUESTMS ProQuest Dissertations & Theses (PQDT), <http://search.proquest.com/docview/1241613557?accountid=12085>.
- Deal, Ron L. *The Smart Step Family: Seven Steps to a Healthy Family*. Minneapolis: BethanyHouse, 2002.
- Farley, Gary and David Ruesink. "Rural Churches In America," Encyclopedia of Rural Sociology. <http://Ruralchurch.us/wp-filez/RSCENE/RCA.pdf>. (accessed September 23, 2012).
- Farley, Gary, John Bennett, Jere Giles and Arnold Parks. "The Rechurching of Rural America: A Report of The Study of Rural Churches in America," Published for The Internet (Fall 2005): <http://Ruralchurch.us/wp-content/uploads/2008/08/The-Rechurching-of-Rural-America.pdf>. (accessed September 23, 2012)
- Farley, John E. and Michael W. Flota. *Sociology* 6th edition. Boulder: Paradigm Press, 2012.
- Frazier, E. Franklin. *The Negro Church in America*. New York: Schocken Books, Inc., 1963.
- Ferguson, Everett. *Church History: From Christ to Pre-Reformation*. Vol. 1. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005.
- Goreham, Gary. *The Rural Church in America: A Century of Writings*. New York: Garland Publications, Inc., 1990.
- Goatley, Wilbert H. "The Black Church in Rural America." *Review and Expositor* 70, no. 3 (Summer 1973): 357-363.
- ed Godlaski, et al. "Substance Abuse among Rural and Very Rural Drug Users at Treatment Entry." *American Journal Of Drug & Alcohol Abuse* 32, no. 1 (February 2006): 87-110. *Academic Search Complete*, EBSCOhost (accessed February 19, 2013).

- Gonzalez, Justo L. *A History of Christian Thought*. Vol. 2. Nashville: Abingdon, 1971.
- Habermas, Gary, R. and Michael R. Licona. *The Case for the Resurrection*. Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 2004.
- Harrington, Daniel J. *Interpreting The New Testament: A Practical Guide*. Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1973.
- Harris-Lacewell, Melissa V. "Righteous Politics: The Role of the Black Church in Contemporary Politics." *Cross Currents* 57, no. 2 (Summer 2007 2007): 180-196. *Academic Search Complete*, EBSCOhost (accessed February 18, 2013).
- Haskins, Charles Homer. *The Renaissance of the Twelfth Century*. New York: Meridian Books, 1957.
- Hassinger, Edward W, John S. Holik, and J. Kenneth Benson. *The Rural Church: Learning from Three Decades of Change*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1988.
- Heer, Friedrich. *The Medieval World*. New York: New American Library, 1961.
- Hughes, Daniel A. *Attachment Focused Family Therapy*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2007.
- Hunter, Kent R. *The Lord's Harvest and the Rural Church*. Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press, 1993.
- Jent, J. W. *The Challenge of the Country Church*. Nashville, TN: Sunday School Board, 1924.
- King, Valerie, Glen H. Elder Jr., and Les B. Whitbeck. "Religious Involvement Among Rural Youth: An Ecological and Life-Course Perspective." *Journal Of Research On Adolescence (Lawrence Erlbaum)* 7, no. 4 (October 1997): 431-456. *Academic Search Complete*, EBSCOhost (accessed February 18, 2013).
- Knowles, David. *From Pacbominus to Ignatius: A Study of the Constitutional History of Religious Orders*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1966.
- Lee, Matthew R. "The Religious Institutional Base and Violent Crime in Rural Areas." *Journal For The Scientific Study Of Religion* 45, no. 3 (September 2006): 309-324. *Academic Search Complete*, EBSCOhost (accessed February 19, 2013).
- Leff, Gordon. *Heresy in the Later Middle Ages*. 2vols. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1957.

