DEVELOPING LEADERSHIP TRAINING FOR GOSPEL

CITY CHURCH IN GRANGER, INDIANA,

TO PROMOTE DISCIPLEMAKING

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A Project

Presented to

the Faculty of

The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

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In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree
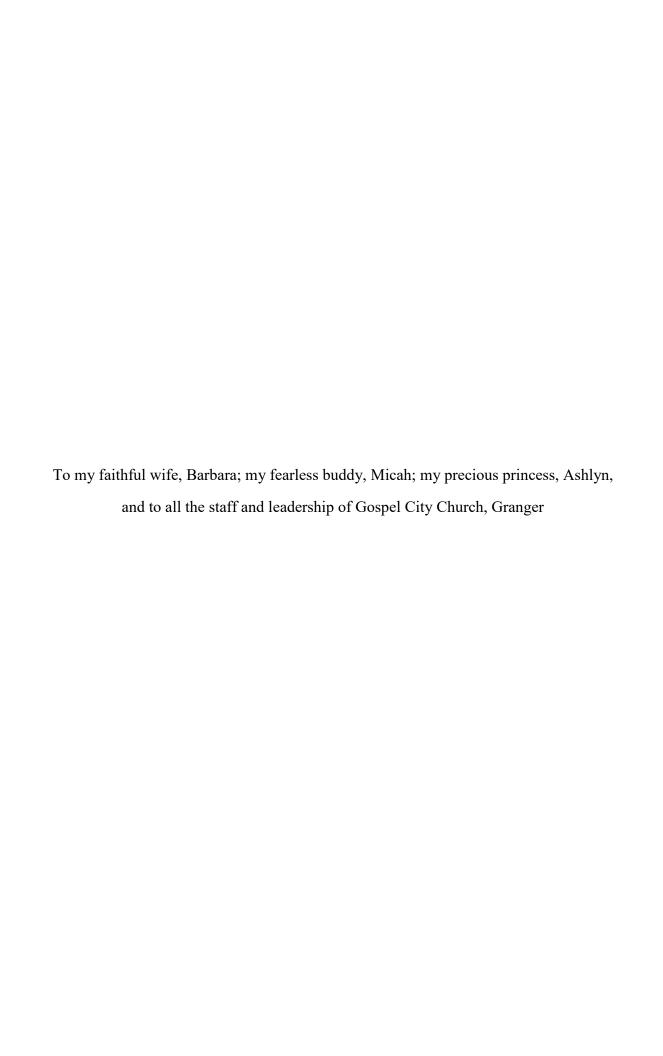
Doctor of Ministry

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by

Nathan Gilbert Scroggins

May 2019

APPROVAL SHEET

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Nathan Gilbert Scroggins

Read and Approved by:

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Shane W. Parker (Faculty Supervisor)

_____

Danny R. Bowen

Date _____

To my faithful wife, Barbara; my fearless buddy, Micah; my precious princess, Ashlyn,

and to all the staff and leadership of Gospel City Church, Granger

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PREFACE

       This project was completed as a result of the encouragement from several people in my life who deserve to be recognized. I am grateful to my supervisor, Dr. Shane Parker, and also Dr. Danny Bowen, for their faithful guidance, professionalism, and coaching along the way. I am especially appreciative for my faithful bride and our two wonderful children who, through their prayer, support, and sacrifice, made the completion of this project possible. I am continually indebted to my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, the best Discipler that has ever walked on this planet and who left his words and example to follow.

       It is a great hope that this project will serve to help others to understand the importance of focusing on the main mission of the church and remain steadfast on the call for discipleship.

<div align="right">Nathan Scroggins</div>

Granger, Indiana

May 2019

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

In a magnificent display of mercy, God sent His Son to earth so He could accomplish the Father's will, that Jesus Christ would live, suffer, and die the death all sinners deserved. Through His life and death, resurrection, and ascension, Jesus completed the mission God sent Him to do. Jesus came to earth in human flesh to *establish* the gospel. Those that followed Jesus in his years of ministry on earth were his first disciples. The disciples of Jesus were entrusted with one mission: to make disciples. As it states in Matthew 28:18-19, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations." Given God's commitment, Jesus' life, and the disciples' mission, it is awesome to understand that every believer of the gospel is given the mission as the disciples that walked with Jesus.

In light of the clarity of this mission, it is startling that the church would be in steady decline. Churches have been closing their doors at an alarming rate. Thom Rainer estimated that approximately 6,000 churches were closing their doors each year and that number could be 8,000-10,000 or greater by 2019.[1] This sad state of affairs is an unacceptable attrition rate. To observe people leaving the church each week is a tragedy. To understand a large determinative factor for the cause of the church's decline, one must look at the *focus* of the church. With the many distractions that lead hearts away from the truth of the gospel, this rapid and evident decline is an indication that the church is not focusing on its primary job of making disciples. In many cases, churches lose their focus.

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[1] Thom Rainer, "13 Issues for Churches in 2013," January 15, 2013, accessed October 13, 2018, https://churchleaders.com/pastors/pastor-articles/164787-thom-rainer-13-issues-churches-2013.html.

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While Jesus maintained missional alignment to the Father's will, much of the church has lost missional focus on the Great Commission. For churches that have lost their focus, the result is unfortunately a horizontal focused mission.

Since making disciples is the main mission of the local church, it is imperative that the church maintain a vertical alignment toward that end. With church sizes continuing to shrink and budgets decreasing, pastors struggle to keep attendance numbers up and need to change strategies.[2] These decisions are a distraction from the main focus of the church. In the world of church, since it is not a democracy, people vote with their attendance. People are leaving at alarming rates indicates that they are increasingly dissatisfied with what the church is providing. The question is, why are churches closing their doors at such an alarming rate? In Rainer's article, he explains thirteen primary issues impacting churches today and how these issues point to one disastrous outcome: mission drift.[3]

While some churches continue to grow (financially and/or numerically) and excel at refining their practices and processes, it seems that the church as a whole is failing to follow Christ's call to "go and make disciples." The church is drifting away from the mission Jesus gave. Mission drift results from a distracted focus and prioritization of secondary matters.[4] Some of these secondary matters include putting a high emphasis on the bottom line and driving staff to get results, operating much like a business. This happened in the Gospel of John and is not a new tactic (2:13-17); however, the lack of focus on the primary mission is also why Jesus cleanses the Temple in that same passage. Rainer's study seems to indicate that churches are trending away from

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[2] Eric Geiger and Kevin Peck, *Designed to Lead: The Church and Leadership Development* (Nashville: B & H, 2016), 179.

[3] Ibid.

[4] Peter Greer and Chris Horst, *Mission Drift* (Minneapolis: Bethany House, 2014), 27.

focusing on biblical discipleship and instead are caught up in pleasing people or becoming multimedia moguls.[5] This distraction is becoming increasingly popular with social media platforms' collective ability for self-promotion. As churches get larger and larger, the church can become less and less about ministering to people, and more about increasing numbers related to lead and lag measures, key performance indicators, and the expansion of a personal kingdom.[6] Smaller churches must remain simple and cannot compete with this type of distraction and high production value[7]. At Harvest Bible Chapel in Chicago, leaders expected departments within the church to generate revenue to be a self-sustaining department.[8] These and many more issues plague the church, resulting in leader disputes, which cause a decrease in leader health and ministry satisfaction. This decrease in pastoral satisfaction leads to congregational dissatisfaction or disunity and ultimately results in a downsizing of the church. By observing the occurrence of disunity, disfunction, and lack of gospel alignment toward biblical disciple making, an urgency must be placed on the church to maintain proper mission alignment.

The disunity, disfunctions, and lack of gospel alignment created this project's focus on creating a healthy model for discipleship for the sake of maintaining a unified gospel ministry. This project attempted to understand the current alignment to discipleship focus of Gospel City Church Granger and to train its leaders to maintain gospel alignment for increased focus on disciple making, for optimization of a healthy culture, and, foremost, for the glory of God.

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[5] Rainer, "13 Issues for Churches in 2013."

[6] Thom S. Rainer and Eric Geiger, *Simple Church* (Nashville: B & H, 2011), 123.

[7] Ibid., 216.

[8] This knowledge came as a result of being on staff at Harvest Bible Chapel, Chicago, for a four-year period between September 2011 to September 2015.

Context

Gospel City Church Granger (GCC) began with a group of thirteen praying people who shared a vision for a new church in Granger, Indiana. In the summer of 2008, Trent Griffith was appointed senior pastor, and the core group grew to about eighty faith-filled people. On February 9, 2009, GCC held its first worship service, attended by 250 people, at Northpoint Elementary School.

Over the next three years, the church doubled in attendance, and the need for a permanent facility became evident. In February of 2012, God provided a home for GCC through the adoption of Cornerstone Community Church and its facility on Hickory Road. The church has since added on to the facility twice, including an entire children's ministry wing. The Lord continues to bless the church with new faces and new disciples as it seeks to bring him glory.

While GCC is less than a decade old, it has experienced a fruitful ministry. GCC was the 37th of what is now over 150 Harvest Bible Chapels planted through an affiliation with Harvest Bible Fellowship (HBF), an organization created by the original Harvest Bible Chapel (Harvest) in Chicago, under the leadership of James MacDonald. Believing God would use its commitment to make disciples to bring a spiritual awakening to turn the tide of the culture back to the exaltation of Jesus Christ, GCC sought to replicate its ideas and materials by planting churches that would follow the same mission.

The senior pastor for each affiliate church, including GCC's senior pastor, has been trained under the leadership of HBF, working closely with Harvest's senior leadership to develop leaders that would follow the same mission. As a part of the affiliation, HBF freely shared its ideas and resources with its affiliate churches, including play books, doctrinal statements, bylaws, organizational support, and even elder support while a new church was getting off the ground. In addition, continuing support was given through the annual gathering formerly known as Harvest University.

GCC's senior leadership has collectively expressed a desire to reach the community of Michiana (northern central Indiana and southwestern Michigan) with the

gospel, to make disciples. With hundreds of churches and a population of approximately 325,000, reaching the lost in Michiana is a large undertaking. The stated mission of GCC is to "Glorify God through the fulfillment of the great commission in the spirit of the great commandment."

Rationale

The Great Commission of the church is to "go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you" (Matt 28:18-19). Unfortunately, many leaders and churches have forgotten this Christ-given mission, perhaps making either conscious or careless decisions to be an entertaining church rather than a discipling church. If the church ceases to remain focused on the mission of making disciples, then the quality of disciples and discipleship will eventually decrease. While the quantity of disciples is not dependent upon man, God has entrusted the church with faithfully stewarding their gifts and talents toward quality discipleship.

For GCC to fulfill the mission given by Christ in Matthew 28, it is important to determine the current level of awareness regarding the mission. Once awareness is established, it is then important to move toward instituting core principles that will preserve mission alignment.

Mission drift is a theological problem and leads to monumental distractions within the church.[9] GCC, like all churches, is susceptible to drift. Drift occurs when leadership isolates and implements competing values or mission focus. All it takes is for the "passions to be at war within you" (Jas 4:1), and a bit of compromise. This project can prove to help churches in quality discipleship and to protect themselves against mission drift.

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[9] R. Albert Mohler, Jr., *The Conviction to Lead: 25 Principles for Leadership that Matters* (Minneapolis: Bethany House, 2012), 19-20.

The health of a church determines how effective it will be in carrying out the Great Commission, and that is directly dependent upon its ability to focus on its mission. The overall health of the organization is dependent on the health of the individual staff members. First Corinthians 12:26 addresses the health of an individual as it relates the strength of body of Christ: "If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together." Organizational health begins at an individual level. It is vital that a strategic plan be developed to maintain missional alignment in each member of the organization, starting with the leadership team. This alignment and realignment are continual and supernatural. Timothy Laniak states, "Biblically speaking, a human leader is none other than God leading his own people through an anointed servant."[10] It is necessary to maintain alignment to prevent an ever-changing culture.

Through the development and fulfillment of a strategic plan to maintain missional alignment, the desired outcome was that GCC would be increasingly equipped to impact and carry out its mission to make disciples. This project will assist the senior leadership team to identify areas of the discipleship pipeline that lack alignment and effective leadership development. Once identified, the leadership team will begin to establish training that would specifically address the mission drift to ensure that quality of discipleship and mission focus are in place. This project formalized the strategic plan and created an environment and culture of optimized effectiveness. As a result, this project contributed to increased communication for continual alignment, allowing each member of the leadership team to have greater accountability. Through the core implementation tactics, this project also ensured extensive alignment across each ministry. These individual pieces of the plan coming together create inexorable momentum and excitement to provide fertile ground for planting more passionate disciples. While having missional alignment may present the need to say "no" to many good things, it creates the margin to say "yes"

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[10] Timothy S. Laniak, *Shepherds after My own Heart: Pastoral Traditions and Leadership in the Bible* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2006), 92.

to the best things. This ability to say "yes" to the best things helps GCC to be more effective in its current efforts as it streamlines each area of ministry.

Purpose

The purpose of this project was to train the lay leaders of Gospel City Church, Granger to create a strong discipleship culture for the glory of God.

Goals

The purpose of this project was to train leaders to improve their focus on disciple-making. Three goals were necessary for its successful completion.

1. The first goal was to recognize opportunities within the discipleship pipeline for increasing effectiveness in discipleship.

2. The second goal was to establish a five-session leadership training course which will specifically address the identified areas of weakness within the discipleship pipeline.

3. The third goal was to develop implementation tactics and timing for a course that will increase the overall effectiveness of the discipleship pipeline.

Research Methodology

The effectiveness of this project was measured by the completion of three goals centered on the mission focus of ministry. The first goal was to recognize opportunities within the discipleship pipeline to increase the effectiveness in discipleship. This goal was measured by a survey collecting data from current staff and seven of the lay leadership team. The survey was designed to gather information regarding the demographics of the leader, experience of the leader, and identified areas of weakness within the discipleship pipeline of GCC. Once all the surveys were returned and the data was analyzed, yielding a clearer picture of the current discipleship pipeline weaknesses, this goal was complete.[11]

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[11] All of the research instruments used in this project were performed in compliance with and approved by the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary Research Ethics Committee prior to use in the ministry project

The second goal was to establish a five-session leadership training course which specifically addressed the identified areas of weakness within the discipleship pipeline. This goal was measured by assimilating the collected data on weaknesses, developing the course, and then utilizing a rubric[12] to evaluate how the course addresses each of the weaknesses. This goal was met once a training course was created and approved by the Senior Leadership Team of GCC.

The third goal was to develop implementation tactics and timing for a course that would increase the overall effectiveness of the discipleship pipeline. This goal was measured by the Senior Leadership Team at GCC, who utilized a rubric to evaluate the communication process of implementation, sequencing, and timing of the course.[13] This goal was met once a date of training was established by the Senior Leadership Team.

Limitations/Delimitations

Three limitations affected this project. First, the primary limitation of this project was the limited time nature of the study. As a result of insufficient time available and ability to collect research affected the accuracy of the outcome. Second, there was no funding for this project, which limited the ability to mail or contract a digital survey service, and limited research to a narrow swath of leaders and a narrow focus within the church. Third, a lack of equipped and trained leaders limited the project to a underdeveloped group of lay leadership despite the size and rapid growth of GCC.

The delimitations consisted of two items. First, to limit discrepancy in feedback, the project aimed and targeted only the staff and senior leadership team. It was important to observe the leadership team to discern their understanding of mission alignment and thereby did not include small group leadership in the study. Second, it was important to

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[12] See appendix 1.

[13] See appendix 2.

determine the staff's awareness regarding the discipleship pipeline to determine if GCC's leadership team was and thereby limited the research to GCC.

Conclusion

The work of deep discipleship is difficult. It can be tempting to follow a shallow, trendy, plug and play model of discipleship that can result in an empty method of ministry. However, discipleship must be purposeful. Without purpose, the mission focus of a discipleship ministry will tend to drift. Without purposeful attention to the mission Christ gave to the church, discipleship can flounder. The number of gospel-aligned churches continues to decline as they close their doors at an alarming rate. Those who love the church and want to see it thrive can only be comforted by Jesus' statement in Matthew 16:18: "I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Pastors and leaders find themselves distracted by measuring of their congregation based on numbers in their pews and dollars in the offerings, rather than the depth of growth in the individuals.

This project set out to train leaders of GCC to maintain mission alignment for increased focus on disciple-making, for optimization of a healthy culture, and for the glory of God. It was first important to recognize opportunities within the discipleship pipeline to increase effectiveness in discipleship. Second, and of equal importance, it was necessary to establish a leadership training course that specifically addressed the identified areas of weakness. Third, it was imperative to develop implementation and timing of the developed course to increase the overall effectiveness of the discipleship pipeline. Finally, it will always be necessary to increase a focus on disciple making and develop healthy cultures to the glory of God.

CHAPTER 2

BIBLICAL CALL TO MISSION FOCUS

When looking to people in Scripture for an example of incredible mission focus, two men were identified. From the Old Testament, Nehemiah stands out as a man who accomplished supernatural efforts during uncertain times. He led men to rebuild the wall around Jerusalem despite enormous distractions and threats on their lives. Jesus is the model of alignment and mission focus in the New Testament. While there was no other man like him, and no other could resist temptation and distractions the way Jesus did, he is the model to observe when seeking to understand mission focus in the New Testament. As leaders, both Nehemiah and Jesus followed similar models of leadership by recognizing the opportunity, establishing leadership, and developing core tactics that kept them focused on their mission.

Nehemiah's Call to Mission Focus

The destruction of Jerusalem was very personal to Nehemiah. Keil and Delitzsch state that Nehemiah was informed that "the walls of the town were still lying in ruins and its gates burned, and that it was therefore exposed, defenseless to all the insults of hostile neighbors."[1] During this time Nehemiah proved to be a biblical example of one who demonstrated the ability to focus intently on his mission. While many people in the Old Testament exemplify faithfulness and accomplishment, Nehemiah was unique in his ability to stay focused against all odds. Gene Getz writes, "There are some individuals who have a special place in God's scheme of things—people God chooses to use in unique ways to

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[1] Carl F. Keil and Franz Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1996), 4:101.

achieve His purposes. Nehemiah is one of those special people."[2] Nehemiah's mission

focus and communication enabled him to develop an effective model of leadership which

demonstrated a good leadership culture.[3] He was called by God to focus on rebuilding the

wall in Jerusalem, as noted by Josephus: "God hath kept our fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and

Jacob, in mind continually; and for the sake of their righteousness hath not left off the

care of you. Indeed, he hath assisted me in gaining this authority of the king to raise up

our wall."[4] While it was not an easy task, Nehemiah accomplished his mission focus

through (1) identification of the situation, (2) establishment of leadership, and (3)

development of core tactics to implement and increase overall effectiveness of his

mission. Getz states, "Nehemiah had a phenomenal ability to coordinate people—to get

everyone involved. This didn't just happen. It *never* 'just happen!'"[5]

Recognize the Opportunity

      Inventory the situation. Hugh Williamson suggests that to maintain a proper

focus on his mission, like any good leader, Nehemiah had "to familiarize himself with the

general situation in the city"[6] to determine what needed to be accomplished (Neh 2:11-

12). Due to Nehemiah's position in the king's home as a cupbearer (Neh 1:11), he was

savvy when it came to political issues and knew he had to move quickly. Joseph

Blenkinsopp notes, "The need for haste was no doubt prompted by awareness that his

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[2] Gene A. Getz, *Nehemiah: Becoming a Disciplined Leader* (Nashville: B & H, 1995), 3.

[3] Ibid., 72.

[4] Fluvius Josephus, *The Complete Works of Fluvius Josephus*, trans. William Whiston (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1987), 297.

[5] Getz, *Nehemiah*, 51, emphasis original.

[6] Hugh G. M. Williamson, *Ezra, Nehemiah*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 16 (Dallas: Word, 1998), 187.

enemies already knew about his mandate."[7] Nehemiah sensed that something was not at rest with the political landscape of the area. Fensham states that Nehemiah "wanted to keep his thoughts to himself until he had inspected the position to see if his plans could be executed."[8] Once Nehemiah had proper permissions, letters, and the authority of God on his side, he set out to inventory the damage present and the resources he had available.

During his inventory and inspection of the wall, Nehemiah intentionally left a small tactical footprint by bringing only one animal and a minimal number of men (Neh 2:11-12). Keeping with the covert operations, he also took a very specific route so as to make sure he inspected specific parts at the right time of night. He knew he needed to protect the integrity of the plan from Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah the Ammonite, who were corrupt Government officials. Williamson notes that these men "had allies in the city who would quickly report on his movements" [9] (Neh 2:16).

Identify next steps. Nehemiah spent time identifying each aspect of the mission God had set before him. He was patient and purposeful so that he could identify the right goals to accomplish his mission (Neh 2:17). Breneman states, "Nehemiah was an energetic leader who combined a deep trust in the Lord with precise planning, careful organization, and discreet but energetic action."[10] Well-crafted plans are not spontaneous, though often times they look very simple. Getz writes, "Nehemiah spent hours and hours doing careful research, analyzing the data, and putting it all together."[11] The burden God

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[7] Joseph Blenkinsopp, *Ezra-Nehemiah: A Commentary*, ed. Peter Ackroyd et al. (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1988), 221.

[8] Charles F. Fensham, *The Books of Ezra and Nehemiah*, New International Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1982), 165.

[9] Williamson, *Ezra, Nehemiah*, 187.

[10] Mervin Breneman, *Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther*, The New American Commentary, vol. 10 (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1993), 167-68.

[11] Getz, *Nehemiah*, 52.

gave to Nehemiah was to provide security from physical trouble and protection from emotional shame. Jerusalem was in a dangerous position. Williamson explains that the city was in "trouble because the defense walls were in ruins and the gates burned down."[12] As a result, the specific goals of the mission were to repair the wall and set its gates, restoring the center of God's kingdom in Jerusalem (Neh 2:17). Williamson states that Jerusalem had been sacked, and now "Nehemiah is denying to his opponents civic, legal, and cultic rights in the Jerusalem community. His emphasis, however, is positive: come what may, 'we . . . will start to rebuild.'"[13] (Neh 2:20).

Establish Leadership

   Select strategic leaders. While the recruitment of key leaders had already begun in Nehemiah's mind, he used the process of inspecting the wall to gain the full trust and support of the men he had selected. Having these men accompany him on the inspection helped Nehemiah to navigate the city. Fensham suggests, "The men with him might have been residents of Jerusalem who knew the city well and could direct Nehemiah on his way."[14] Nehemiah obviously trusted these men and needed them to understand the whole vision for what was about to take place (Neh 2:11-12). Blenkinsopp proposes that Nehemiah recruited loyal help since he was "doubtless aware that these enemies had allies in the province who would be watching him closely (Ne 6:17-19; 13:4-9, 28); hence also the need for secrecy."[15] While the specific reasons are uncertain, Nehemiah obviously picked a small contingent of men to start with for a reason. They may have had craftsman qualities or geographical residence that Nehemiah had already identified as necessary for accomplishing the mission (Neh 2:13-15). These men would

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[12] Fensham, *The Books of Ezra and Nehemiah*, 167.

[13] Williamson, *Ezra, Nehemiah*, 193.

[14] Fensham, *The Books of Ezra and Nehemiah*, 165.

[15] Blenkinsopp, *Ezra-Nehemiah*, 221.

remain in the leadership of Nehemiah's team to accomplish the enormous mission. Nehemiah 2:20 says, "The God of heaven will make us prosper, and we his servants will arise and build."

Select capable leaders. Since the project to rebuild the wall surrounding Jerusalem, which was the main defense against enemy attack, was so large, it required a sizable contingent of men to repair it. Fensham states that the wall was "about eight feet thick"[16] and Blenkinsopp describes, "Topographically, it covers the entire perimeter of the fifth-century BC city, beginning and ending at the Sheep Gate to the north of the temple area and moving anticlockwise."[17] Because of the impending dangers, it would also take men who were positioned in front of their own homes and were willing to give all they had to build a wall that would protect them and their families (Neh 3). Nehemiah called the leaders together to announce his plan and communicate the vision he had for the city, "that we may no longer suffer derision" (Neh 2:17-20). This announcement was an all-out call to recruit co-laborers for the work on the wall. As part of God's mission for Nehemiah, he first gathered the men, then cast the vision, and finally, gave mission assignments to everybody.

In casting this vision, Nehemiah helped all the workers understand that the hand of God was on their side when he stated, "The hand of my God that had been upon me for good, and also of the words that the king had spoken to me" (Neh 2:18). With proper perception, Williamson states, "Nehemiah's correct perspective is seen here again as he points first to God's favor as the cause for their change in fortune."[18] In his recruitment and enthusiasm Nehemiah was able to recruit many men and co-laborers.

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[16] Fensham, *The Books of Ezra and Nehemiah*, 172.

[17] Blenkinsopp, *Ezra-Nehemiah*, 231.

[18] Williamson, *Ezra, Nehemiah*, 191.

Yamauchi notes, "Some forty-one parties are named as participating in the reconstruction of forty-two sections. The towns listed as the homes of the builders seem to have represented the administrative centers of the Judean province."[19] In their enthusiasm the people proclaimed, "'Let us rise up and build.' So they strengthened their hands for the good work" (Neh 2:18). This encouragement was greatly needed later as they began to encounter distractions from those trying to stop them from building the wall.

Develop Core Tactics

Not everyone agreed with Nehemiah regarding rebuilding the wall. Nehemiah said that some of the "nobles would not stoop to serve their Lord" (Neh 3:5) and rebuild the wall. Getz states, "Nehemiah didn't allow these negative responses to intimidate him or to interfere with his own desire to complete the task."[20] Rather, as Williamson adds, in the face of opposition, Nehemiah stood and gave a "firm expression of God's ability to prosper his cause. Rather than being deflected from his primary task, he asserts positively that 'We, his servants, will start to rebuild.'"[21] Nehemiah needed to (1) keep his men focused, (2) keep the work moving, (3) avoid distractions, and (4) accomplish the mission. Nehemiah was strategic and defined his assignment well. Despite the distractions and attacks, Nehemiah kept focus and did not lose sight of what was important.

Keep leaders focused. Nehemiah spent a lot of time directing the men back to the task given to them; keeping them focused on what was important. Appealing to their protection and emotions, he stated, "Fight for your brothers, your sons and your

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[19] Edwin M. Yamauchi, *Ezra and Nehemiah*, in vol. 4 of *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, rev. ed., ed. Tremper Longman III and David E. Garland (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010), 480.

[20] Getz, *Nehemiah*, 56.

[21] Williamson, *Ezra, Nehemiah*, 193.

daughters, your wives and your homes" (Neh 4:14). Breneman recommends that "internal problems can be more serious than those from the outside. The people were becoming discouraged."[22] As a result, difficult challenges arose during the construction of the wall. The men faced humiliating mockery (Neh 4:1-3), threat of war (Neh 4:7-8), and their own personal trials, as well as all the issues that came from trying to accomplish Gods work (Neh 4:10-11). In Nehemiah 4:10, the anxieties of the people were expressed in a song, "It seems as if the propaganda of the enemies had its effect."[23] The propaganda had great potential to distract Nehemiah from his mission. As in any work that is for the Lord, the enemy was present and seeking to thwart any focus one would have on the mission to keep the work from happening.

Assignments were given out by geographic location, based on where the worker lived (Neh 4:13). Breneman writes that Nehemiah understood that "grouping them according to families would strengthen the motivation to fight," [24] so he did just that to gain strength and loyalty. Grouping the families together also provided for increased effort for the hard things when times were tough. To keep all the leaders focused, Nehemiah spent time on the wall himself, helping to build and fight the enemy. Nehemiah 2:17 says, "Come let us build the wall of Jerusalem, that we may no longer suffer derision." This statement is repeated several times throughout the book of Nehemiah. To help maintain the mission focus, Nehemiah called Jerusalem to take a stand together against the derision (חֶרְפָּה) or taunts of the enemy, and the reproach and scorn they brought against Jerusalem. When the leader is observed participating in the difficult work he is requiring of others, it can lead to increased focus, diligence, loyalty, and alignment.

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[22] Breneman, *Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther*, 197.

[23] Fensham, *The Books of Ezra and Nehemiah*, 172.

[24] Breneman, *Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther*, 197.

Keep the mission moving. Keeping the mission moving forward was practical for Nehemiah. If the work stopped, the wall would not be built. There were countless attempts by politicians and others to stop or slow the work, but Nehemiah was relentless to keep the work moving forward. Sacrifices were necessary and he helped lead the people to feel safe, secure, and necessary. The sacrifices by the men involved were great. Nehemiah 4:22 says, "Let every man and his servant pass the night within Jerusalem, that they may be a guard for us by night and may labor by day." Fensham notes, "It was important to have all the men around in case the enemies should venture a night attack; they could guard the city at night and work during the day."[25] Nehemiah kept the mission moving forward and continued to give encouragement that motivated, re-centered, and assisted each.

Most importantly, Nehemiah kept the work moving forward amid circumstances that could have proven to be fatal distractions. Nehemiah's states, "They intended to do me harm" (Neh 6:2). Shemaiah, a Prophet, was sent to coax Nehemiah to sin against God by running to the temple for safety, to avoid the threat on his own life. Nehemiah responded, "And what man such as I could go into the temple and live? I will not go in" (Neh 6:11). Nehemiah would not sin against God, even to protect his own life. Fensham says that he knew his place: "Nehemiah as a layman was not allowed to enter the temple."[26] Due to the desire to accomplish the mission set out in front of him, Nehemiah provided unwavering leadership and mission focus, which influenced the people to be deeply committed to the work. The men did not hesitate in following the orders of Nehemiah; they were willing to "work until the stars came out" (Neh 4:21).

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[25] Fensham, *The Books of Ezra and Nehemiah*, 189.

[26] Ibid., 204.

Yamauchi proposes that their work from sun-up to sunset "indicates the earnestness of the people's efforts."[27]

Keep distractions contained. Many issues sought to distract Nehemiah from his mission. Distractions can live on a continuum from minimal to fatal. A simple distraction can be a fast thought or a fleeting desire. A difficult distraction can be a fast thought and fleeting desire that turns quickly into an action of idolatry. It is the action of the difficult distraction that can cause temporary loss of focus and slow the progress. In addition, a fatal distraction can kill the mission without resurrection. Several things had the potential to be fatal distractions for Nehemiah. The opposition was strong. He had to overcome these distractions to accomplish the mission the Lord had placed on his life. While some of the distractions may not individually seem difficult or fatal, the combination of them all had the potential to halt construction.

Often times, when Nehemiah was faced with a potential distraction he clearly responded to the threat with prayer, preparation, faith, and fundamentals (Neh 1:4, 1:6, 1:11, 2:4, 4:9). Nehemiah knew all too well that he would not be able to accomplish the difficult task of endurance and determination without the Lord's help. Fensham explains that Nehemiah realized his dependence therefore he "sat down and wept, fasted, and prayed."[28] His opposition began with some simple distractions from Sanballat and Tobiah as they began to mock of and speak vile against Nehemiah and the Jews building the wall. Under Nehemiah's leadership, the people knew this distraction had the potential to stop the project. Commenting on Nehemiah 4:6, Yamauchi states, "The people worked with all their heart" is literally, "the people had a heart to work."[29] This disciplined desire aided Nehemiah in his efforts to keep the men working despite difficult distractions. In

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[27] Yamauchi, *Ezra and Nehemiah*, 494.

[28] Fensham, *The Books of Ezra and Nehemiah*, 153.

[29] Yamauchi, *Ezra and Nehemiah*, 491.

their words, "What are these feeble Jews doing" (Neh 4:2), Sanballat and Tobiah were using words of mockery and wickedness intended to distract the Jews away from the project; although, the words they used did not even logically add up. The Jews were not weak or feeble. They had proven to be strong and resolute. Kiel and Delitzsch point out, "The irony lies in the fact that they did not give the Jews credit for power to build fortifications."[30] Over the years, the Jews had proven that they could construct massive structures.

Other difficult distractions faced by Nehemiah included political opposition and intimidation tactics. The political threats of Sanballat and Tobiah were enough of a distraction that it must have caused a lull or pause in construction on the wall that required another focus/alignment speech. Nehemiah states, "And I looked and arose and said to the nobles and to the officials and to the rest of the people, 'Do not be afraid of them. Remember the Lord, who is great and awesome, and fight for your brothers, your sons, your daughters, your wives, and your homes'" (Neh 4:14).

In an attempt to kill the mission, Sanbalat and Tobiah tried to call Nehemiah off of the wall for a meeting (Neh 6:2). Taking Nehemiah away from the construction of the wall would have caused the co-laborers to lose sight of the mission as well. On this note Keil and Delitzch observe, "His presence in Jerusalem was necessary for the uninterrupted prosecution of the work of building."[31] The reason for conspiracy and Nehemiah's resolution is clearly seen in Nehemiah 6:9: "For they all wanted to frighten us, thinking, 'Their hands will drop from the work, and it will not be done.' But now, O God, strengthen my hands." This cry to God was yet another indication that Nehemiah always went first to God, in prayer. Nehemiah was a man of prayer before he was a man of action.

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[30] Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*, 4:110.

[31] Ibid., 4:137.

Complete the mission. To accomplish the mission, it was important to keep the end goal in focus. Breneman states, "It was necessary to sacrifice some time and effort to confront the crisis, but Nehemiah never took his eyes off the goal."[32] With all the potential distractions, it was necessary to continually realign to the primary mission.

Nehemiah's focused response was to pray and then set a guard against his opposition (Neh 4:9). After many experienced fear and left the wall temporarily, in chapter 4 Nehemiah goes to prayer. Following his prayer time and charge to the officials and people, "they all returned to the wall" (Neh 4:15). This resolve gave Nehemiah the motivation and ability to accomplish the mission God had given him.

The definitive precursor to his mission being accomplished came when Nehemiah directed the men to a great understanding of a resolute, steadfast, dedicated, mission focus. The actions Nehemiah took at this point seemed radical, but it worked. To stay focused and on mission, Nehemiah instructed the men to come armed with a sword in one hand and construction tool in the other. In fact, Keil and Delitzsch state that Nehemiah "furnished the people on the wall with weapons, and encouraged the nobles and rulers to fight boldly for their brethren, their children, and their possessions,"[33] which led to a resounding defeat of Sanballat and Tobiah. Nehemiah displayed incredible wit, focus, and strategy to place people to have maximum impact and demonstrate superior focus and strategy in battle.

Nehemiah was so impacted by the lack of protection, broken down walls, and how the city was facing derision, mockery, and ridicule, that he was moved to action. He prayed to God asking for help and direction. Once God granted these, Nehemiah began to take steps forward to accomplish the mission God had given him. Over the course of the rebuilding the wall, Nehemiah faced many trials, distractions, and threats on his life. None

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[32] Breneman, *Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther*, 198.

[33] Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*, 4:127.

of these obstacles could stop him from (1) recognizing the situation, (2) establishing leadership, and (3) developing core tactics to implement and increase overall effectiveness of his mission. These obstacles could not thwart Nehemiah from accomplishing his mission. Nehemiah could not accomplish the mission on his own though. Getz says, "The task in Jerusalem was completed because nearly everyone participated. Everyone contributed what they could."[34] When everyone on the team works to accomplish the same mission, it is then that the team has true mission focus.

Jesus Christ's Call to Mission Focus

Many years later, in the same city where Nehemiah fought his battle of rebuilding the wall around Jerusalem, Jesus became the target of attack while focusing on redeeming the people of the city. The greatest mission that ever existed was accomplished by the greatest man to ever live. Jesus redeemed humanity to himself through the atonement of sins, once and for all. Jesus knew He was the Messiah and that he had a mission to fulfill. This mission took thought and effort. He was going to be tried and tested. In His pursuit of the mission, Jesus is the best example of one who demonstrated mission focus. His purpose for being on this earth was to seek and save the lost (Luke 19:10; 1 Tim 1:15), testify of the truth (John 18:37; Mark 1:38), and give his life as the propitiation for sins (Mark 10:45; Rom 15:8-19). The remainder of this chapter examines his method for accomplishing his mission. Jesus' method was threefold: (1) recognize opportunities where leadership was necessary, (2) establish leadership to ensure a quality of discipleship and alignment, and (3) develop core tactics to increase effectiveness of discipleship. Mark Dever writes, "Christianity did not start with a mass-market product

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[34] Getz, *Nehemiah*, 59.

rollout. There was no 24/7 media coverage surrounding his travels. It began with a series of personal engagements among a small group of men over a three-year period."[35]

Recognize the Opportunity

  Inventory the situation. Jesus was perceptive and wisely observed the landscape of his mission at the early age of twelve. At this age he was initiated "in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions" (Luke 2:46). All who were present were "amazed at his understanding and his answers" (Luke 2:47). Growing up and going to the synagogue reading the Torah (five books of Moses), Neviim (prophets) and Ketuvim (writings), Jesus would have known Jewish customs, writings, and courtesies well (Luke 2:41-49). Calvin suggests that, at this young age, Jesus seemed to understand "the chief design of his being sent into the world, which was, that he might discharge the office enjoined upon him by his heavenly Father."[36] It is reasonable to believe that Jesus understood the prophesies listed in Scripture about Him. It is also equally reasonable to know Jesus was aware of His Messianic calling (Matt 11:2).[37] Although fully human, it was His mission to accomplish the work His Father (John 4:34) had set out for Him. Understanding the cultural, geopolitical, and

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[35] Mark Dever, *Discipling: How to Help Others Follow Jesus* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2016), 28.

[36] John Calvin and William Pringle, *Commentary on a Harmony of the Evangelists Matthew, Mark, and Luke* (Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software, 2010), 1:171.

[37] Davies and Allison note,
"The deeds of the Christ" (cf. 11:19) is a key phrase. Being defined in 11:4 as what has been heard and seen, and being described in 11:5 as healing and preaching, it refers back not only to the miracle chapters, 8–9, but also to the sermon on the mount, 5–7, interpreting both Jesus' authoritative words and his mighty deeds as messianic (τοῦ Χριστοῦ). (William D. Davies and Dale C. Allison, Jr., *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel according to Saint Matthew* [New York: T & T Clark, 2004], 2:240)

sociological underpinnings, Jesus observed, took inventory, and continued to increase in knowledge, wisdom, and stature (Luke 2:52).