- _____. *Medieval Thought: St Augustine to Ockham*. Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1958.
- Lewis, C. S. *The Beloved Works of C. S. Lewis: Surprised by Joy, Reflections On The Psalms, The Four Loves, The Business Of Heaven*. New York: Inspirational Press, 1986.
- Lincoln, C. Eric and Lawrence H. Mamiya. *The Black Church in African American Experience*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1990.
- Littlefield, Marci Bounds. "The Black Church and Community Development and Self-Help: The Next Phase of Social Equality." *Western Journal Of Black Studies* 29, no. 4 (Winter 2005 2005): 687-693. *Academic Search Complete*, EBSCOhost (accessed February 18, 2013).
- Lovin, Robin W. *An Introduction to Christian Ethics: Goals, Duties and Virtues*. Nashville: Abingdon, 2011.
- McClosky, Mark. *Tell It Often Tell It Well: Making the Most Of Witnessing Opportunity*. http://www.internetevangelismday.com/dayframeforlinks.php?id=http://www.greatcom.org/resources/tell_it_often_tell_it_well/default.htm&referer=/engel-scale.php&des=Tell%20It%20Often,%20Tell%20It%20Well,%20by%20Bright%20and%20McCluskey(accessed March 28, 2013).
- Mays, Ronald Brent. "Comparing Turnaround Leadership in a Rural Church and in Schools." University of Louisville, 2011. In PROQUESTMS ProQuest Dissertations & Theses (PQDT), <http://search.proquest.com/docview/896956701?accountid=12085>.
- Norris, Kathleen. *Dakota: A Spiritual Geography*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1993.
- Ogden, Schubert M. "What is Theology?" *The Journal of Religion* 52 (January 1972): 22-36.
- Ostrogorsky, George. *History of the Byzantine State*. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1957.
- Pratt, David. *Curriculum Planning: A Handbook for Professionals*. Orlando: Harcourt Brace College Publishers, 1994
- Pui-lan, Kwok. "2011 Presidential Address: Empire and The Study of Religion." *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 80 no. 2 (June 2012). <http://jaar.oxfordjournals.org/content/early/2012/04/09/jaarel.lfsoo3.full> (accessed August 1, 2012).
- Purpel, David. *The Moral and Spiritual Crisis in Education: A Curriculum for Justice and Compassion in Education*. Granby, MA: Bergin & Garvey, 1989.
- Ray, David R. *The Big Small Church Book*. Cleveland: Pilgrim Press, 1992.

Rich, Mark. *The Rural Church Movement*. Columbia, MO: Juniper Press, 1957.

Roberts, Jeremy Paul. "Transitioning the Local Church from a Rural to Suburban Context." Liberty University, 2009. In PROQUESTMS Dissertations & Theses @ Liberty University; ProQuest Dissertations & Theses (PQDT), <http://search.proquest.com/docview/305137041?accountid=12085>.

Scazzero, Peter and Warren Bird. *The Emotionally Healthy Church: A Strategy for Discipleship that Actually Changes Lives*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003.

Schroeder, W. W. and Victor Obenhaus. *Religion in American Culture*. London: Free Press of Glencoe, 1964.

Sellers, V. *The Council of Chalcedon: A Historical and Doctrinal Survey*. London: S.P.C.K., 1953.

Smethurst, Philip. "Rural Pastor's Network," Overland Missions, (January 23, 2009): <http://www.overlandmissions.com/rpn/>. (accessed September, 2011).

Smith, Edward L., ed., *The Doctrine of Providence and Revelation An Introduction to Philosophy and Theology: A Series In Postmodern Studies*. vol. 7. Atlanta: ITC The Research Center Press, 2001

Smith, Rockwell. *The Church in our Town*. New York: Abingdon Press, 1955.

Spader, Spader and Gary Mayes. *Growing a Healthy Church*. Chicago: Moody Press, 1991.

Sprayberry, Rodney Merrill. "The Revitalization Process in a Small Rural Plateaued Southern Baptist Church." Liberty University, 2010. In PROQUESTMS Dissertations & Theses @ Liberty University; ProQuest Dissertations & Theses (PQDT), <http://search.proquest.com/docview/275863123?accountid=12085>.

Street, James. *The Gauntlet*. Garden City: Life Press, 1945.

Surrey, Peter. *The Small Town Church*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1981.

Towns, Elmer and Ed Stetzer. *Perimeters of Light: Biblical Boundaries*. Chicago: Moody Press, 2004.