Identify next steps. Jesus had a limited time on earth. Knowing this, along with His mission, Jesus realized that the task made it necessary to raise other men up to carry the burden. In Matthew 4, he indicates these men would not be regular men. France states, "Jesus' associates in this mission would not be merely supporters but would themselves become *fishers of men*, winning new subjects for God's rule."[38] These disciples would have to continue to preach the gospel after Jesus' departure.[39] Jesus felt this urgency following his temptation in the same chapter of Matthew. He had to make decisions regarding the selection of his disciples. Jesus would have presumably given much thought to how he would accomplish his mission. He set out to make disciples, starting with four men from Galilee by saying to them, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men" (Matt 4:18). Given that the profession of Simon and Andrew was fishermen, this was a term they would have understood immediately. Robertson states, "They had already become disciples of Jesus (John 1:35–42), but now they are called upon to leave their business and to follow Jesus in his travels and work."[40] Jesus' methodology was to increasingly make new disciples. He did this in nearly all the towns to which he travelled. In simple terms, Jesus chose men who were willing to renounce themselves and to take up one's cross, which stands at the beginning of the disciple's journey. Calvin and Pringle indicate that the urgency comes in understanding Jesus simply

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[38] R. T. France, "Matthew," in *New Bible Commentary: 21st Century Edition*, ed. D. A. Carson et al., 4th ed. (Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity, 1994), 910.

[39] Craig Blomberg writes, "A disciple was an adherent or follower of a master, an intimate companion in some common endeavor, often learning and promoting a particular ideology." Craig Blomberg, *Matthew*, The New American Commentary, vol. 22 (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1992), 90.

[40] A. T. Robertson, *Word Pictures in the New Testament* (Nashville: Broadman, 1933), Mt 4:19.

did not have time, capacity or desire to disciple people who "cannot be reckoned his disciples unless [they] are prepared to endure many afflictions" [41] (Matt 16:24-26). Ultimately, his disciples would be required to give up whatever they valued in order to carry the gospel to the ends of the earth. Jesus knew he was giving his life. Carson declares, "Death to self is not so much a prerequisite of discipleship to Jesus as a continuing characteristic of it."[42] Discipling men who would be willing to die to carry the gospel to the ends of the earth proved to be advantageous to accomplishing his mission.

Establish Leadership

It is natural for individuals to observe the people around them and to notice their character, personality, or the way they interact with others. Jesus would have done the same thing before establishing His leaders. Establishing leadership is not as easy as it seems. Establishing leaders involves more than merely training. Establishing leaders is to have developed, equipped, and positioned them in a place of governance and authority where they are capable and trusted to lead with the competencies required. Establishing leaders first requires a selection of potential leaders. In establishing His leadership, Jesus proved to be strategic in the selection of these leaders as He chose capable men.

Select strategic leaders. After Jesus spent time in prayer, he gathered men who would carry out the mission of making more disciples. Luke 6:12 states, "In these days he went out to the mountain to pray, and all night he continued in prayer to God." Fishing during New Testament times was not an easy profession. The disciples that Jesus first called in Matthew 4:19 were average men who were hard workers. Simon (Peter), Andrew (v. 19), then James and John (v. 21) were all recognized by Jesus as men He

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[41] Calvin and Pringle, *Commentary on a Harmony of the Evangelists*, 472.

[42] D. A. Carson, *Matthew*, in vol. 9 of *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, ed. Tremper Longman III and David E. Garland, rev. ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010), 431.

selected to disciple. Later, Jesus called a tax collector named Matthew when he said, "Follow me. And he rose and followed him" (Matt 9:9-11). "Follow me," is the common language Jesus used to call disciples (Matt 4:19; 8:22; 16:24; 19:21).

Selecting leaders who were strategic required Jesus to choose only those whom He knew could carry out the mission. Because it was necessary to give up everything to follow Christ, Jesus did not even give a scribe a chance to bury his own father (Matt 8:22). Not everyone who desires to follow Jesus will make the sacrifice necessary, and He knew that. Some had distractions that would have prevented them from completing the mission. Davies and Allison say, "Jesus answers the scribe with a hard saying which presupposes that Jesus is an itinerant and that therefore those who follow him will have to live on the road."[43] Following Jesus necessitated giving up everything. Jesus' response to the scribe was strategic; it required a difficult decision on the part of the scribe, but of necessity, leaders must make difficult decisions.

The selection process for Jesus began with a willingness to sacrifice one's life and rapid obedience (John 21:18-22; Matt 16:24-26; Luke 9:23; John 15:13). When Jesus called men, they immediately followed (Matt 4:20, 22). If they did not immediately follow, he dismissed them (Matt 8:22, 19:21-24). Jesus did not spend time trying to convince them to do something for which they did not have a great passion (Matt 7:21, 16:24-25, 10:38).

Select capable leaders. The Gospels provide some details about the twelve disciples Jesus selected during his three years of ministry. However, they do not explain why Jesus picked the specific men that he did. It would seem that Jesus selected men with a willingness to lay down their own life (Matt 16:25). Seven of the twelve were fishermen from the region of Galilee, where fishing was less of a lucrative business and

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[43] Davies and Allison, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel according to Saint Matthew*, 2:42.

more of a culture and character-building business. Following Jesus' temptation and the inauguration of His ministry, as noted, Jesus had at least four followers with him to deliver the Sermon on the Mount and was not until Matthew 10 that all twelve of his disciples are in place. Blomberg notes, "His disciples seem to presume that he has already called more than the four described in 4:18–22. Matthew does not give the names of all twelve until 10:2–4, but 10:1 makes clear they had already been called." [44]

As the twelve men were considered, it is curious to wonder why Judas Iscariot was chosen. On a human level, it is difficult to understand that God will select leaders for the purpose of destruction, so that His power would be made known (Rom 9:22). God is all powerful and all knowing; it is impossible for Him to make a mistake. Therefore, Jesus' choosing of Judas was not a mistake. Jesus selecting Judas as a strategic and capable leader had a purpose that was fulfilled while he lived on this earth. Jesus made the selection, and states, "Did I not choose you, the twelve? And yet one of you is a devil" (John 6:70). A. T. Robertson states, "Jesus does not say that Judas was a devil when he chose him, but that he is one now."[45] While Jesus was not referring to chosen in the eternal sense, He uses the term to refer to the office for which Judas was chosen. Calvin writes, "He used the word *chosen*, therefore, to denote those who were eminent and distinguished from the ordinary rank."[46] Judas was divinely chosen. In choosing Judas, specific tactics were happening despite the appearance of a tragedy.

Develop Core Tactics

Jesus descended from heaven to seek and save the lost (Luke 19:10). The strategy to accomplish that mission would take great effort and focus. The more people

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[44] Blomberg, *Matthew*, 97.

[45] Robertson, *Word Pictures in the New Testament*, John 6:70.

[46] John Calvin and William Pringle, *Commentary on the Gospel according to John* (Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software, 2010), 1:280.

Jesus ministered to through healing, casting out demons, and forgiving sins, the more he grew in popularity and increased his following. As His popularity increased, the more the religious leaders hated him. This was a time when the religions leaders were known for preaching a message that was carried out externally and legalistically, but were unwilling to allow that message to deeply penetrate their hearts (Matt 23:27). They projected heavy burdens upon the people that were hard to bear, but they were not willing to help. The Pharisees were often willing to perform in front of others to gain approval but abandoned all integrity. The religious leaders wanted all the power and influence. Tenney explains, "Jesus told His adversaries that they were descended from their father, the devil, and that they reproduced his nature."[47] Jesus exposed their wickedness time and time again. As a result, Jesus and his disciples faced opposition. To maintain mission focus toward the completion of his mission, Jesus developed a set of core tactics that included keeping the disciples focused, keeping the mission moving, avoiding all distractions, and resolving to accomplish the mission.

Keep leaders focused Jesus employed three methods to keep his leaders focused. He spent time teaching, modeling, and asking leaders to participate.

Jesus' teaching. One of the greatest ways Jesus reached the crowds that followed him was through teaching. With the size of some of these crowds, it was necessary at times for him to pull back to be heard; sitting in a boat off shore (Mark 4:1) or on a mountain (Matt. 5:1), or any other means necessary to give the listeners a better chance of hearing him. Jesus was also conscious of where he was when his words were being delivered. As Davies and Allison state, "When Jesus 'goes up the mountain,' he is seeking a place befitting his weighty words. That is, the revelatory character of the

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[47] Merrill C. Tenney, "Topics from the Gospel of John: Part I: The Person of the Father," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 132 (1975): 44.

discourse demands a site consistent with its content."[48] When Jesus spoke, people listened, including the Pharisees, even if it offended them (Matt 15:10). Calvin said that Jesus spoke the truth and would "turn to those who are ready to receive instruction and explains more fully the truth"[49] without expecting anything in return. Chrysostom states, "For it was not men's bodies only that He was healing, but He was also mending their souls."[50] He not only taught so the crowds could hear him, Jesus taught so the disciples would hear again and again. Jesus often had to repeat something to the disciples or explain it for them to understand (Matt 13:10). Jesus used different teaching methods to help the lesson be more memorable for the disciples, which also led to others being astonished at his bold clarity. He would speak in parables, hyperbole (Matt 5:29; 7:3-5), skillfully worded statements (Luke 6:37-38; Luke 6:31), with questions (Matt 16:26; 22:20-21), with living visual illustrations (John 13:3-17, Matt 18:1-4; Mark 12:41-44), and through repetition (Mark 8:31; 9:31; 10:33-34). When he taught, he spoke with authority (Matt 4:23; 5:2; 7;29). His teaching was different. He did not rely on other Rabbi's words, cultural fundamentalism, or traditionalism. Blomberg writes that Jesus, "cites no human authorities or tradition, and he speaks with directness and confidence that he himself is bringing God's message for a new era in human history."[51] Jesus' teaching aligned the disciples to a common mission and ensuring that alignment continues throughout the process of the mission (Mark 8:31, 9:31, 10:33-34).

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[48] Davies and Allison, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel according to Saint Matthew*, 2:423.

[49] Calvin and Pringle, *Commentary on a Harmony of the Evangelists*, 255.

[50] John Chrysostom, "Homilies of St. John Chrysostom, Archbishop of Constantinople on the Gospel according to St. Matthew," in *Saint Chrysostom: Homilies on the Gospel of Saint Matthew*, ed. Phillip Schaff, trans. George Prevost and Matthew B. Riddle (New York: Christian Literature Company, 1888), 10:91.

[51] Blomberg, *Matthew*, 134-35.

Jesus' modeling. Jesus desired to model and ensure he could lead people to repentance in many places. It is not clear how many places Jesus preached. Matthew 9:35 states, "And Jesus went throughout all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel." In His desire, "not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance" (2 Pet 3:9), Jesus' recorded public ministry captured many times that He preached to others or spent time healing someone. Calvin states, "For he was constantly employed in the discharge of his office; that is, in proclaiming the doctrine of salvation, and in confirming it by the addition of miracles."[52]

To reach the multitude, Jesus taught and preached in synagogues and city centers (Matt 10:5, 11:1). Jesus modeled everything he taught with impeccability. He was the consummate believer in leading by example. In helping keep himself focused, Jesus spent time with the Father in prayer (Matt 14:19, 14:23, 26:36, 26:39, 26:42). During one of the most intimate and difficult times in his life, Jesus sought the father through a model prayer. Carson says that in his prayer to God the Father, Jesus "revealed his deepest emotions and thus given his disciples the most compelling of reasons to do what he asks, he tells them to stay and 'keep watch with me.'"[53]

Knowing what he was about to face, as the propitiation for sins, he knew he had to be focused in his own relationship with God and spend time in the garden talking with God. While his time in the garden was an example in prayer and dependence, France states, "The whole passage is a powerful testimony to the reality of Jesus' human nature."[54] It was apparently a common occurrence for Jesus to pray in the garden. It was also a rare occasion to find Jesus without his disciples. It was an even more rare occasion to find him without his closest disciples, Peter, James, and John. This was an occasion,

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[52] Calvin and Pringle, *Commentary on a Harmony of the Evangelists*, 420.

[53] Carson, *Matthew*, 609.

[54] France, "Matthew," 940.

however, that Jesus found solace to be in prayer alone with only the Father. It was on this occasion where Jesus experienced the most difficult trial he had ever faced, the disciples were still close by. Matthew 26:36 states, "Jesus went with them to a place called Gethsemane" and in all reality Jesus was leading them to a common place of prayer. Robertson demonstrates just how intimate Peter, James, and John were with Jesus: "These three had been with Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration and now they are with him in this supreme crisis."[55]

Jesus' participating. Jesus wanted active participation in proclaiming the good news in order to make disciples (Matt 28:18-20). The imperative to make disciples comes before the action of baptizing or teaching and indicates that a proper gospel presentation is the first step. Carson notes, "To disciple a person to Christ is to bring him into the relation of pupil to teacher." [56] Close pedagogical discipleship helps teach all that Jesus commanded and helps the pupil accept, as Carson states, "what he says as true because he says it, and submitting to his requirements as right because he makes them."[57]

After spending much time teaching, training, mentoring, and discipling them, Jesus sent the twelve men out to participate in what he had modeled, "proclaim[ing] the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matt 10:6). When Jesus began his ministry, following his baptism and temptation, Matthew 4:17 says, "From that time Jesus began to preach, saying, 'repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.'" When Jesus called the disciples, they responded immediately to the call He placed on their life (Matt 4:19-20). This participation included not wasting time with "those who will not receive your words" (Matt 10:14), understanding that persecution would surely come (Matt 10:16), being

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[55] Robertson, *Word Pictures in the New Testament*, Mt 26:37.

[56] Carson, *Matthew*, 666.

[57] Ibid.

aware of the inevitable jail time for what they preached (Matt 10:19), and the possibility of losing their lives for the sake of Christ (Matt 10:39).

Keep the mission moving. Nearing the end of His earthly life, Jesus approached the point where he was called to complete the mission God sent him to accomplish (Luke 19:10). His life was set on a trajectory that would physically end within hours of the encounter seen in the Garden of Gethsemane. According to what is known from Scripture, Jesus knew he was about to face one of the most difficult times during his earthly ministry (Matt 26:38-39) and had to keep the mission moving forward. Carson states, "Having revealed his deepest emotions and thus given his disciples the most compelling of reasons to do what he asks, he tells them to stay and 'keep watch with me' while he goes a little farther on to pray alone."[58] There are no indications in Scripture that Jesus had faced anything that brought him such pain until the moment in the Garden of Gethsemane. Davies and Allison note, "Although Jesus contemplates the possibility of not drinking 'this cup', his prayer reveals that he has set aside his own will."[59] An examination of Matthew 26:36-46 reveals some obvious decision points that Jesus encountered that were catalytic in ensuring his ability to stay mission focused.

Moving further into the garden Jesus began to feel the burden even greater than before. His physical appearance must have become different from what the disciples had witnessed before, as Matthew 26:37 states that he "began to be sorrowful and troubled. Jesus knew what was going to occur in a short few hours and knew that the Father had never forsaken any of His own. In this moment, the impact of his own forsakenness was about to occur, yet this was the cup that Jesus willingly drank for us.

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[58] Carson, *Matthew*, 609.

[59] Davies and Allison, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel according to Saint Matthew*, 2:496.

Keep distractions contained. While Jesus had certainly been tempted prior to this moment in the garden, He had never faced the potential distraction awaiting Him in the garden of Gethsemane. In these moments the world can clearly see the heart of Jesus and his concentrated focus. France suggests, "We have here a privileged glimpse into Jesus' intimate relation with his Father and a sobering insight into the cost of his mission."[60] It is in the Garden of Gethsemane, right before Jesus' arrest, that one sees how Jesus was the greatest example of one who focused on the mission.

Jesus admitted to his disciples that his "soul is very sorrowful, even to death; remain" (Matt 26:38). His emotional depth indicated that the situation was so difficult that one would certainly understand a decision to "abort mission." Yet allowing a distraction that big to cause him to desert the mission would have been fatal. Despite the sorrow, Jesus finished his sentence as he commanded his disciples to "remain here, and watch with me." The Greek translation of this passage states γρηγορεῖτε μετ' ἐμοῦ. Robertson states, "This late present from the perfect ἐγρήγορα means to keep awake and not go to sleep."[61] The Garden of Gethsemane is also the only place where Jesus appealed to his disciples in this manner. Therefore, it seems obvious that something had really affected Jesus. He was sorrowful, even unto death, and was getting directive in his request for prayer. In all of Scripture, despite the trials and difficulty Christ was exposed to, he never told of his pain or his trials. However, here he states that he was sorrowful, even unto death. The use of the words and tone Jesus used should have given the disciples great reason to be alarmed and remain awake praying, yet their distraction overtook them.

In the most intense situation the world had seen, Jesus had opportunity to be distracted by the very thing that led him to the garden to pray. Despite the potential

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[60] France, "Matthew," 940.

[61] Robertson, *Word Pictures in the New Testament*, Mt 26:38.

distraction from completing the mission, he surrendered His own will to God's. He cared as Carson states, "more deeply still, Jesus desires to do his Father's will."[62] His spirit was tested to the point of death. Jesus had just finished asking God for another way to follow through with atoning for the sins of the world. After Christ spent his first intense moments in the garden praying, he came back to the disciples to find them asleep (v. 39).

Jesus returned to the humble posture of prayer after giving Peter an imperative to "watch and pray." He also told Peter in the face of temptation that "the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak" (v. 41). Jesus went away and prayed again for the second time, "My Father, if this cannot pass unless I drink it, your will be done" (Matt. 26:39). In an act of humility by Jesus, Blomberg notices, "He [Jesus] has come to believe that it is not within God's will that he avoid the suffering mapped out for him, but he reaffirms his desire to carry out that will irrespective of the cost."[63] Jesus pressed into the distraction to maintain his focus on the mission ahead of him and not allow his own desires to keep him from fulfilling the mission of redeeming the human race with an act of obedience. Though Jesus could have walked away or summoned a legion of angels to remove him from his circumstance, because of His covenant and commitment with the Father, He could not and would not disappoint the Father.

Complete the mission. Jesus was ready to complete his mission and become the propitiation and sacrifice needed for the sins of the world. In his battle against distraction and his appeal to the disciples, including the inner circle, Jesus had to approach the throne of God alone. Jesus indicated that he had a desperate need to be strengthened and was battling against the distraction to accomplish the mission.

In a swift decisive move, Jesus came back to the disciples and was ready to be

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[62] Carson, *Matthew*, 609.

[63] Blomberg, *Matthew*, 396.

handed over. He moved forward to complete his mission when he stated, "Rise, let us be going" (Matt 26:46).Carson states, "Jesus has prayed in agony but now rises with poise and advances to meet his betrayer."[64] This moment in time is terribly dismal as Robertson suggests that it would seem that in his most vulnerable hour the disciples "missed their chance for sympathy with Jesus."[65] However, Jesus asked them to pray so they would not be tempted. It would seem that Jesus had been preparing for this moment. In a triumph of obedience over the trial and in a dedicated missional focus to stay the course despite the personal sacrifice, Jesus was kissed by his betrayer and handed over to the chief priests. Hill states it this way, "Jesus is the Son of God who is suffering and dying. His death is humiliating but voluntary, an act of obedience fulfilling God's will."[66]

Conclusion

In this chapter the leadership of Nehemiah and Jesus were displayed because their clarity of the missions they were called to was like no other. Jesus and Nehemiah were given missions of monumental proportions within environments that required a determined focus. Both men had ample opportunity to be distracted by circumstances outside of their own human control. However, they were determined to focus on the mission, deciding what was important, and determining to stay resolute, not allowing the distractions to move them toward mission drift. Their missions were completed through humble dependency and obedience, and they glorified the Father through accomplishing the work God sent them to do. The fulfillment of Jesus and Nehemiah's missions were a direct result of their determination to recognize leadership opportunities, establish leaders, and develop implementation tactics that increased effectiveness.

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[64] Carson, *Matthew*, 611.

[65] Robertson, *Word Pictures in the New Testament*, Mt 26:45.

[66] David Hill, *The Gospel of Matthew*, New Century Bible Commentary (London: Oliphants, 1972), 332.

CHAPTER 3

THE LEADER'S CALL TO MISSION FOCUS

Introduction

One of the leader's main focus is to accomplish his mission. The ability to focus on that mission in the midst of leadership challenges increases the maturity of that leader. Mission focus requires a disciplined approach in knowing what can be said yes to, as opposed to what must be said yes to. Every leader has the same number of hours in a day, and none should risk squandering the hours for frivolous things. When a decision is made and a leader says yes to an event, task, or distraction, he inevitably is also saying no to something else. Churches can rely on their mission statement as a means to motivate church congregants without actually focusing the mission of the church, to make disciples. The mission of the church is much more than a simple mission statement. The mission can, in most settings, be minimized to a simple statement for the sake of alignment and clarity, but it is much more. To understand mission focus, Stephen Covey suggests that leaders must understand that "to begin with the end in mind means to start with a clear understanding of your destination. It means to know where you're going so that you better understand where you are now and so that the steps you take are always in the right direction."[1] The mission focus of the church can communicate in a way that defines the mission, defines core values, and helps to develop a mission critical strategy.

A mission is accomplished when intense focus is placed upon that mission and the strategy to achieve it. Simply stated, missions are not fulfilled by accident. Greer and

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[1] Stephen Covey, *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Leaders: Powerful Lessons in Personal Change* (New York: Simon and Shuster, 2013), 130.

Horst state, "Mission Drift is the natural course for organization, and it takes focused attention to safeguard against it. Once an organization ignores its source of heat, drift is only a matter of time."[2] Accomplishing a strict mission focus takes the leader's ability and gifting. It takes the leader sharing of himself in a way that is selfless and servant orientated. Leadership is inspiring others to do things they did not know possible. In *Master Leaders*, George Barna refers to a conversation he had with Jon Gordon when he quotes him saying, "Leadership is not about what you do as the leader, but about what you can inspire or encourage or empower others to accomplish. Leaders bring out the best in other people by sharing the best from within themselves."[3]

Methods for fulfilling missions can be a distraction from optimal benefit if not strictly followed. The method presented in this chapter is designed to focus alignment and maintain the focus needed to accomplish the mission. Bossidy and Charan sadly state that "many leaders . . . fall victim to the gap between promises they've made and the results their organizations delivered."[4] Foundationally, mission focus comes as a proper vertical alignment with God and a horizontal alignment with others. The following content will strive to maintain these two principles in order to submit to the commands in Scripture to love God, love others, and make disciples.

Since organizations, both secular and parachurch, have an imperative for proper organizational alignment and focus, the same imperative may also be important in the church. Organizations do not intend to drift. Greer and Horst notes, "We discovered we were making small decisions that, compounded over time, would lead to Mission

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[2] Peter Greer and Chris Horst, *Mission Drift* (Minneapolis: Bethany House, 2014), 20.

[3] George Barna and Bill Dallas, *Master Leaders: Revealing Conversations with 30 Leadership Greats* (Carol Stream, IL: Barna Books, 2009), 14.

[4] Larry Bossidy and Ram Charan, *Execution: The Discipline of Getting Things Done* (New York: Random House, 2002), 7.

Drift. If unchecked, we'd inevitably follow the pattern of organizations like Harvard and Yale."[5] Drifting away from the foundational focus of the organization does not happen intentionally. Rather, mission drift is because of a lack of intentionality. The following research has been gathered from a variety of resources ranging from secular business owners to prominent pastors.[6] In consideration of different models that lead to increased effectiveness, there are three common aspects in approach to leadership opportunities and organizational alignment: recognition of the opportunities, establishment of leadership, and developing the core tactics. Together, these three aspects lead the organization to alignment and abundant health. When optimized levels of health are achieved, the organization can naturally reap the benefits of an aligned and focused mission. Liz Wiseman proposes, "Each time people who uphold the beliefs are rewarded, the culture is strengthened; likewise, every time diminishing behavior is overlooked, that culture is diluted."[7]

These three important factors aid Gospel City Church Granger in maintaining a simple, clear, and urgent mission focus for the glory of God. This is a concentrated catalytic process, and when strictly followed can increase missional alignment and a healthy culture. The leadership resources investigated for this project demonstrate a similar pattern, which each follow in the presentation of their information.[8] This simple process evaluates leadership resources into one or multiple categories of leadership as a

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[5] Greer and Horst, *Mission Drift*, 21.

[6] See bibliography for detailed list of all resources utilized to conduct research for this project.

[7] Liz Wiseman, *Multipliers: How the Best Leaders Make Everyone Smarter* (New York: Harper Collins, 2017), 274.

[8] When looking at the contents page of a leadership book one can begin to discern how a leadership book is written. The chapter titles give the general flow and contents written within the book. Most leadership books used in this project followed the format of Recognize Opportunities (look for change or optimization of process and people), Establish Leadership (train, equip and install leaders), and Develop Core Tactics (strategies to implement change, train, equip and install leaders).

methodology. The effective principles observed through the research are those that followed the pattern Nehemiah and Jesus followed.

Recognize the Opportunity

Strong leaders excel in their ability to observe opportunities for change, optimization of process, and building relationships. In recognizing the opportunity, it is important for leaders to observe three things: inventory the situation, identify next steps, and focus on strengths.

Inventory the Situation

Whenever a leader sees an opportunity to make a change, increase effectiveness, provide a service, or simply make someone's life better it is because he has identified an opportunity. Sometimes the opportunity is due to a normal process within an organization to continue an increase of efficiencies. Other times the opportunity happens because the leader has a desire to increase effectiveness and therefore conduct an informal SWOT analysis. When a leader is determined and focused to look at an increase in efficiencies or increase in effectiveness, his investigation will typically reveal process more than it will reveal issues related to people. If this investigation does reveal process over people, then there will most likely need to be some change. The people of an organization are the best asset an organization has, therefore it is important to ensure employee satisfaction is considered. In *Extraordinary Leader*, Zenger and Folkman describe a "method of helping increase the employee satisfaction through helping drive what is called a 'career best' experience. This helps with retention, satisfaction and ultimately customer lead generation."[9] When staff are happy, then they are effective; and when they are effective,

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[9] John H. Zenger and Joseph R. Folkman, *Extraordinary Leader: Turning Good Managers into Great Leaders* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2009), 112.

then they are healthy, and the output and mission accomplishment are exponentially increased.[10]

Liz Wiseman, author of *Multipliers*, sees leadership as an opportunity to create healthy work places by dividing leaders into two groups. The "diminishers" tend to take away from their employees, and the "multipliers" make the staff better. Wiseman writes,

> There is more intelligence inside our organizations than we are using. It led to the idea that there was a type of leader, those I came to call Multipliers, who say, used and grew the intelligence of others, while others leaders, whom I labeled Diminishers, shut down the smarts of those around them.[11]

Many have difficulty understanding the importance of relationship and task in a church model. Due to the nature of pastoring, most churches seem to get the relationship part correct, but fail in the area of task. Church leaders who desire efficiencies will face the tension Crawford Loritts identifies: "We must fight the encroaching secularization both of Christianity in general and Christian leadership in particular."[12] Some leaders fight this secularization intuitively, while others must force themselves through a process. Secularization comes in many forms—it could come in pragmatism, legalism, feminism or other culturally-dominate antibiblical stances of power and influence. In some circles the culture is dominating the church rather than the church influencing the world. Decisions must be made through the comprehension of empirical data and lens of Scripture. Sometimes it is important to understand what one is measuring and how to determine if the apparatus used provided a successful measurement. Jim Collins and his team developed tools to effectively evaluate and recognize opportunities where it was important to follow the data versus make the data prove an agenda: "We did not begin this project with a theory

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[10] Peter Drucker, *The Effective Executive* (New York: Collins, 2006), 20.

[11] Wiseman, *Multipliers*, xvii.

[12] Crawford Loritts, *Leadership as an Identity: The Four Traits of Those Who Wield Lasting Influence* (Chicago: Moody, year), 21.

to test or prove."[13] The data influenced the decision, not the opposite. Where secularization is happening within the church, the perspective of individuals or decision makers may have been tainted by a faulty worldview (Matt 15:19-20; 23:1-12; Rom 8;7).

Following many years of organizational leadership and life experience, Patrick Lencioni realized what helped companies thrive:

> I became convinced that the biggest problem our clients faced, and their biggest opportunity for competitive advantage, was not really about strategy or finance or marketing; it was something a little less tangible—something that seemed to revolve around the way they managed their organizations.[14]

Recognizing an opportunity and moving forward does not negate the fact that the company needs to continue to recognize opportunities along the way. Adjustments must continue to be made; and if necessary, a new path must be followed.

Identify Next Steps

Stated in a variety of ways throughout leadership resources, the foundational goals for all leaders are to multiply the greatness in others,[15] build relational connections,[16] motivate for deliverables,[17] lead through change,[18] focus on strengths, and ask for feedback. These leadership goals must be addressed before ever considering tactical goals. Bossidy and Charan declares, "Identifying goals requires a level of savvy and expertise to achieve the right balance. That, in turn, requires the realism and the

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[13] Jim Collins, *Good to Great: Why Some Companies Make the Leap . . . and Others Don't* (New York: Harper Collins, 2001), 10.

[14] Patrick Lencioni, *The Advantage: Why Organizational Health Trumps Everything Else in Business* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2012), xv.

[15] Wiseman, *Multipliers*, 248.

[16] Lencioni, *The Advantage*, 27.

[17] Bossidy and Charan, *Execution*, 70.

[18] Zenger and Folkman, *Extraordinary Leader*, 103.

knowledge of the business and the people."[19] Leadership requires knowing the people

well so that their greatness can be multiplied.

Multiply the greatness in others. When a leader spends time multiplying

greatness in others, the people employed by that organization develop a deep trust and

respect for that leader. As a part of natural relationships, there is typically a willingness to

generate deeper motivation toward achieving greater task execution when there is a high

degree of trust.[20] When the staff of an organization have a deep trust for their leader, they

are willing sacrifice to accomplish the mission. This trust is built by leaders who are

willing to multiply others, rather than diminish them. Wiseman writes,

> To keep up and to create the type of workplaces where people thrive, we need
> diminishing leaders to be replaced by those who serve as true Multipliers, inspiring
> collective intelligence and capability on a mass scale. It's immense, both in promise
> and deed, so let's begin.[21]

The way in which individuals are multiplied remains dependent upon the specific

passions, desires, and abilities of each staff member, and needs to be tailored to fit.

Build relational connections. God created man as a relational being. Humans

are social in their behaviors and crave relationship connections. First Corinthians 12: 24-

27 states,

> But God has so composed the body, giving greater honor to the part that lacked it,
> that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same
> care for one another. If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is
> honored, all rejoice together. Now you are the body of Christ and individually
> members of it.

It is important for leaders to build relational connections with the people over which God

has given them stewardship. As social creatures, leaders are responsible for culture and

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[19] Bossidy and Charan, *Execution*, xxvi.

[20] Judith E. Glaser, *Conversational Intelligence: How Great Leaders Build Trust and Get Extraordinary Results* (New York: Bibliomotion, 2014), 34.

[21] Wiseman, *Multipliers*, xxii.

the building of that culture. Leaders should develop a positive culture that drives workplace execution through process and positive relationship building. John Maxwell states, "In my career, each time I entered a new leadership position, I immediately started building relationships."[22] Building relationships is foundational for any leader's ability to lead. Apart from relationships, people cannot lead other people well.

Motivate to outcomes. Leaders who build relational connections and motivate for specific outcomes are more likely to be perceived as an effective leader. Good leaders are determined by their level of influence. That influence motivates people to meet deadlines, stretch goals, and motivate for specific outcomes. Multiplying the greatness in others and building relational connections help people deepen the bond between leaders and their staff. Zenger and Folkman state,

> Having a strength in building relationships improves trust and the sense that the leader does not just care about the results, they care about each member of the team. Another person may be very effective at building relationships. Having a strength in driving for results helps them to deliver on their promises.[23]

Leading through change. Sometimes a church is in constant change due to continual growth. Leading through that change is a challenge. As a leader within an organization who desires to lead change and continue the growth of that organization, there must be a careful distribution of time spent on tasks. In the beginning of a startup or church plant it is important for a few people to do many things. Often times in a startup it is required to do things that one is not good at, which are sometimes referred to non-talents. Later, as the church grows, the staff also grows, and it becomes increasingly important to spend focused time with key people. To help the staff remain content and healthy, leaders should guide staff through their continually changing circumstances. This guidance will

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[22] John C. Maxwell, *21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership: Follow Them and People will Follow You* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1998), 17.

[23] Zenger and Folkman, *Extraordinary Leader*, 144.

lead to a sense of safety and assist the staff in adapting to the continual church growth. Well spent time is simply a more efficient use of the limited man hours available for the advancement of the mission. Often, there is a need to say no to good things in order to say yes to great things. When a leader patiently helps a staff member grow in parting with the responsibilities they are good at, in exchange for those that they are best at, the staff member generally demonstrates loyalty and compassion. This is a multiplying of others in a way that is not common. It is also a demonstration to employees that they are welcome, and that their supervisor is looking out for their best interest. A good supervisor helps others understand their value. Buckingham and Coffman explain,

> An employee may join Disney or GE or Time Warner because she is lured by their generous benefits package and their reputation for valuing employees. But it is her relationship with her immediate manager that will determine how long she stays and how productive she is while she is there.[24]

Focus on strengths. Head-strong, gifted, self-motivated individuals easily believe they can accomplish anything they set their mind to; after all, that is what the world has taught them. This philosophy gets them far in life and may get them promoted to impressive levels. At some point, however, that person will top out and begin to have a negative impact on the organization when they continue to strive in an area of weakness. Drucker notes that successful organizations understand that to "try to build against weakness frustrates the purpose of organization. Organization is the specific instrument to make human strengths redound to performance while human weakness is neutralized and largely rendered harmless."[25] Buckingham and Coffman say it is equally important for the organization and individual to accept the understanding that it is best to "do everything you can to help each person cultivate his talents. Help each person become

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[24] Marcus Buckingham and Curt Coffman, *First Break all the Rules: What the World's Greatest Managers Do Differently* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1999), 36.

[25] Drucker, *The Effective Executive*, 75.

more of who he already is."[26] In some cases, an employee will continually beat his head against the wall because of his former leadership development and belief that he truly can accomplish anything. When he hears the word "no," he accepts the challenge and works harder. This reaction may look like a prideful, do-your-own-thing arrogance and defiance. Buckingham and Coffman state that the employee must come to the realization that "persistence directed primarily toward your nontalents is self-destructive—no amount of determination or good intentions will ever enable you to carry out a brand-new set of four-lane mental highways."[27]

      Ask for feedback. To get good and useful feedback it is important to create an environment that will be safe enough to give it. In many cases it will be important to ask about specifics so that the risk of a general question will not stifle the colleague to withhold helpful feedback. The leader must invite it, the leader has to receive it, and the leader has to make adjustments as a result of it. While asking for feedback one could also ask for both positive and negative feedback. Porter states, "To increase the likelihood of your colleagues taking that risk with you, show them that their honesty won't be met with negative repercussions."[28] Once feedback is given, it is important to recognize the weaknesses, resist the temptation to debate or defend, and thank them for giving it. Then the leader should promise to make some adjustments and follow up on the adjustments made.

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[26] Buckingham and Coffman, *First Break all the Rules*, 141.

[27] Ibid.,145.

[28] Jennifer Porter, "How Leaders Can Get Honest Productive Feedback," *Harvard Business Review*, January 8, 2019, accessed November 19, 2018, https://hbr.org/2019/01/how-leaders-can-get-honest-productive-feedback.

Establish Leadership

In establishing leadership for an organization, it is important to recognize six important qualities that determine a leader's fit, the six C's of leadership[29]: character, competence, chemistry, communication, capacity, and commitment. When selecting good leaders, it is important to choose character over competence and chemistry over capacity. Collins draws attention to this statement when he writes, "The old adage 'people are your most important asset' turns out to be wrong. People are not your most important asset. The right people are."[30] While it is not stated outright, humility is also needed. Tayler writes, "Humility *in the service of ambition* is the most effective and sustainable mindset for leaders who aspire to do big things in a world filled with huge unknowns."[31] Sue Shellenbarger of the *The Wall Street Journal* states, "Humility is a core quality of leaders who inspire close teamwork, rapid learning and high performance in their teams, according to several studies in the past three years."[32]

Select Qualified Key Leaders

While selecting qualified key leaders it is important to identify several qualities about them. Due to the complexity of culture and potential for mission drift, selecting leadership for an organization is one of the key ways mission alignment can remain focused.[33] Selecting leaders can be a bit complex at times, yet being patient and slow in the selection process can mean a greater chance of selecting the right leaders.

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[29] Adapted from Zenger and Folkman, *The Extraordinary Leader*.

[30] Collins, *Good to Great*, 13.

[31] Bill Tayler, "If Humility Is so Important, Why Are Leaders SO Arrogant?" *Harvard Business Review*, October 15 2018, accessed December 4, 2018, https://hbr.org/2018/10/if-humility-is-so-important-why-are-leaders-so-arrogant, emphasis original.

[32] Sue Shellenbarger, "The Best Bosses Are Humble Bosses," *The Wall Street Journal*, October 9, 2018, accessed December 7, 2018, https://www.wsj.com/articles/the-best-bosses-are-humble-bosses-1539092123.

[33] Zenger and Folkman, *Extraordinary Leader*, 110.

Character. From the very formation of leadership, character has always been an important component that could either tank a person's career or allow it to thrive. A person's character demonstrates who he is as a leader. Who a person is as a leader has great impact on his success as a leader. In The *Extraordinary Leader*, Zenger and Folkman note, "Our research confirms that personal character is absolutely at the heart of effective leadership."[34] Without the proper character, a person's career will be built on self-promotion and success. Self-promoting leaders may do well throughout their career moving from one organization to another, getting promoted along the way because of incredible abilities as a manager, but as a leader without character, culture will suffer and people will not be as effective as they could be. Unfortunately, leaders without character can also lead people like animals, driving hard for results, unkind and bottom line driven because they understand behavioral patterns. Leaders know that if they do X people will respond in Y. These patterns are proven over time because of the psychological habits of people. However, good leaders that have great character will lead their people and organizations without self-promotion, or ego centered ambition.

In *Good to Great*, Collins explains that the character of a

> Level 5 leader channel[s] their ego needs away from themselves and into the larger goal of building a great company. It's not that Level 5 leaders have no ego or self-interest. Indeed, they are incredibly ambitious—but their ambition is first and foremost for the institution, not themselves.[35]

With proper character comes large amounts of credibility and trust. Trust is an incredibly hard attribute to earn. As Kouzes and Posner write, it is earned through difficult circumstances over time "and it's the most fragile of human qualities. It's earned minute-by-minute, hour-by-hour, month-by-month, year-by-year. But it can be lost in very short order if not attended to."[36]

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[34] Zenger and Folkman, *Extraordinary Leader*, 55.

[35] Collins, *Good to Great*, 21.