Elmer L. Towns. "21st Century Tools and Techniques" Revisiting Church Evangelism, Evangelism 851, "lecture, Liberty Baptist Theological Seminary, Lynchburg, VA, May 14, 2009.

Usry, Glenn and Craig S. Keener. *Black Man's Religion: Can Christianity be Afrocentric?* Downers Grove, IL: Inter Varsity Press, 1996.

Vanhoozer, Kevin J. *Is There Meaning in this Text.* Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1998.

Vidich, Arthur J and Joseph Bensman. *Small Town in Mass Society.* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1958.

Washington, James M. ed., *A Testament of Hope: The Essential Writings and Speeches of Martin Luther King, Jr.* New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 1991.

Wilson, Carl. *With Christ in the School Building.* Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1976. Quoted in Spaker, Dann and Gary Mayes. *Growing a Healthy Church,* Chicago: Moody Press, 1991.

Wimberly, Edward P. *African American Pastoral Care and Counseling: The Politics of Oppression and Empowerment.* Cleveland: The Pilgrim Press, 2006.

Westerhoff, John H. III., "Christian Education for Tomorrow," <http://www.religion-online.org/showarticle.asptitle=1894> (accessed June 16, 2012)

APPENDIX A

Table 1 compares the CMS numbers for 1980 and 1990 Churches and adherents for denominations with over 100,000 adherents in 1990.

These are the non-metropolitan county figures:

Denomination name Congregations Adherents
1980 1990 1980 1990

Name of denomination	Number of Congregations	Number of Adherents
American Baptists/USA	2,123	740,461
AME Zion	910	322,044
Assemblies of God	4,180	583,745
Baptist General Conference	250	35,800
Baptist Missionary Association	937	171,711
C & M Alliance	529	65,721
Christian Church/Church of Christ	2,746	509,450
Christian Reformed	227	61,721
Church of God--Anderson	1,016	80,118
Church of God--Cleveland	2,373	261,320
Church of the Brethren	576	82,104
Church of the Nazarene	2,070	308,136
Churches of Christ	7,087	635,418
Disciples of Christ	2,073	410,010
Episcopal Church	2,507	396,090
Evangelical Free	398	45,425
Evangelical Lutheran	4,629	1,698,775
Free Will Baptist	1,397	159,624
Friends	510	36,343
Foursquare Gospel	437	45,153
Latter Day Saints	3,131	1,026,890
Lutheran--Missouri Synod	2,600	835,884
Lutheran--Wisconsin Synod	575	184,756
Mennonite Church	525	57,866
Old Order Amish	576	84,095
Pentecostal Holiness	825	75,208
Presbyterian Church in America	360	39,188
Presbyterian/USA	4,765	856,223
Reformed Church in America	258	96,169
Roman Catholic	8,662	6,780,500
Salvation Army	379	32,283
Seventh Day Adventist	1,709	178,794
Southern Baptist	21,414	7,651,760
Unitarian-Universalist	224	18,240

United Church of Christ	2,310	498,500
United Methodist	20,795	4,132,800
Wesleyan Church	794	103,880

APPENDIX B

Research Survey to Determine Need for Training in the Black Church

Please check one:

1. What is your age?

18-25 26-36 37-47 48-58 59 or Older

2. What is the highest grade you completed?

less than high school high school college graduate school

3. Male Female

4. Married Single

5. What is your denomination?

Baptist Methodist Pentecostal Presbyterian Other

6. How long have you been a member of the Church?

less than 1 year 1 year to 5 years 5 or more

7. Are you an ordained person or on the church staff?

yes no

8. Do you have any formal theological training?

yes no

9. If yes to question #8 what kind? (example: Certificate, B.A. M.Div. Etc...)

10. If no to question #8 do you wish to get theological training if it were available?

yes no

11. On a scale of 1-5, 1 being very important 5 being not important, how important is a theological education for church leaders?