[36] James Kouzes and Barry Posner, *The Leadership Challenge: How to Make*

Competence. Skills and proficiencies seem to be among the highest reasons people are invited to be a part of a team. Skills are asked about in any job posting and listed on resumes. An individual possessing subject matter expertise is considered even more essential to mission focus. If the team member has a skill or is a subject matter expert, it is still important for him to understand how to maintain focus. Zenger and Folkman recognize this when they state, "This cluster of abilities comprises skills or competencies that are absolutely crucial for people to be highly regarded by peers, subordinates, and bosses. These are not skills that would typically be described as leadership skills."[37] Recruiting good leaders requires competence and efficiency, but also the ability to help others achieve an increased competence in their own work. According to Wiseman, in multiplying leaders, it is important to look for team members "who have a reputation not only for delivering results but creating a place where young, talented people can grow. They are accelerators to other people's careers."[38]

It is important to have a critical eye but not a critical spirit. A leader must learn how to discern and observe opportunities that can be changed for the better. Zenger and Folkman state that all leaders "not only need to understand some basic concepts and be reasonably well read, but also need to be able to judge everyday interactions and understand what is missing."[39] The competence of a leader is dependent upon his ability to think critically and move others to action so that the team can solve the problem.

Communication. It is necessary to communicate in all organizations. Conversations between employees, staff, supervisors, and team members are important.

Extraordinary Things Happen in Organizations (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, 2017), 36.

[37] Zenger and Folkman, *Extraordinary Leader*, 57.

[38] Wiseman, *Multipliers*, 35.

[39] Zenger and Folkman, *Extraordinary Leader*, 42.

These conversations in fact define the foundations, of relationships in any organization.[40] When entering a conversation, people will determine if it is safe or unsafe to talk and become vulnerable. Understanding how conversations work within the lives of every individual will help an organization thrive or dive. Judith Glasser believes it is important to understand and know how to "focus on . . . creat[ing] the conversational space that creates deeper understanding and engagement rather than fear and avoidance."[41] The general make up of one's brain and how it processes physical information is interesting. Glasser explains,

> According to the research of Angelika Dimoka, PhD, and other neuroscientists who use fMRI (functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging) technology to study what happens inside the brain, trust is centered in the prefrontal cortex and distrust in the amygdala and limbic areas of the brain.[42]

When two people enter a room, it is normal for each person to make observations about body language, facial disposition, and general attitude. If for some reason one person or another picks up that the person is unsafe because of a negative tone, angry facial features, lowered disposition, or bad attitude, it will trigger the amygdala. If distrust is sensed and concluded, whether right or wrong, the prefrontal cortex, where joy and excitement happen, begins to shut off and the amygdala is activated where the fear response triggers the fight or flight mechanism.[43]

Chemistry. Leaders need to work hard to set a culture and create opportunities to increase team interaction and positive chemistry. This happens through off-site interaction, shared life experiences, and positive reinforcement of mission focus. A good leader also constantly tries to reinforce the advancement of the staff through drawing

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[40] Glaser, *Conversational Intelligence*, 48.

[41] Ibid., xxx.

[42] Ibid., xx.

[43] Ibid., 5.

them out for creative answers, education, and promotions, when possible. Good leaders

will help elevate the people around them. Wiseman states, "Some leaders make us better

and smarter. They bring out our intelligence. [They] access and revitalize the intelligence

in the people around them."[44]

Chemistry is also built through trust. Leaders build trust and help others desire

to follow their leadership. Lencioni writes,

> The kind of trust that is necessary to build a great team is what I call vulnerability-based trust. This is what happens when members get to a point where they are completely comfortable begin transparent, honest, and naked with one another, where they say and genuinely mean things like "I screwed up," "I need help," "Your idea is better than mine," "I wish I could learn to do that as well as you do," and even, "I'm sorry."[45]

This kind of trust is not achieved overnight and requires the leader to take the first step

toward transparent relationships. Though, once these types of relationships are achieved,

the team will have great chemistry and will be able to advance the mission focus and

organizational goals.

Capacity. While capacity is not the primary characteristic of a person that

leaders want on their team, it is an important one. Capacity is an ability to process

multiple problems and situations, and maintain a system for managing all tasks, projects,

and the whirlwind of daily responsibilities. The ability to advance in leadership or within

an organization will be dependent upon the team member's capacity. In *The 21 Irrefutable

Laws of Leadership*, John Maxwell states, "Leadership ability is always the lid on personal

and organizational effectiveness. If a person's leadership is strong, the organization's lid

is high. But if it's not, then the organization is limited."[46] The capacity of the team member

is dependent upon the emotional intelligence of the leader. In an article in *Harvard*

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[44] Wiseman, *Multipliers*, 4.

[45] Lencioni, *The Advantage*, 27.

[46] Maxwell, *The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership*, 7.

Business Review, Daniel Goleman comments, "Our investigation was designed in part to look at how emotional intelligence drives performance—in particular, at how it travels from the leader through the organization to bottom-line results."[47] He goes to say, "The leader's mood is quite literally contagious, spreading quickly and inexorably throughout the business."[48]

Commitment. When looking to recruit for the organization, it is important to find the right people. According to Wickman, "The right people are the ones who share your company's core values, they fit and thrive in your culture. They are people you enjoy being around and who make your organization a better place to be."[49] Naturally, people that are committed to the mission and the community that they work in will make that environment a better place. When these same people are incredibly motivated, that enthusiasm creates a high capacity leadership team that self-regulates and manages. Collins explains,

> [When]you have a disciplined people, you don't need hierarchy. When you have disciplined thought, you don't need bureaucracy. When you have disciplined action, you don't need excessive controls. When you combine a culture of discipline with an ethic of entrepreneurship, you get the magical alchemy of great performance.[50]

This environment increases the commitment from each staff member and creates an environment where everybody becomes a learner so that all are learning from one another.

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[47] Daniel Goleman, "Primal Leadership: The Hidden Driver of Great Performance," *Harvard Business Review*, December 2001, accessed October 22, 2018, https://hbr.org/2001/12/primal-leadership-the-hidden-driver-of-great-performance.

[48] Ibid.

[49] Gino Wickman, *Traction: Get a Grip on Your Business* (Dallas: BenBella Books, 2011), 81.

[50] Collins, *Good to Great*, 13.

Develop Core Tactics

One of the keys to developing solid core tactics is to pinpoint the steps necessary for moving forward. Larry Bossidy states, "Pinpointing the building blocks forces leaders to be clear as they debate and discuss the strategy."[51] This clarity drives toward an increased ability to execute the core tactics. When implementing these tactics, it is necessary to have simple plans that are not insulting. The simplicity of these plans will bring comfort and an ability to lead with confidence and dissolve any unnecessary distractions or frustrations. Wickman recognizes the clarity when he says, "As a result, business leaders come out feeling more in control, happier, and less stressed. Their organizations are more profitable, more focused, and staffed by great employees."[52]

As part of the base tactic, Lencioni advises senior leaders to pay attention to their own employees:

> After two decades of working with CEO's and their teams of senior executives, I've become absolutely convinced that the seminal difference between successful companies and mediocre or unsuccessful ones has little, if anything, to do with what they know or how smart they are; it has everything to do with how healthy they are.[53]

Keep the Leaders Focused

To keep high capacity leaders focused, it is important to concentrate on effectiveness and results. Effectiveness comes from many different components of interaction between leadership and staff. In many ways, the chemical composition of the brain within each of the members of a team is extremely important. As stated, when a person feels safe it activates the prefrontal cortex where excitement and joy happens, and when they are fearful it activates the amygdala where the fight or flight reaction happens. Leaders that understand this will always be a more effective leader. Glasser recognized that

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[51] Bossidy and Charan, *Execution*, 182.

[52] Wickman, *Traction*, xiv.

[53] Lencioni, *The Advantage*, 9.

employees who feel safe and are not in a fear-based, fight or flight amygdala-activating organization, will have increased confidence. In fact Glasser states, "I can feel safe, and when I feel safe, my levels of cortisol are lower and my mind is open to explore, discover and learn without feeling I will make mistakes that may damage my ego or reputation or, even more critically, my confidence in myself."[54] When the fear of mistakes, criticism, retribution, and marginalization are not present, the employees will function more freely, produce more efficient results, and the organization as a whole will be more efficient too.

In focusing on effectiveness and results, Peter Drucker states, "Increasing effectiveness may well be the only area where we can hope significantly to raise the level of executive performance, achievement, and satisfaction."[55] It is equally necessary to establish goals that stretch the individual or team beyond monotony. High capacity teams will become bored if a set of goals are not challenging. Setting these stretch goals well takes preparation. Sometimes the key to keeping people focused is the leader's preparation. Maxwell observes, "When you prepare well, you convey confidence and trust to people. Lack of preparation has the opposite effect."[56] In setting these stretch goals, it is necessary to create measurables to help leaders get the right things done at the right time. Wickman states, "Complete mastery of your Data Component is achieved when you boil the organization's numbers down to the point where everyone has a single meaningful, manageable number to guide them in their work."[57] These numbers will help keep the entire team focused and resist the urge to delve into the vast sea of opportunity. Challies makes an interesting observation when finds it is necessary to remain focused on the goals that are set so each team does not wander off. He states, "Many things we could

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[54] Glaser, *Conversational Intelligence*, 184.

[55] Drucker, *The Effective Executive*, 18.

[56] Maxwell, *The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership*, 45.

[57] Wickman, *Traction*, 122.

do in our lives and in any given moment, but so few we actually can do. There are fewer things we can do with excellence."[58]

Keep the Mission Moving

To keep the mission moving forward there must be consensus and collaboration among associates. When this consensus among associates does not exist, the mission will suffer by being blocked, or at best, temporarily halted. Zenger and Folkman state, "Many of the leaders who derailed had a difficult time cooperating with other leaders. They viewed work as a competition and other leaders as opponents."[59] It is a sad scenario when, at one point, both leaders or leadership teams all believed in the same mission. However, Zenger and Folkman observe, "their lack of collaboration caused them to be set adrift without the help or insights of others."[60] Interestingly enough, it seems as though their lack of collaboration is a personality or disposition the individual chose. Wiseman contrasts the tyrant and the liberator when she writes, "The liberator creates an environment where good things happen. They create the conditions where intelligence is engaged, grown, and transformed into concrete successes."[61]

When the mission stalls or one of the team members seem to be breaking down, there will typically be a core value break down. Core values are one of the most important things an organization or church can provide that keeps the mission moving forward. The motivation to maintain core values is continual alignment and consistent messaging. Lencioni explains,

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[58] Tim Challies, *Do More Better: A Practical Guide to Productivity* (Minneapolis: Cruciform Press, 2015), 27.

[59] Zenger and Folkman, *Extraordinary Leader*, 154.

[60] Ibid.

[61] Wiseman, *Multipliers*, 72.

Amazingly, when employees in different parts of an organization hear their leaders saying the same things after meetings, they actually start to believe that alignment and clarity might be possible. This allows a leadership team to get a quick and meaningful win, one that creates momentum for executives and employees alike.[62]

The mission of an organization is the most important thing for which the organization strives. It is what the goals are built from and how the team stays aligned. When any one team member falls short of the goals, values, or mission, it affects the whole team. The importance the team places on feedback and its use is detrimental to the success of the organization. Author writes,

Inside everyone's head is a picture of how they see themselves. It describes what sort of person they are, what values they possess, their overall pattern of behavior, and sums up the image they have of themselves. In most cases, the leader with a fatal flaw is totally unaware of it.[63]

When the leader is made aware of this fatal flaw he is then able to change and rediscover how to correct it.

Keep the Distractions Contained

Leadership distraction. Some leaders are known as those who can multiply the energies and abilities of others, while some leaders accidently diminish people. Wiseman states, "Managers actively acquire talent, but then are passive about growing it. They are, for the most part oblivious to the development of others."[64] Others find themselves continually seeking to overlook this accidental diminishment to focus on the mission. Avoiding distractions and maintaining focus on the mission is an active job of everyone in the organization. In an interview with Chris Horst, regarding maintaining focus and avoiding distractions, Gene Habecker, president of Taylor University states,

You can't just assume that a mission will take care of itself. It will atrophy if you don't aggressively manage it in an ongoing way and continually reaffirm and

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[62] Lencioni, *The Advantage*, 145.

[63] Zenger and Folkman, *Extraordinary Leader*, 161.

[64] Wiseman, *Multipliers*, 57.

integrate it into everything that you do over and over and over again. Mission management is never over. It's never done.[65]

The leadership of an organization believes in the mission they submitted themselves to by accepting employment; if not they ought to consider seeking other employment. This mission is important and should be the focus of their employment. It is important to mitigate against leadership distractions by ensuring continued development of others. In this development toward mission focus the leader will naturally align and realign where necessary. The training process, for the sake of the organization, can also ensure the right person is in the right position within the organization for strategic optimization.

Employee distraction. One of the most commonly overlooked distractions is having the right person in the wrong seat or a great person on the team that is just not right for that organization. Author states,

> Many people try to accommodate their own personal style and desires to the needs of an organization. Although this can be done successfully, frequently this leads to frustration, job dissatisfaction, and failure to be promoted and advanced. Finding an organization where there is a good fit often allows people to truly excel.[66]

Distractions are minimized when an employee's satisfaction is up. When their abilities and desires combine to do work that the organization values, then the employee's satisfaction goes up. This increase in satisfaction is seen not only in staff leadership, but volunteer leadership as well.

Assignment distraction. Within organizations, distractions are often not intentional; they happen because someone was not being intentional. Change can create levels of distraction that are unnecessary and are avoidable. While organizations learn to multiply the greatness in others, they must realize that including others through the process of change will minimize avoidable distractions. It is important to create safety and include

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[65] Greer and Horst, *Mission Drift*, 51.

[66] Zenger and Folkman, *Extraordinary Leader*, 118.

team members in the process of change rather than dictate it down. In her work, *Conversational Intelligence*, Glaser notes, "When leaders help create a framework for change and then stimulate Level III interaction dynamics, they are catalyzing change within the framework rather than dictating the way change needs to happen."[67]

In a world where businesses are required to do more with less, it becomes a race to see who is just doing more things. Since organizations are required to be more efficient, it is important to focus on the right things. In a determined focus, McKeown writes, "Essentialism is not about how to get more things done; it's about how to get the right things done."[68] Because of the availability of tools, smart phones, and connectivity, avoiding distractions is especially difficult. All people face different levels of distractions. Some of these distractions can be an annoyance to the mission, but others are fatal. Many of these distractions come in the form of bad decisions as well. Decisions need clear boundaries, as Drucker affirms: "The more concisely and clearly boundary conditions are stated, the greater the likelihood that the decision will indeed be an effective one and will accomplish what it set out to do."[69] To avoid all distractions, it is important to focus. Some pride themselves on being able to multi-task and carry on with multiple things at one time, which is ok so long as there is focus involved. Multi-tasking is elusive, it is more about focus and switching between tasks, as McKeown states, "What we can't do is concentrate on two things at the same time. When I talk about being present, I'm not talking about doing only one thing at a time. I'm talking about being focused on one thing at a time."[70]

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[67] Glaser, *Conversational Intelligence*, 186.

[68] Greg McKeown, *Essentialism: The Disciplined Pursuit of Less* (New York: Crown Business, 2014), 5.

[69] Drucker, *The Effective Executive*, 130.

[70] McKeown, *Essentialism*, 220.

Complete the Mission

This dependence is also connected to their ability to succeed as a team, when Wickman notes that it is "in direct proportion to your ability to solve your problems. The better you are at solving problems, the more successful you become."[71] It is important to understand how to avoid distractions and make sure that even the best ideas do not hinder a team from accomplishing the mission. To accomplish the mission, it is important to understand from where fatal distractions tend to come. The distractions tend to come from "sins of omission" rather than "sins of commission." Zenger and Folkman explain,

> [Fatal distractions are] defined by failure to initiate activities, not discovering the causes of failure, ignoring obvious needs, not reaching out, not taking initiative, not seeking out new ideas, connecting with people, and not exerting energy to make things happen. It could be summed up as complacency and general apathy.[72]

A healthy team is often created around the fact that all have to be in agreement of the mission as Geiger states, "You can't have a strong culture without a strong sense of mission. A healthy ministry cultivates a clear sense of "here is what we are going to do together."[73] In this greater purpose a team finds its strength to avoid distractions and maintain alignment. It is imperative for a team to work together and not against each other. Each team member must make an intentional decision each and every day to keep accounts short and overlook simple offenses for the sake of the mission. To maintain good work relationships for the sake of the mission, Lencioni notes, "Becoming a real team requires an intentional decision on the part of its members. I like to say that team work is not a virtue. It is a choice—and a strategic one."[74]

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[71] Wickman, *Traction*, 131.

[72] Zenger and Folkman, *Extraordinary Leader*, 159.

[73] Eric Geiger and Kevin Peck, *Designed to Lead: The Church and Leadership Development* (Nashville: B & H, 2016), 23.

[74] Lencioni, *The Advantage*, 21.

Conclusion

Leaders in the church are to focus on the mission of the church. When the leadership understands where the church is going due to the clarity, simplicity, and urgency of the mission, it is easier to rally increased leadership to support it. While this project is centered on the three factors of recognizing the opportunities, establishment of leadership, and the development of core tactics, in some way the premise of this project is similar to the advice that Barna and Dallas offer when they state, "You'll always find the same two things. There is relationship and there is task."[75]

What is presented in this chapter is nothing more than a method for focus and alignment, to accomplish the mission. It is important for leaders to recognize a need within their ministries and desire the opportunity to make changes as necessary. In these changes, leaders search for efficiencies that maintain focus and draw others to the tasks that all work toward the greater mission. In these tasks, building the culture of the organization is extremely important. If there is to be a culture of safety and creativity, leaders need to multiply the greatness in others. In this culture of safety and creativity, leaders will focus on forming relational connections, while at the same time motivating for deliverables.

While some staff members may be uncomfortable with change, it provides leaders with opportunities to learn how lead through it. In leading through change, or just in the daily activities of the organization, it is important to focus on the strengths of each team member rather than trying to vitalize draining weaknesses. Allen states, "If you're like most people, however, you need to apply these skills in a more timely, complete and systematic way so you can get on top of it all instead of feeling buried."[76] To increase efficiencies and maintain focus on the mission it is important for all leaders to seek out both positive and negative feedback. This feedback will help the humble leader correct

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[75] Barna and Dallas, *Master Leaders*, 20.

[76] David Allen, *Getting Things Done: The Art of Stress-Free Productivity* (New York: Penguin Group, 2015), 3.

either intentional or unintentional diminishment of others. When correcting negative behaviors that diminish others, the result will have a positive impact. The leader's impact of multiplying staff through focusing on strengths will help the individual and the organization.

In selecting teams to help a church accomplish its mission, it is critical to select qualified leaders. Selecting qualified leaders is essential to ensuring that character is sought after above competence, and chemistry is more important than capacity. If that happens appropriately, then leadership problems seem to melt into the fray of working together. As part of selecting the right team, it is likewise important to keep the leaders focused and the mission moving through awareness and accountability. When teams are selected and managed appropriately, churches will experience an incredibly focused alignment and their productivity and efficiencies will increase.

CHAPTER 4

PRACTICAL CALL TO MISSION FOCUS

Gospel City Church Granger (GCC) exists for the purpose of glorifying God by making disciples through the fulfillment of the Great Commission given by Jesus in Matthew 28:19-20, which says, "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you." GCC uses small groups (men's, women's, and mixed), as the primary means to aid in pursuing this mission. Small group leaders are entrusted with making disciples through intentional interaction, group discussion, accountability, and prayer. As they lead their small groups, the members of the small group are discipled toward growing in Christlikeness. In a church that continues to increase in attendance each year, these leaders become the hands and feet of Jesus, shepherding and caring for the members of their small group. It is beneficial to the mission of the church that these men and women are provided with oversight and training to help them stay focused on the mission, so that what is happening in small groups is actually discipleship.

The purpose of this project was to train the lay leaders of Gospel City Church, Granger, through an increase in leadership development due to an amplification of improved focus on disciple-making, for optimization of core discipleship tactics resulting in a strong discipleship culture, and for the glory of God. Following the process of recognizing opportunities, establishing leadership, and developing core tactics, the project led to the development of a new training program aimed at maintaining mission alignment between the pastoral staff and the lay leadership of the church. The subsequent information details that process.

As outlined in chapter 1 of this project, the purpose was to train leaders and improve focus on disciple-making, and three goals were essential for its successful completion. The three goals that determined the success of this project.

1. The first goal was to recognize opportunities within the discipleship pipeline for increasing effectiveness in discipleship.

2. The second goal was to establish a five-session leadership training course which will specifically address the identified areas of weakness within the discipleship pipeline.

3. The third goal was to develop implementation tactics and timing for a course that will increase the overall effectiveness of the discipleship pipeline.

Recognize Opportunities

At GCC, small group leaders are not only a part of their own small group, but also participate as a member of a larger team, led by a pastor-appointed coach, who serves as a liaison between the pastoral staff and the congregation and provides leadership for each of the small group leaders. Coaches are men and women who have shown faithfulness as a small group leader and have demonstrated biblical maturity and competency to lead several small group leaders and oversee the care of 30-60 individuals. The objective in this structure is that, through these coaches, the pastoral staff can not only equip and train small group leaders but can also provide ongoing involvement and accountability within the small groups.

Although this well-structured ministry was in place at GCC, the leadership team observed that the proportion of the congregation participating in small groups was lower than they desired. Since small groups are the primary tool through which GCC seeks to make disciples, the leadership wanted to understand why that number was lower than desired, and what could be done to increase that number. Upon evaluation for the first goal, it was determined that a thorough evaluation of the small group ministry would serve to recognize opportunities within the discipleship pipeline for increasing effectiveness and reveal opportunities that would lead to the increase and efficacy of these weaknesses.

In recognizing the opportunity, it is important for leaders to do three things: inventory the situation, interpret the results and identify next steps.

Inventory the Situation

Often, leaders come to the place of evaluating a ministry either because something negative has happened, or through a purposeful process in which the leadership team has moved to remain aligned, relevant, and focused on the mission. In a world where the church seems to be fighting for space within the hearts of its community members, it is important to regularly evaluate and inventory ministries and the leadership over them. When a ministry is not holding tight to the mission of the church, then it is time to identify where change is needed or desired in order to align the ministry with the mission of the church.

At GCC, a multi-level approach was developed to take inventory of the existing small group ministry. The objective in the inventory process was to determine how effectively the small group ministry was in pursuing the mission of the church. Conducting this inventory involved cataloguing the discipleship ministries through internal research, both on a personal and collaborative level, and conducting a survey of the leaders.

Personal evaluation. The inventory began with the small groups pastor informally evaluating the ministry through personal observation and conversations with staff and lay leaders. First, questions were directed at the current realities of each of the separate ministries. The questions considered included, what the current model for recruitment is, how the church onboards new members, what is the dynamic flow of small group, what is expected of each small group member, and what is being done to deepen the discipleship of each person within a small group.

Second, an examination was conducted on missional alignment of the goals the small group ministry team had established for the year. To determine if the goals were focused on mission alignment, five questions were asked: (1) is the team on track with

goals, (2) do each of the goals support the overall goals for discipleship in the church, (3) are the other ministries on track for their own goals, (4) what adjustments need to be made, and (5) do ministry goals support one another. GCC's declaration that it is "not a church with Small Groups [but] a church of Small Groups," makes it imperative that all other ministries support the onboarding and goals of the small groups ministry. For the ministries of the church to be missionally aligned, they must not compete against one another, but instead understand how each ministry can work together toward the same end. With a primary focus on small group ministry, it is right for each ministry department to support the onboarding of small group members into healthy, growing small groups.

Third, it was important to examine the goals established at the beginning of the ministry year and ask if they were the right goals. Sometimes leadership needs to recognize that a wrong decision has been made and take corrective action. Realizing a wrong decision has been made, making the change, and adjusting to increase effectiveness only helps all involved to become stronger leaders. Since GCC's mission is to make disciples, it was effective to question if the small group ministry goals were effective in making disciples, or if an adjustment needed to be made to better support the mission.

Throughout the informal evaluation and observation, it was helpful to document the findings, ideas, and preliminary conclusions. The informal evaluations were useful for collaborative evaluations within the leadership team, as well as for creating a formal survey to gather data.

Collaborative evaluation. After the personal evaluation was completed, the small groups pastor pulled together other members of the lay and staff leadership team to ask the same questions within a group context. Rather than looking first at the data that had already been collected, the team was led through a process of development whereby they could experience the joy of discovery and interpretation as they came up with creative solutions. If the leader has already begun to form intermittent decisions, that will lead the staff toward a premature conclusion. However, it is important not to lead the staff to

conclusions when the investigation process is not over. It is beneficial to the process to continue scrutinizing concepts for the sake of thoroughness. Remaining neutral is a difficult but crucial task.

The spark that originated with one leader, eventually ignited others to thinking on the same topic. As this happens, it is important to lead staff, volunteer and paid, through a similar process of development. There is value in allowing the staff to experience the joy of discovery and interpretation, thereby letting them come up with creative curiosity and ideas before leading them to a preconceived solution. As the leader who developed a passion and curiosity for the identified opportunity, it is important to allow the staff and lay leaders to evaluate the ministry in a similar way. This is a simple evaluation period, casual step, and an informal survey for the staff. These actions will begin the process of a critical evaluation for the staff.

Using the same questions from before, it is important to talk to lay leadership first to hear from the lowest possible position in the leadership chain. Hearing from the leader closest to the ground war in any battle is indispensable for winning the war. Listening to the volunteer lay leader will help one hear the actual issues affecting each small group leader and need to be considered before hearing from senior staff leaders and elders. Next, it is important to hear from non-pastoral staff members. Information gathered from lay leadership teams will initiate interviewing the non-ministry specific staff members. The non-pastoral staff members will have a perspective that the volunteers do not. These staff members will also have a perspective that the pastoral staff do not have. These reflections will help gain a perspective from other leaders that would not normally result without these observations.

Once the non-pastoral staff members have been heard, the pastoral staff will offer another perspective on the identification of opportunities. Once all the crucial information is gained from the staff, an interview of the pastoral team is needed to glean their observations as a leader. It is beneficial to incorporate the senior staff pastors and

elders at the end of the interview process. This patient process will gain the data needed without contaminating it from leadership opinions or any ideas related to solutions.

Objective evaluation. The process of the personal and collaborative evaluations prepared the participating individuals for the objective evaluation. The informal conversations that occurred in the first two steps, engaged their minds to think about the issues to be addressed so that their answers in the survey would be well-thought and developed. The third step in the process of inventory was to conduct a formal survey. The survey sought to make the evaluation more objective, with clear data and results. All leaders received the survey by email, with clear directions and a due date for the responses to be returned by.[1] As responses are returned, it is important to identify each leaders' unique and profitable ideas. It is important to capture all ideas without making any decisions based on small pieces of feedback so that all the data can be compiled before moving forward.

Interpret the Results

As part of the process to recognize opportunities, an interpretation of the data is crucial for making appropriate decisions. Both verbal and written data need to be assimilated together. For a leader making observations and listening to people, it is natural to receive multiple data inputs. There are multiple forms of data received, some formal and some informal, and they are all equally important. A constant stream of information leads to decisions flowing into the leader's mind. A good leader will be under a constant state of assimilation. The assimilation of this data will guide the leader to process and evaluate the data received, leading to a better decision.

Evaluate the data. To make good decisions related to the data received from the personal evaluation, collaborative evaluation, and objective evaluation, it is imperative

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[1] See appendix 1.

to examine all the details before deciding on a course of action. It is important to note some of the outliers of the information, especially if any of the numbers would register higher in percentage equaling 80 percent or above. In the evaluation of the data, one must be aware that leadership does not necessarily make decisions based on what others say is important. Rather, the mission, vision, and culture must be kept at the forefront, ahead of what others say, unless comments support the mission, vision, and culture. After evaluating the data received, it can be presented to other leaders to see if there is universal agreement with the findings.

Looking at the data in a single spreadsheet provides a glimpse of the entire survey at the same time. It is good to list some of the initial findings and ideas and keep track of any of the solutions, but not move to solving any of the issues. The spreadsheet is simply an evaluation of the data and not a conclusion. This project compared the personal against the collaborative, and the personal against the objective. Then, it compared the collaborative against the objective data. Once all comparisons are complete, it can be interpreted.

In GCC's evaluations, there were glaring similarities in the data with ten out of ten data sources agreeing on the fact that (1) small group leader coaches did not have adequate training which included apprenticeship training, (2) a lack of connection to pastoral leadership, (3) there was not clear vision for the small group ministry, (4) there has been little to no focus on small groups from the platform, (5) the small group members lacked a sense of awe abiding relationship with God, (6) and small group members have an over-developed sense of consumer mentality and entitlement.

Compiling verbal data that has been observed, heard, and collected throughout the evaluation process may be difficult, but it is just as important to pull together as the objective data from the survey. It is much easier to gain clarity on issues related to the ministry in conversations rather than through a survey. In many ways, the personal

interviews of leadership proved to be more compelling in data collected while the surveys were lacking in completeness.

The main weakness clarified through verbal communication was a lack of leadership support, training, and encouragement. In addition, verbal communication revealed that the language from the platform sent the message that there was not enough room for more people in small groups since there was a waiting list, so it was not worth the effort to try to get into one. Lastly, leaders expressed concern about the language being used to recruit people into small groups. When the benefits of small group are so heavily advertised, it sends the message of consumerism or false advertisement. The offering used to onboard people to small groups is the same offering one would need to keep them in small groups. Other leaders noted that the entitlement mentality is further fueled when small groups fail to serve together, thereby developing an increased entitlement and consumer mentality.

Consider all the opportunities. Organizing all the issues and opportunities into one place provides clarity when trying to make decisions moving forward. This can be a difficult part of the project since it involves capturing a lot of data. However, it will produce much fruit. The organization of the issues into a single place is equally valuable to any future projects as it will provide historical data to help make future decisions.

When searching for the greatest solutions, it is important to remember that great ideas evolve through collaborative creativity and leaders working together to establish requirements. Pulling the team together to collaborate on all the opportunities available is a profitable exercise. The team can debate which opportunities ought to be considered and are best for fulfilling the mission of the church. At this point, it is important to begin the prioritization of the opportunities.

Prioritize the opportunities. It is at this place in the project that the team can work together to ensure that all opportunities have been stated. They then create a

prioritized list that is sorted by relevance. This list of opportunities will be important to determine which opportunities are most pressing and need to be translated into goals for optimizing and strengthening small groups. As the list emerges, similar opportunities with overarching principles begin to reveal themselves. These become the most pressing issue to be addressed.

The process of prioritizing ideas can be cumbersome and time consuming. While some opportunities may be readily identified as lower priorities, it takes time to reflect on and consider those that must have the place of greatest importance. Ideas can be narrowed down to the twenty best options that either need to be first or seem to combine several of the ideas into one. Then, one should wait at least one week to think about it. This waiting period provides time for reflection and other conversations that will strengthen the list. After taking time for reflection, the list can then be whittled down to the top ten. For this project it was important to wait an additional week, providing time to continue thinking about it. Further narrowing this list can be quite difficult. As the data was observed it naturally began to narrow the list down from the top ten to the top five and then the top three. Sometimes a very clear idea will stand out. It is still important to narrow the opportunities down to the top three ideas and then organize a healthy debate over why each of the ideas are good and why each are bad. Once the top three issues are decided upon, it can be presented with the supporting data to the senior leadership team.

Identify Next Steps

Within the process to recognize opportunities, conduct a personal evaluation, assemble a collaborative evaluation, and collect an objective evaluation together revealed three issues that stood out as needing immediate change, while two other issues required time for further development. Those that needed to be addressed immediately were a (1) lack of connection to pastoral leadership, (2) clear vision of small groups and a focus on small groups from the platform, and (3) small group members lacking a sense of awe abiding relationship with God. The two that required more time to develop were: (1)

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adequate small group leader coach training, and (2) over developed sense of consumer mentality and entitlement. After developing the first three chapters of this project it was natural to follow the same format developed in identifying the next steps.

Multiply the greatness in others. When developing leadership, it is essential to teach them how to multiply the greatness in others, by example. Leaders will model what has been modeled for them. The best way to multiply the greatness in others is to give away leadership and then empower other leaders through training and equipping. It is an important leadership task to call up other leaders to come alongside those who are fatigued.

The first item immediately addressed was the lack of connection to pastoral leadership. The lack of connection was addressed by hosting small group leader coach meetings consisting of thirty minutes of training focused on how to be a better facilitator, guide, and mentor, followed by forty-five minutes of questions and answers that needed to be addressed and were received from the small group leaders during the previous month. The question and answer time was designed to address problems in the small group before they rise to the need of formal counseling issues.

Build relational connections. The second leadership opportunity immediately addressed was the outreach to all small group leader coaches by way of calling, emailing, texting, and having lunch with several of the leaders to build the relational connection to the small groups pastor. Another item advantageous for communication in the area of relational connections was related to small group on boarding. Because of a false barrier, there was a need to develop a language that would be helpful for building small groups and not unintentionally diminishing them. Work began with pastoral staff to change the language related to small groups. It was important to ensure that pastors and other leaders did not communicate that there is a waiting list, and thereby create a false barrier for people wanting to get into a small group.

Motivate to outcomes. The third leadership opportunity immediately addressed was what small group leader coaches described as a clear vision of small groups from the platform. As a result of the feedback received from small group leader coaches, a four-week series on biblical community was preached from the platform. This series was designed to cast vision for what discipleship and small groups could be at GCC. In this series the speakers developed a clear vision and presence as it related to small groups.

Focus on strengths. The fourth leadership opportunity immediately addressed was a determined focus on what strengths currently exist within the leadership model. In honor of the first strength it was important to ensure that a multiplication of the greatness in others occurred during this process. To multiply the greatness of others and avoid any unintentional diminishment of the leadership team, it was important to help the leadership team understand the great community GCC currently has. While some things need optimization, many others are doing very well. Since the culture one creates is the one affirms, there needs to be great importance placed on the strengths at GCC. The small groups leadership team knows how to cultivate their own thriving awe-abiding relationship with the Lord and as a result, establish disciplines to nurture a thriving passion for the Lord. The need is to help small group members do the same. The training being taught, revised, and created seeks to address this need.

Leading through change. Once the decision to develop a small group leader coach's training was reached, the next step was to determine the appropriate content for that training. Another informal verbal survey was conducted with several leaders coming together to discuss the needed components of the training for small group leader coaches. Following the informal verbal survey there was also another collaboration time going over the content outline. This content outline was the first draft for the training. This

outline was then further developed into the small group leader coach training[2] that was subsequently was comprised of five separate one-hour sessions.

Through the informal interviews and survey, another issue discovered and in need of change related to the culture of small groups. Many within the small group ministry have an over-developed sense of consumer mentality and entitlement. As a result, there is a plan to increase the amount of serving and to make serving as a small group a mandatory project once per quarter, at a minimum. There is also a targeted approach to accountability and asking leadership to participate more in the church community and in the surrounding community.

Ask for feedback. Sometimes feedback is difficult for people in ministry. Feedback can seem harsh, confrontational, and diminishing. When feedback is done wrong it is a negative behavior. When feedback is done properly, however, it is positive and healthy for the church. In most cases, volunteer lay leaders will not feel comfortable giving feedback to a pastor or paid staff, which is why it is essential that pastors and staff ask for it. Ensuring all leadership has a method for feedback and understanding how to use this feedback knowing that the people giving the feedback will not be shunned, neglected, or penalized in any way for giving honest feedback.

The first goal of this project was to recognize opportunities within the discipleship pipeline for increasing effectiveness in discipleship. This goal was successfully completed after inventorying the situation, interpreting the results, and identifying the next steps. This process alerted Gospel City Church leadership to weaknesses within the small group ministry, leadership development, and the need for a leadership training course. Upon successful completion of the first goal, it was appropriate to move to the second goal of establishing leadership, which utilized training specifically targeted to address the identified areas of weakness within the discipleship pipeline.

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[2] See appendix 2-6.

Establish Leadership

Upon recognizing the opportunities directly in front of GCC and realizing what must be done, establishing leadership was the next step. This task took on the form of a leadership development course. The second goal was to establish a five-session leadership training course which specifically addressed the identified areas of weakness within the discipleship pipeline.

The five-session training course was part of establishing leadership and developing core tactics. The first two sessions were designed to help establish leadership: " Foundational Coaching: Leading with Purpose"[3] and "Directional Coaching: Leading with Christ Centered Counseling."[4] The final three were designed to develop core tactics for the leadership that had been established: "Relational Coaching: Leading toward Authentic Biblical Community,"[5] " Transformational Coaching Leading Others toward Spiritual Maturity and finally,"[6] "Missional Coaching: Leading Others to Live Sent in all of Life."[7]

The selection of qualified leaders had already been in place for this ministry since there was an established small group ministry with small group leader coaches. However, the leadership selection process should be continual, as church growth creates the need for additional leaders, and at times it is wise to replace leaders who need to rotate out of leadership for various reasons. The establishment of leaders is a fluid process. At times, leaders move into new positions, creating a need to back fill their previous position. Sometimes, the demands of life, or simply the need for a break, necessitate that individuals step out of leadership for a season. For this reason, there is a need to develop an on-ramp

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[3] See appendix 1.

[4] See appendix 2.

[5] See appendix 3.

[6] See appendix 4.

[7] See appendix 5.

and off-ramp process whereby new leaders are being trained up and veteran leaders are provided with the opportunity to rotate in and out of leadership when timing is right.

Select Qualified Key Leaders

Finding key leaders for a ministry position requires more than identifying a competent and willing individual. To maintain focus on the mission of the organization it is indispensable to raise up leaders who are qualified to lead according to the mission of the organization. Establishing an objective criterion for qualified key leaders allows the leadership team to more easily identify individuals who could focus on and advance the church's mission. As qualified individuals were identified, a list of potential leaders was created and utilized for inviting men and women to serve in places of leadership. This criterion was also useful to evaluate current leaders.

For the small group leader ministry at GCC, this objective criterion was established through evaluating a combination of the organization's mission, core values, and needs, in conjunction with biblical and secular research that identifies primary attributes for a successful leader. Together, these components clarified the responsibilities and commitment needed, as well as skills and maturity essential for someone to fill these leadership roles. "Foundational Coaching: Leading with Purpose" was developed to help identify and integrate qualified leaders into the discipleship program.[8] The material within the training session was used by the leadership team to help identify individuals as potential leaders. The session itself was used to train coaches in what was to be expected of them, as well as help them identify potential leaders as they interact within the body of the church.

The training session entitled, "Directional Coaching: Leading with Christ Centered Counseling" was created to look at the desirable attributes for a successful leader.[9] The six C's of biblical coaching comprise six aspects of an individual that should

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[8] See appendix 2.

[9] See appendix 3.

be observed when choosing a new leader. The traits learned or observed in these six c's are extremely important to the development of the proper culture. The most important aspect is that of character. Character is the one place where more time spent will yield better results. It is built over time and is difficult to train. Rather than training specific character, it is more readily identified by watching, observing, and asking others about an individual. It is confirmed over time with proven character and affirmed by others who know them well.