1 2 3 4 5

APPENDIX C

2010 Highest Education Level Attained (Population Age 25+)	Crescent City, FL		Florida		United States	
	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage
Did Not Complete High School	346	30.65%	2,002,371	15.70%	30,370,155	15.35%
Completed High School	358	31.71%	3,788,381	29.70%	57,863,097	29.24%
Some College	201	17.80%	2,705,700	21.21%	40,691,836	20.56%
Completed Associate Degree	48	4.25%	1,060,560	8.31%	14,841,627	7.50%
Completed Bachelors Degree	120	10.63%	2,046,375	16.04%	34,682,582	17.52%
Completed Graduate Degree	56	4.96%	1,152,892	9.04%	19,465,340	9.84%

The data for Crescent City, FL may also contain data for the following areas: Crescent City

Highest Education Level Attained (Populations Age 25+): The data represents the percentage of people in the area over age 25 who have attained a particular education level.

APPENDIX D

Solomon's Porch Academy of Christian Education
Cornelius S. Golden, M.Div., D.Min (candidate)

Church History
Class Syllabus

I. Course Description

The curriculum shall be as ecumenical as possible while we examine the history of the "whole" church. We shall examine some of the major events of the church and their impact on the church then and now. This course of study will identify the social, economic, and political impact of the church on the African American Christian Culture.

II. Rationale

It is generally the consensus of the African American community that the church has been one of the most influential voices in the African American experience. However, its influence is on a decline for all practical purposes. This course is designed to examine where the church is at present as it relates to time past and how to avoid mistakes of the past and regain influence within the community.

III. Prerequisites

None

IV. Material List

- A. The Holy Bible (Version of your choice)
- B. Collins, Michael and Matthew A. Price, The Story of Christianity: A Celebration of 2,000 Years Of Faith, New York: A DK Publishing Book, 1999.

Week 1

Lecture: Jesus and the beginning of the Church

Reading: Holy Bible: Mark 1; Matthew 28; Luke 1-3, Acts 2,10-11; 1 Corinthians 15 and Galatians 2.

Week 2

Lecture: The Reformation

Reading: The Story of Christianity Pages 42-43; 130-145.

Week 3

Lecture: Christological Controversies

Reading: The Story of Christianity Pages 60-65,75

Week 4

Lecture: The Global Church

Reading: The Story of Christianity Pages 204-205, 208-219

APPENDIX E

Solomon's Porch Academy of Christian Education
Cornelius S. Golden, M.Div., D.Min (candidate)

Church Administration
Class Syllabus

I. Course Description

The curriculum shall be as ecumenical as possible while we examine sound administrative principles that apply to the church. We shall examine Leadership qualities and the approach to the call of God to the work of ministry.

II. Rationale

It is generally the consensus of the African American community that the church has been one of the most influential voices in the African American experience. However, its influence is on a decline for all practical purposes. This course is designed to examine the administrative liabilities that the church suffers because of poor leadership and strengthen the body through a called and prepared ministry.

III. Prerequisites

None

IV. Material List

A. James D. Berkley, ed. Leadership Handbook of Management and Administration, Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1992.

Week 1

Lecture: The Call to Ministry

Reading: Pages 38-49

Week 2

Lecture: Responsibility

Reading: Pages 63-74

Week 3

Lecture: Leadership

Reading: Pages 215-232

Week 4

Lecture: Tax and Law Considerations

Final Exam

APPENDIX F

Solomon's Porch Academy of Christian Education
Cornelius S. Golden, M.Div., D.Min (candidate)

Theology
Class Syllabus

I. Course Description

The curriculum shall be as ecumenical as possible while we examine sound theological principles that apply to the church arm the church with insight that supports its position in a critical environment. We shall examine some theologians and the approach to doing theology.

II. Rationale

Theology is the resource by which Christian education thrives. Bad theology will result in bad teaching and good theology will result in good teaching. The aim of the class is to establish good theological research habits.

III. Prerequisites

None

IV. Material List

A. Edward L. Smith, ed., *The Doctrine of Providence & Revelation: An Introduction to Philosophy and Theology: A Series In Postmodern Studies* vol. 7 2001.

B. Gary R. Habermas and Michael R. Licona, *The Case for the Resurrection of Jesus*, Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 2004.

Week 1

Lecture: What is Theology

Week 2

Lecture: Doing Theology (Fully Reflective Thinking)

Week 3

Lecture: The Resurrection Of Jesus (1)

Week 4

Lecture: The Resurrection Of Jesus (2)

APPENDIX G

Solomon's Porch Academy of Christian Education
Cornelius S. Golden, M.Div., D.Min (candidate)

Ethics
Class Syllabus

I. Course Description

The curriculum shall be designed to introduce the student to the history of ethical thought and how it affects the thought process in contemporary society.

II. Rationale

Ethics is the resource by which Christian base decisions of everyday life. All Christian should have a framework whereby they make decisions not directly addressed in Scripture.

III. Prerequisites

None

IV. Material List

- a. Robin W. Lovin, *An Introduction To Christian Ethics: Goals, Duties and Virtues*, Nashville: Abingdon, 2011, 174.

Week 1

Lecture: The Origin of Ethics (reading 9-67)

Week 2

Lecture: Goals (reading 156-248)

Week 3

Lecture: Duties (reading 256-333)

Week 4

Lecture: Virtue (reading 393-491)

APPENDIX H

Solomon's Porch Academy of Christian Education
Cornelius S. Golden, M.Div., D.Min (candidate)

Evangelism
Class Syllabus

I. Course Description

The curriculum shall be designed to introduce the student to the study of evangelism and church growth.

II. Rationale

Evangelism is the primary function of the Church and is one of the primary focuses of Scripture. "For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior Who will have all men to be saved, and come unto the knowledge of the truth." 1 Timothy 2: 3-4

III. Prerequisites

None

IV. Material List

1. McClosky, Mark. *Tell It Often Tell It Well: Making the Most Of Witnessing Opportunity*. http://www.internetevangelismday.com/dayframeforlinks.php?id=http://www.greatcom.org/resources/tell_it_often_tell_it_well/default.htm&referer=/engel-scale.php&des=Tell%20It%20Often,%20Tell%20It%20Well,%20by%20Bright%20and%20McCluskey
(This Book can be purchased on line at amazon.com)
2. Enga's Scale (Engal's Scale.Com)

Week 1

Lecture: Chapter 1-4

Week 2

Lecture: Chapter 5-8

Week 3

Lecture: 18-20

Week 4

Lecture: Engal's Scale

APPENDIX I

Solomon's Porch Academy of Christian Education
Cornelius S. Golden, M.Div., D.Min (candidate)

Pastoral Care & Counseling
Class Syllabus

I. Course Description

The curriculum shall be designed to introduce the student to the dynamics that go into providing care for the congregation.

II. Rationale

Pastoral care and counseling is a very important and mostly neglecting function of the Church and is one of the primary focuses of Scripture. "Feed my sheep!" It is very important that church leaders have some basic understanding of at least the need for such care within the church.

III. Prerequisites

None

IV. Material List

- a. Wimberly, Edward P. "African American Pastoral Care and Counseling: The Politics Of Oppression and Empowerment." Cleveland, Ohio: The Pilgrim Press, 2006.
- b. Deal, Ron L. "The Smart Step Family: Seven Steps to a Healthy Family". Minneapolis, Minnesota: BethanyHouse, 2002.

Week 1

Lecture: Pastoral Care and Counseling as Political Process

Week 2

Lecture: Parish Context of African American Pastoral Counseling

Week 3

Lecture: The Smart Step Family - Part 1

Week 4

Lecture: The Smart Step Family - Part 2

VITA

Cornelius S. Golden

PERSONAL

Born: November 22, 1952

Single

Children: Cornelius S. Golden, Jr., born June 11, 1978.

Regina E. Golden, born February 11, 1980.

EDUCATIONAL

B.A., Albany State University, 1990.

M.Div. Interdenominational Theological Center, 1992.

MINISTERIAL

Ordained: December 5, 1995, Jethro First Baptist Church, Crescent City, Florida.

PROFESSIONAL

Saint James Missionary Baptist Church, Senior Pastor 1996-1998.

New Elizabeth Missionary Baptist Church, Senior Pastor, 2002-2003.

Solomon's Porch Christian Academy, Executive Director, 2004-2008.

Mt. Tamo Missionary Baptist Church, Associate Pastor, 2012-Present.

FRATERNITY

Alpha Phi Alpha Inc.