A communicator is a person with a good to high emotional intelligence (EQ). A high EQ should be placed second on the list. They must be able to communicate with others and read the room situation to help make leadership decisions. This understanding of EQ is also hard to train as much of it is a natural gifting.

Good chemistry amongst leadership is an important ingredient, and it is what makes the work fun. Some teams spend time together playing, laughing, sharing meals, doing hard things and doing silly things together. Good team chemistry means the team enjoys being around each other. Good team chemistry leads to increased performance, productivity, loyalty, and team success. Chemistry is a big piece of the overall culture tenor.

When selecting specific qualified leaders, it is their commitment to Christ which is first and foremost the most important item to consider about a person. However, it is also advantageous to consider individuals' other areas of commitment, including their family and other obligations to which they have made a commitment. Those who are faithful in the little, can be entrusted with more. However, those who are not faithful with their current obligations cannot reasonably be expected to be faithful with a greater level of leadership and commitment.

Capacity refers to an individual's ability to process multiple problems and situations while maintaining a system for managing tasks and projects within their purview. Although the capacity of a person is often first on the list of qualities that

employers look for, the research in this project suggests that it is not the most important consideration.

Finally, there is a need to make sure all leaders have competence to do what they are being asked to do. However, competence cannot be the gifting or ability that takes over and overshadows the other qualifications of leaders. Competence can be trained, learned, and gained over time. It is always better to invite a person to leadership that has good character and emotional intelligence; the competence can be developed through the process of discipleship.

The second goal was to establish a five-session leadership training course which specifically addressed the identified areas of weakness within the discipleship pipeline. This goal was completed at the finalization of the fifth session of the leadership training course[10]. The first two training sessions were designed to establish leadership and the final three are designed to develop core tactics.

Develop Core Tactics

Once opportunities for change are identified, qualified leadership is established, and a plan is created to cultivate potential leaders, it is time to develop the steps essential to carry out the mission. The third goal was to develop implementation tactics and timing for a course that would increase the overall effectiveness of the discipleship pipeline. This is accomplished by helping leaders focus on the mission, keep the mission moving, keep distractions contained, and complete the mission. For GCC, with a mission to make disciples and a specific goal to reduce the unbelieving population of Michiana, requires great consideration of how to not only move leaders toward evangelism and discipleship, but that those leaders would in turn train the people under their care toward that goal as well. A compilation of core tactics was developed toward that end.[11]

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[10] See appendix 1-5

[11] See appendices 3-5.

At this point in the project it was time to implement the final concept. To host an effective training there needed to be advanced organization of the training sessions beforehand. The simple process to follow would be to select the day in advance on which to train, promote the training to the leadership team, personally invite specific leaders that had been observed as faithful, offer the training, and finally, deploy the new leadership team. The mission of leadership development is never complete. It is important to continue to invest in the leadership so that they will stay healthy, on mission, and happy to serve.

Keep the Leaders Focused

Keeping leaders focused on the mission requires ongoing interaction and a plan. When the mission is not kept in front of the leaders, it is easy to drift away from it. GCC sought to eliminate this drift through more regular interaction between the small groups pastor and the small group leader coaches. A monthly meeting was established to provide training, equipping, accountability, and support. "Relational Coaching: Leading toward Authentic Biblical Community" was developed to provide an initial training to align the coaches on the mission, vision, and their role.[12] While this training is necessary for all new leaders to onboard them and align them with the mission, additional training is also required. The monthly meeting between the pastor and the coaches provides the forum for this monthly training to happen. This small group of men and women gather together for prayer, equipping, and addressing situations that have risen within their small groups. These coaches then meet with their assigned small group leaders to use the same training and answer the same questions with them. It has become a pedagogical model where the pastor trains the coach who trains the leader. A formalized pedagogical model helps keep leaders at every level focused on discipleship and encourages the congregation toward discipleship as well. As this model has been instituted, the leaders have responded

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[12] See appendix 4.

positively to the input, training, and equipping. It has led them to experience greater joy, support, and encouragement as they lead others.

Keep the Mission Moving

In a fast-paced and screen-time-based culture many find themselves in a place where they have become isolated and no longer work together to solve difficult issues. It is important to be intentional about keeping leaders from derailing or sidelining. Maintaining a positive discipleship of the leaders helps to ensure that the mission keeps moving. Another benefit of this project is that it has caused an overdue evaluation of and solution for suffering leaders. Leaders need occasional respite and a support network to keep moving forward.

Keep Distractions Contained

A team that keeps distractions contained in all areas is a team that will succeed at their mission. Distractions can be something that creates simple lack of focus on the mission or they can lead to fatal failures. Distractions come in the form of insecurities, lack of competencies that develop as the church grows and responsibilities increase, and a leader's pride. To stay mission focused, a leader is to maintain focus on living, shepherding, living, and teaching. "Transformational Coaching: Leading Others toward Spiritual Maturity" was developed to guard GCC's leaders against distractions that arise in pursuing the mission of making disciples.[13] This lesson on transformational coaching seeks to continually turn leaders back to the gospel

Complete the Mission

When an organization is intentional about and focused on its mission, it is more readily able to keep the mission moving forward and keep distractions contained. This distraction-free forward progress sets the organization up to actually complete their

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[13] See appendix 5.

mission. For GCC, that extends to the point of making disciples, both through salvation and sanctification. The mission is fulfilled when unbelievers are presented with the gospel and come to saving faith in Christ, and when young believers are challenged and encouraged to grow in their faith. While the latter most likely occurs in the context of personal relationships at the small group level, the former requires an additional focus on pushing individuals toward evangelism. Neither the church nor the members of the church are able to carry out the work of salvation. That job is given to the Holy Spirit. However, the Holy Spirit works through the individuals in the church actively proclaiming the message of the gospel to a world that needs to hear it. The pulpit ministry at GCC has worked decidedly toward building a culture that pursues this end, but completing the mission required an additional push for individuals to purposefully act in accordance with that goal. "Missional Coaching: Leading Others to Live Sent in all of Life" was developed to move coaches, small group leaders, and small group members toward carrying out the work of making disciples through evangelism.[14] This training on missional coaching seeks to train individuals to not just pursue spiritual growth in their own lives, but to pass it on to those who do not yet know the gospel.

The leader who recognized an opportunity to increase or optimize a process would generally like to see the solution implemented. The third goal was to develop implementation tactics and timing for a course that would increase the overall effectiveness of the discipleship pipeline. This goal was met following the completion of the five-session training course.

Conclusion

The mission of Gospel City Church is to glorify God through the fulfillment of the Great Commission in the spirit of the great commandment. GCC takes this mission seriously and has given a lot of energy toward that end. GCC desires to make disciples

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[14] See appendix 6.

and is determined to continue doing until the Lord returns. From the onset of this project, the mission was to train leaders and improve focus on disciple-making, with three goals indispensable for its successful completion.

The first goal was to recognize opportunities within the discipleship pipeline for increasing effectiveness in discipleship. This goal was completed by observing the many opportunities identified and brought forward. Following the identification of these opportunities, it was essential to narrow the options through a simple process. The process included: (1) inventory the situation, (2) interpret the results, and (3) identify next steps. Once goal 1 was complete, it was necessary to move toward the second goal.

The second goal was to establish a five-session leadership training to specifically address the identified areas of weakness within the discipleship pipeline. Leadership development and deployment is a difficult task that needs much attention. As a result of the first goal and identifying the opportunities to increase effectiveness, the leadership recognized areas of vulnerability within the small groups ministry. The five-session training course was developed as a part of goal 2. The developed training sessions were intentional to ensure that the model followed was the same model established in chapter 1 and 2 of this project. To follow the model within this project, the first two sessions of the five-session training helped to establish leadership and the final three sessions work at developing core tactics for the leadership that have been established.

The third goal was to develop implementation tactics and timing for a course to increase the overall effectiveness of the discipleship pipeline. As a result of the format from the five-session training course, the tactics were already set and in place with the training outlines. To fulfill the completion of this goal it was necessary to help leaders focus on the mission, keep the mission moving, keep distractions contained, and finally, complete the mission. With all necessary tactics in place and a systematic training calendar established, the third goal was successfully completed.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY AND EVALUATION

Leaders who think critically naturally look for opportunity to continually improve circumstances, surroundings, and outcomes. In that natural desire, they recognize opportunities and begin to fill the gaps to do something about it. Looking at the way Nehemiah and Jesus naturally demonstrated leadership in their spheres of influence was illuminating. Each man identified opportunities, established leadership, and then developed core tactics. That unintentional discovery led to other notable discoveries about biblical leadership. Diving into extrabiblical and secular sources on leadership, it was remarkable to see that all of those resources pointed to the same thing.

Biblical Call to Mission Focus

Nehemiah was so impacted by the broken-down walls, lack of protection, and Jerusalem's onslaught of derision, mockery, and ridicule, that he was moved to action. It was sobering to see how a leader took the mishandling of people so personally. Nehemiah's call to mission focus came as a result of learning how Jerusalem was being handled. This defenseless trial was very personal to Nehemiah; he had visceral reactions because he was affected by the defenselessness of Jerusalem. Nehemiah was called to develop an effective leadership culture that led to the repair of the wall that protected Jerusalem. There were ample opportunities for him to succumb to distractions, ranging from simple to fatal. However, he refused to be distracted from his mission focus, and spent a lot of time directing his men to maintain focus on the mission, until the wall was rebuilt and the city was once again protected.

Jesus was called to redeem humanity to Himself through the permanent atonement of sins. This was the greatest mission that ever existed; it was no small assignment. In fact, it was a mission that only God Himself could complete. While Jesus was fully human, it was also His mission to accomplish the work of His Father (John 4:34). Jesus was limited in His humanity; He could not accomplish the mission on His own without the deployment of other men and their skills. Jesus employed the gifts of other men making them fishers of men, winning new subjects for God's rule (Matt 4:18). These men continued the mission to redeem humanity to Himself by preaching the gospel once Jesus returned to His place at His Father's side. It was imperative that Jesus establish that leadership before His departure to ensure His mission could be accomplished. Jesus not only discipled others, He conducted ministry and continued to perform miracles. To see the Savior understand His mission and remain extremely purposeful throughout His life was moving. Jesus had incredible focus, to the point of extreme difficulty that affected Him personally. In fulfilling His mission, Jesus' humanity was tested and tried as He faced difficult trials. Jesus' mission took great focus and an ability to understand the importance of the outcome, yet He remained resolute in the completion of it.

Nehemiah and Jesus relentlessly maintained focus and were not distracted from their missions. These men understood their mission and had a deep sense of what needed to be done to accomplish it. First, they identified opportunities by inventorying the situation and identifying next steps. Second, they established leadership through selecting strategic leaders and capable leaders. Finally, they developed core tactics that kept their leaders focused, the mission moving, distractions contained, and ultimately led to completing the mission.

Extrabiblical Call to Mission Focus

The research of extrabiblical material led to the discovery of a common pattern of leadership that exists in the vast sea of expert opinion. The patterns seen in extrabiblical sources followed the same pattern that Nehemiah and Jesus used in the Old and New

Testaments of recognizing opportunities, establishing leadership, and developing core tactics.

Mission statements within a church do not guarantee that a church will stay on mission. It is critical that the church communicate in a way that defines the mission and its core values, and helps to develop a mission critical strategy. It is not until a church has a defined mission, and the community around it begins to state the mission of the church, that a church has begun to truly live its mission. The way the community begins to state the mission of a church is through the way it loves the community around them. The mission of a church can be accomplished when intense focus is placed upon that mission and the leadership is disciplined to fulfill the strategy necessary to achieve it. In most cases, churches do not intend to drift from their mission. However, when the mission of the church and its methods to fulfill it are not strictly adhered to, the church will drift.

When a person feels safe, he more readily performs at his highest levels and provides a much higher level of output. The correlation is, when staff are happy and healthy, the output and mission accomplishments are increased. When a leader spends time multiplying greatness in others, all the people employed by that organization develop a deep trust and respect for that leader. When the staff of an organization have a deep trust for their leader, they are willing to sacrifice just about anything to accomplish the mission. The organization is built as leaders follow six critical tactics: (1) multiply the greatness in others, (2) build relational connections, (3) motivate for deliverables, (4) lead change, (5) focus on strengths, and (6) ask for feedback. These tactics invest in others and genuinely help them grow, ultimately enabling the organization to more readily complete its mission.

Practical Call to Mission Focus

Making disciples is the task given to all believers throughout history. Gospel City Church Granger has a mission to complete as a stewardship given by the Lord Himself. Leaders naturally notice and observe inconsistencies in their areas of oversight

that need continual improvement and development. While observing the opportunities within the discipleship ministries of Gospel City Church, it was realized that a leadership gap had resulted in a lack of discipleship. This identification led to a survey that returned quantifiable information about how to shore up that gap. Following the same format that was discovered in researching Nehemiah, Jesus, and extrabiblical leadership materials, this project applied the same time-proven methods of mission focus and alignment, creating a training curriculum focused on the mission of the church.

Once the decision was made as to the best methodology and process toward an increase in discipleship, it was imperative that a proper establishment of leadership take place. The establishment of leadership happens by relationship and training. The first two sessions of the project focused on establishing the leadership in sessions of "Leading with a Purpose" and "Leading with Christ-Centered Coaching." In these two sessions, coaches were led to consider the charge given to them and to develop the proper constitution required of an individual to lead well.

The concentration of the latter three sessions was on employing core tactics that have been developed to help coaches maintain a focused alignment. In these sessions, coaches were provided with procedures and tactics to keep their small group leaders attentive to the mission so that the mission keeps moving forward and distractions are contained. In this area, coaches were trained on "Leading toward Authentic Biblical Community," "Leading Others toward Spiritual Maturity," and "Leading Others to Live Sent in All of Life."

Recognize Opportunities

In the research and study that was conducted for this project, fourteen leaders, comprised of seven volunteer leaders and seven staff members, were surveyed. Each leader received the same set of twenty questions that covered experience, training, vision, mission, strategies, challenges, awareness, measurements, weaknesses and recommended changes. Among the data collected, it is important to note that the staff and volunteer leaders

demonstrated agreement on nearly all the questions answered. It is also noteworthy that of the fourteen leaders, 50 percent were volunteers.

The results provided some clear direction for needed changes and training to be implemented. Many significant data points will help to fine tune the ministry in the coming month and years to maximum effectiveness. However, for the purposes of this project, it was most important to look at four points that were considered mission critical and afforded the greatest opportunity to continue developing the discipleship ministries at Gospel City Church.

First, the survey disclosed that 100 percent of those surveyed agreed on the question, "Why do you find that deploying Small Group leaders can be difficult?" The unanimous response was that leaders lack a sense of awe abiding relationship with God and have an over-developed sense of consumer mentality and entitlement. In an effort to meet this need, training session 4 was developed to train leaders in transformational living. The focus of this session was on shepherding, leading, and teaching. Session 5, on missional coaching, also sought to meet this need as it provided training on living sent and leading to send.

When asked "What areas of the training and equipping process are weakest," 90 percent stated that the weakest place in the training for leadership development was in the lack of small group leader coach training. Coaches have been unaware of how to assist and come alongside their small group leaders. They have not been equipped to mentor leaders with difficult problems within their groups. The entirety of the training curriculum sought to equip coaches in this area. Throughout the five sessions, they were trained in foundational coaching, directional coaching, relational coaching, transformational coaching, and missional coaching.

In response to the question, "What process exists for increasing awareness of the biblical mandate to make disciples?" a commanding 88 percent noted two problem areas. The first problem area was the need to increase awareness within the church body

through a culture of invitation to small groups. People feel more inclined to join a small group if they have been personally invited, rather than randomly signing up and being assigned to a group in which they have no personal connections. Second, a lack of communication through the pulpit ministry has left many in the church unaware of the opportunities available with small groups, the church's primary discipleship arm. In response, the church initiated a campaign encouraging small group members toward a culture of invitation, and educated the congregation with a focus on small group awareness and onboarding. During the month of February, the pulpit ministry was devoted to preaching four sermons on the importance of community within the church.

One final, critical question asked, "What would you change about the discipleship pipeline?" Of those surveyed, 82 percent responded that there is a need for increased connection with pastoral leadership, a more clear and compelling call for discipleship engagements, and the development of leadership apprenticeships. These needs have been responded to by inviting small group leader coaches into a pastor's home on a monthly basis to work through a thirty-minute session of continuing relationship building and conflict resolution training. This training was followed by discussion related to situations that small group leaders presently face and need answers to.

Establish Leadership

Of critical importance to completing the mission, is establishing the right leaders. Moving forward after recognizing the opportunities, the next step was to consider how to establish leadership. The focus of the leadership group was the small group leader coaches. Given the size of the church, it is not possible for the pastoral staff to work directly with all the small group leaders. Therefore, coaches are selected to serve as a liaison between the pastoral staff and the small group leaders. One of the needs identified was creating a program for a greater level of pastoral support for the coaches as they seek to train and encourage small group leaders. This has been met through monthly opportunities for the coaches to meet and be equipped by the pastoral leadership. Through

these meetings, the church is now better able to establish the leadership necessary to complete the mission.

Foundational coaching. Through foundational coaching, coaches are trained to understand exactly what is required of them. In this training session, coaches were educated on the definition of a coach and the commitment required of those called to serve as coaches. The commitment of a coach is to functionally act as a facilitator who comes alongside to encourage others in spiritual growth, and to equip and train leaders. In addition, coaches are charged with mentoring small group leaders toward multiplying their groups, working through crisis mentoring, and unlocking leadership potential. Lastly, coaches are committed to guiding their leaders toward small group involvement, small group recruitment, and multiplication of the leaders within their own groups.

Within the responsibility of this commitment, coaches act as culture shapers and culture cultivators. They work to ensure that the culture of the groups under their leadership is biblical, gospel-centered, prayer-saturated, discipleship-concentrated, forgiveness-oriented, and others-focused. As a leader and culture cultivator it is important for them to develop purposeful urgency, extreme clarity, core value stewardship, frequent communication, consistency of ministry, and asking for helpful feedback.

As leaders, coaches are trained to understand the continuum of discipleship through an intentional discipleship model of being essential, consistent, and preventative. Through this process, coaches learned what it means to be directive in discipleship as it relates to instructive, purposeful, and persuasive coaching. They were taught how to offer corrective discipleship and how to be authoritative in teaching, directional in reproof, and altering in their correction. Finally, they learned that an intensive discipleship model demands urgency as they work with vulnerable people and offer counsel that is restorative in its approach.

Directional coaching. Directional coaching sought to help leaders understand that God wants to do something in them before He does something through them. Coaches were trained in the 6 Cs of biblical coaching: character, competence, chemistry, capacity, commitment, and core values. Character was highlighted as the most important and was encouraged to be considered before competence. If the character of an individual cannot handle the position, potential leaders are not to be elevated simply because of their competence or gifting. Focusing on the development of the leader is of utmost importance. If the right leaders are not in place, then developing the core tactics will not matter.

Develop Core Tactics

Tactics are strategies and plans by which any organization determines how it will fulfill its mission. Tactics also provide the principles for the day-to-day operations of the organization. These tactics and strategies also stipulate the metrics to help an organization understand how to track the completion of its mission. Once an established leadership is in place, it is imperative to develop core tactics that lead toward accomplishing the mission. These tactics involve relational coaching, transformational coaching, and missional coaching.

Relational coaching. Relationships are foundational to ministry. Discipleship does not happen apart from growing relationships that are centralized on the gospel. Relational coaching is designed to lead others toward authentic biblical community through leadership development, leadership alignment, leadership execution, leadership feedback, leadership core values, and the leadership CARE model. Through this personal, close, hands-on approach to leadership development, small group leader coaches will learn to become humble, healthy, growing, courageous, and multiplying leaders.

Transformational coaching. Part of the Christian life entails continual growth and a transformational nature of life. As discipleship happens, so does growth in Christlikeness. Transformational coaching is aimed to increase the purposefulness in

transformational living, transformational shepherding, transformational leading, and transformational teaching. While coaches are developing their own purposefulness toward transformational coaching, they will help increase a discipline, passion, compulsion, and urgency for the gospel in the church. This transformation with the gospel will increase their passion to care, lead, coach, and become increasingly transparent with others. As a result, living in a transformational way will give greater persistence toward gospel conversations, relationships, and partnerships. That will naturally help each of the coaches and all their small group leaders live in missional way. They will desire to live sent or lead others to live sent.

Missional coaching. The mission of the church is to live out the commandment given in Matthew 28:19-20: "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you." It is an act of worship to live in a way that one is sent no matter where he is. That type of commitment requires believers to functionally live as a missionary and continually make disciple and teach disciples. Living sent involves four types of gospel-centered relationships: coincidental, calculated, determined, and intentional. Within the missional coaching model, all coaches are to live in such a way that they are leading to send. Leading others in such a way that they understand the general call for every believer to proclaim the gospel, a specific call to preach the gospel to a specific person, group or country of people, and finally a continuing call where all believers are to proclaim the gospel, making disciples until the day Christ returns or He takes them home.

Evaluation of the Project's Purpose

The purpose of this project was to train the lay leaders of Gospel City Church Granger, to increase leadership development through an amplification of organizational alignment for improved focus on disciple-making, for optimization of core tactics resulting in a healthy culture, and for the glory of God. To be faithful to the observations and

survey, this project set out to equip lay-leaders, intensify leadership maturity, and advance the deliberate development on disciple-making amongst the leaders of Gospel City Church.

This project recognized four major weaknesses, which led to the implementation of process, systems, and training which helped cultivate Christ abiding relationships and equipped leaders. First, leaders can now cultivate their own sense of awe or abiding relationship with Christ and therefore decrease a sense of consumer entitlement. Second, the project strengthened a breakdown and weakness in the training for small group leader coaches through the development of a small group leader coach training. In addition, Gospel City Church hosted a sermon series on biblical community which increased awareness of the value of discipleship through small groups. Finally, a small group leader coach meeting was established. This meeting is deliberate through a monthly training and equipping. During this meeting there is also purposeful development of pastoral leadership with the coaches. It is through these efforts that an increased awareness and amplification of organizational alignment has improved the focus on disciple-making by developing core tactics.

As a result of the data collected from individuals through conversations and the formal survey, this project successfully fulfilled its purpose by developing a process for pastoral mentorship and small group leader coach training. It was through this training that the small group leader coaches were equipped and better prepared to mentor their small group leaders.

Evaluation of the Project's Goals

When the work for this project began it was difficult to nail down three goals. Observing the difficult times within the church, and many evangelical leaders moving toward a path of destruction, it was considered imperative to stay on mission and focus on the goals. The goals were designed to aim at the current cultural dysfunctions that are

happening in evangelicalism, yet that did not fit the goals of Gospel City Church Granger.

After conducting the survey, it was established that the best goals were simply threefold.

1. The first goal was to recognize opportunities within the discipleship pipeline for increasing effectiveness in discipleship.

2. The second goal was to establish a five-session leadership training course which specifically addressed the identified areas of weakness within the discipleship pipeline.

3. The third goal was to develop implementation tactics and timing for a course that would increase the overall effectiveness of the discipleship pipeline.

The first goal was simply to recognize opportunities, which is natural for most leaders. It merely takes a critical eye and a desire for improvement. This goal also takes into account the need for increasing the effectiveness at Gospel City Church. The goal of recognizing opportunities within the discipleship pipeline to increase effectiveness in discipleship was met by an intentional focus on evaluating the primary discipleship arm of the church; the small group ministry. Through a combination of personal and collaborative evaluations and a formal survey, specific weaknesses within the ministry were identified.

The second goal was designed to meet the need that was identified by developing a leadership training course that promoting an increase in a disciple-making ministry. The goal to establish a five-session leadership training course was met by the creation of a training course that focused on the establishment of qualified leaders, as well as the core tactics needed to better align the small group ministry with the mission of the church. This course is now able to be used for identifying potential new leaders and training them as they step into leadership as a coach. It also serves as a plumb line for which to evaluate leaders and the ministry's alignment with the mission.

The third goal was to develop the tactics necessary to implement the five-session training course. It was also necessary to help with ordering the timing for the implementation surrounding the teaching of the course. These goals simply follow the same methodology discovered in the biblical texts and extrabiblical texts for developing a

leadership paradigm and discipleship methodology. As one of the goals, the small group leader coach training was developed to promote disciple-making, thereby fulfilling the overall purpose and goal this project presented.

Strengths of the Project

The success of a project depended upon its strengths. The strengths of this project will have future fruit as a result of the discipleship ministry that takes place in the hearts of the small group members at Gospel City Church. The biggest strength of this project is Jesus Christ. He is the reason this project exists. Jesus is the reason that discipleship is important. If it were not for Jesus, then discipleship would not be necessary. With that stated, there were six recognizable strengths and benefits of this project.

First, it was discovered that extrabiblical authors follow the same approach to leadership that Nehemiah and Jesus exhibited in Scripture; recognizing the opportunities, establishing leadership, and developing core tactics to address the opportunities. While this discovery is important, the application of that research to leadership in the church increases the effectiveness of ministry. Understanding Jesus' and Nehemiah's model for leadership and implementing it in the church is a significant strength for ministry execution. The amalgamation of information with application of this leadership model that Jesus and Nehemiah laid out, will lead to greater efficacy in other ministry opportunities.

Second, this project helped develop a training tool to address a weakness and provide a tool to equip small group leader coaches. The strength of this entire project rests on the implementation of this training tool. Even with a tool that is on target, however, it will take time to change a culture. The delivery of content and the ability to follow through with the development of small group leader coaches is incredibly important.

Third, this project led to increased awareness and understanding of the need for discipleship and small group community through a four-week promotion. The most important activity for the church to engage in is discipleship. While increasing the

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awareness of discipleship is a strength, actually doing something to implement a process of discipleship is a mandate. This project does both, increasing cognizance of discipleship and creating a procedure for deployment.

Fourth, this project developed a methodology for increasing volunteer leadership connection with pastoral leadership. A purposeful plan for pastoral interaction is a must for all churches. The interaction in larger churches gets to be more difficult as the size of the congregation grows. The relationship between pastor and lay leader is vital to the advancement of any discipleship ministry in the church. This project has developed a methodology to ensure that it remains paramount as a primary focus of the small group ministry.

Fifth, the most significant strength of this project was the development of five sessions of heart level training to mentor small group leader coaches toward an increase in effectiveness of discipleship. There is a plethora of leadership development tools available on the internet, in stores, or at conferences that one can attend. However, there is no substitute for developing a set of materials internally targeted toward the leadership model and philosophy of ministry of a specific church context. To have a curriculum developed for Gospel City Church by Gospel City Church is a significant strength.

As a result of this project, discipleship will continue to increase in awareness and effectiveness. Discipleship, as outlined in Matthew 28, is and will always be the methodology of the church. When the church fails to continue discipleship, the church fails to be the church.

Weaknesses of the Project

In taking the time to conduct an evaluation of this project, several weaknesses were observed. As the training continues to be taught over and over, the weaknesses will be removed, and strengths will be implemented in their place. Developing and conducting a training that answers several problems is a tough task and to say that this project

answers all the leadership challenges would be naïve. This project does not address the culture of consumerism and entitlement that pervades much of the church culture.

First, the training that was developed was not easily accessible to all small group leader coaches. Due to the time constraints in completing the project, it was necessary to set a training date without much advance notice and move forward with only those who were available to participate on that day. To increase the effectiveness of this project, following a set schedule and deployment of the material would have been more effective. This constraint limited the feedback to a small number of participants.

Second, the amount of training attempted in each session was too much. This created an information overload for those who participated in the training. The training felt rushed, hurried, and did not have enough time to expand on the content that was present. The people attending the training were not able assimilate the amount of material that was downloaded in a constant stream of information. There was simply too much content, given in too short a period, for them to reasonably take it all in to process it and employ it.

Third, in addition to an overload of information, the curriculum failed to provide an opportunity for participants to actively apply what they were learning. Urgent application of the information would provide a lasting impact. Providing time in a training agenda schedule to reflect, interact with others at the table, or answer questions would provide a context for lifelong learning. Time should be set aside within the training to stop and reflect on what has been taught and provide action items to consider how to apply what is learned in each session.

Fourth, this project was created in isolation and did not allow for multiple collaborators. When one person creates content that will affect a wide range of people, a handicap is generated because it is limited to that individual's experience, expertise, and perspective. The training could be more effective with multiple communicators advancing the concepts in the material. Having a limited amount of collaboration also

limits the leadership development perspective. With multiple collaborators, the training would be more effective and narrowed down for maximum effectiveness.

Observing the weaknesses of a project leads to reflection and a focus on desires versus outcomes. Leaders often judge themselves on intent while others judge the leaders on impact. When a leader seeks feedback while evaluating weaknesses it is an opportunity to close the gap on intent versus impact gap. Understanding the weaknesses also helps a leader understand what they would do differently.

What I Would Do Differently

As a leader and project author, it is easy to see multiple things that could be done differently. While a project is never complete and there can always be additional research, or better execution, the items that would be done differently are limited to five.

First, to make the training more accessible to the intended audience, there should be an over simplification of the language used in the training. There also needs to be a reduction in the amount of training that occurs in each session, as the amount offered was too much for five one-hour sessions. Either, some of the material should be removed, or the training needs to be expanded into more sessions.

Second, the practicality of the project lacks the application necessary to ensure all participants of the training receive the intended outcomes. To ensure all the lessons are absorbed and applied, it is important to gain mental and muscle memory with direct immediate application. Creating additional evaluation tools, next step tools and breakout sessions would help illustrate the sessions to help the coaches retain the information taught.

Third, additional meetings and collaboration with other team members should be utilized to help with earlier identification of goals for leadership coach training. It is important to draw out the full extent of leadership concerns to determine the best course to pursue. Hearing from all the leaders in separate settings would allow for deeper exploration and collaboration to ensure fully developed course that meet specific needs.

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Fourth, there needs to be a larger call to action. In part, the training lacks the urgency necessary to lead people to action. Hosting a training for leaders is profitable, but a stronger call to action and increased urgency would increase the effectiveness. It is important to ensure that all who learn the material are being faithful stewards of the training. The call to action must include specific next steps in order to give each person that attends the direction needed in leadership.

Fifth, there needs to be a greater effort to draw out more clarity related to the entire project. When developing a project, it is imperative that enough research is conducted before outlining the goals. This project would have greater clarity if it had a stronger purpose and more targeted goals set from the beginning of the project. Once the goals are made stronger it would be helpful to have an amplified scholastic research methodology and intensification in the formality of writing. In addition, the project needed an increased specificity that was more detail orientated.

Looking at all the aspects of a project before finishing it and moving on to the next thing is important. Once a project is finished and reflection occurs on the evaluation of the purpose and goals, an examination is made of the strengths and weaknesses, and observations are developed over what should have been done differently in retrospect, which can feel weighty. The process expose failures, but great gain is accomplished in the project evaluation. The greatest gain comes in the examination of all that was set out to accomplish, how the project morphed over the course of it, and continued alignment occurred over the life of the project. The examination should always lead to increased effectiveness of the project and a second unveiling. Finally, after completing the pragmatic implications of a project, it is important to examine the theological implications of that project.

Theological Reflections

This project is theological and practical. The theological and practical begin to combine at the level when one understands a Van Til presuppositional approach to

apologetics and applies that same thinking with leadership resources. All good is borrowed from a biblical worldview, as Van Til would say. Anything good in a person's worldview has been borrowed from a biblical worldview and applied to fit the context of the individual desires. Leadership texts from a secular standpoint are simply borrowing ideas from a biblical worldview to state their case and develop an effective model for leadership. Good cannot be reinvented; it has existed in God and in the Scriptures well before it existed elsewhere. While *The Multipliers* by Liz Wiseman is written to a secular audience, due to the good it states, it has biblical overtones and demonstrates different parts of the fruit of the Spirit, the one another's in Scripture, and seeking to love others as more important than themselves.

Leaders need the help and community of other people. It was a significant event for Jesus to clearly communicate to Andrew and his brother Simon when He called them to ministry by stating, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men" (Matt 4:19). In this moment Jesus gave an example to follow in calling men to follow leadership. This was to fulfill a calling that one man would not be able to accomplish on his own. That thought process is seen in Exodus 18, when Jethro coaches Moses on how to lead a ministry that is larger than any one person could handle. He exhorted Moses to train, lead, and install other leaders who could handle some of the workload so that it would not be too burdensome for the one leader. "What you are doing is not good. You and the people with you will certainly wear yourselves out, for the thing is too heavy for you. You are not able to do it alone" (Exod 18:17-18).

This project has practical implications that will benefit the leadership of the church, but it will also help take people into a deeper relationship with Jesus by understanding the implications of how He led through the application of leadership. While it is easy to critique the secular world as it influences the church, it is important to point out that the biblical worldview has impacted the secular workforce through proven methodologies originally proven in Scripture. Pastors and leaders within the church need

to embrace greater biblical training to equip their ability to teach. They equally need to pursue solid methodologies to understand how to be a better leader and care for the souls of all they lead.

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Personal Reflections

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Academic Challenge

      I am thankful for the path that God had me on in developing this project. I thought it was going to be more of an academic challenge and it ended up being both an academic and life challenge. Over the past two years, I have realized more about myself than I ever thought I would want to. As I am slightly dyslexic, I am academically challenged in some ways as I process information to put it back out on paper in a way that is coherent for others to read. I grew up in a world of homelessness and dysfunction and never thought college would be an option due to ability and finances. God has continued to perform miracle after miracle getting me to this point in my education. This project has taken me longer than most and has been more difficult than any other academic venture on which I have ever worked. While all these things exist in my past, I am thankful for the abilities God has given to me.

Personal Life Challenge

      Due to the challenges that this program and project have allowed me to experience, I have grown immensely. I have learned many things related to my job and my own heart. I have prayed over and over that God would help me develop my character before he allows me to have any sort of position that would require more of me than my character could handle. Character is built over time and can be destroyed overnight. God has been gracious to reveal one thing at a time, giving me a chance to repent and seek forgiveness where needed. I have learned more about leadership, servanthood, and how to multiply the greatness in others. God has also revealed my greatest sin of jealousy and how that has affected all my relationships in a negative way. This program has also affected my family in great ways. We have learned the value of working together as a

team and helping each other out. I have seen my children lean in and help out in ways that have led to their own spiritual growth.

Leadership Challenge

This project was a key development for understanding leadership as I observed Nehemiah and Jesus use the same principles followed by secular leaders. Observing the same pattern in biblical texts and extrabiblical texts seemed to help things gel in my own mind as to how I ought to conduct my own leadership. This project brought much clarity as to best practices and has given me the ability to identify the hidden secret to leadership development and a process paradigm. It was helpful to learn how mission drift never happens on purpose; it is always accidental. Churches do not set out thinking they will drift off the foundational mission that launched the church. However, without unapologetic focus and alignment, it will drift. In addition, it takes effort to communicate mission, vision, and core values to the organization as it grows. It becomes important to help the implicit become the explicit by documenting and recognizing the opportunities, establishing leadership, and developing the core tactics. As a result of this project, I now have a framework to develop my leadership primary tasks, build intentional relationships, multiply the greatness in others, demand extreme clarity, drive for results, and stop focusing on weaknesses. In addition, and maybe the most important, I am taking away an extremely important understanding of the function of discipleship in the local church.

Conclusion

A mission is accomplished when intense focus is placed upon that mission and the strategy to achieve it. It takes extreme dedication to the mission to avoid drifting away from it. That is precisely what was attractive to the leadership of Nehemiah and Jesus as they displayed clarity of the missions they were called to. The example of Nehemiah stands out as a man who accomplished supernatural efforts despite the uncertain times, distractions, and threats upon his life. Jesus stood out as fully man and, in his humanity,

displayed a total obedience and submission to God as He maintained an incredible focus on redeeming humanity to Himself despite His own temptations and distraction avoidance.

This project centered on the three factors of recognizing the opportunities, establishing leadership, and developing core tactics. These three factors are what will help leaders focus on the mission of the church and avoid distractions that could lead them to drift. The mission of the church is to make disciples, which is extremely important for a church to remember. It would benefit a church for a leader to walk into the room with a Bible in his hand, in full Vince Lombardi style and state, "this is a Bible" then proceed to give the foundation of the church and pastoral ministry. The church was never designed to be a profit center or ministry that runs multiple profit centers out of it.

The church exists as the only organization of which has ever been said of it, "the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matt 16:18). That statement was not made by just anyone; it was said by Jesus Christ Himself, God incarnate. God in the form of Man. A church's ability to remain intentional about its discipleship ministry is one of the most important aspects of its mission focus. When the church fails to make disciples and practice the practical ministry of discipleship, the church fails to be the church. It is imperative to remember that the church is designed to make disciples and has great need to develop a process by which men, women, students, and children are actively being discipled. When the church begins to communicate in a way that not only defines the mission, core values, and strategizes for a specific outcome, it will produce effective deep disciples that will continue the Great Commission to the ends of the earth. Until Jesus returns.

APPENDIX 1

MISSION FOCUS IN MINISTRY

Assessing Leaderships Ability to Maintain an Emphasis on Discipleship
A Qualitative Survey Instrument

Agreement to Participate

The research in which you are about to participate is designed to identify leadership weakness, establish leadership training and develop core implementation to increase alignment in disciple making and develop a healthy culture to the glory of God. This research is being conducted by Nathan Scroggins for the purposes of completing his doctoral project research. In this research, you will complete the following survey questionnaire. Feel free to answer these questions directly on this form or another Word document. Any information you provide will be held *strictly confidential,* and at no time will your name be reported, or your name identified with your responses. *Participation in this study is completely voluntary and you are free to withdraw from the study at any time.*

By your completion of this survey, you are giving informed consent for the use of your responses in this research.

<u>Introductory Questions</u>

1. Please describe your journey to your current role at the church.

2. How long have you been in church leadership? How long have you been in ministry?

3. What is the purpose of the Discipleship Team (DT) here? How is that purpose/function distinguished from other key leaders (individuals and groups) at the church?

4. What is the vision of the church? What are the goals of the church?

<u>Discipleship-Making Questions</u>

1. How would you describe and define a Disciple?

2. Describe Gospel City Church discipleship pipeline and how someone goes through it?

3. What are the biggest challenges Flock Leaders/Pastors face when making disciples?

4. What training, strategies, and equipping does the church implement to increase and make more disciples?

5. What kinds of programs are initiated by the whole discipleship team to give opportunities to make disciples?

6. Describe your discipleship practices as a team. How does the DT make disciples?

7. Why do you find that developing new Small Group leaders can be difficult?

8. Why do you find that deploying Small Group leaders can be difficult?

9. What processes exist for increasing awareness of the biblical mandate to make disciples?

10. How does the DT engage in collaborative conversation and process divergent viewpoints on making disciples?

11. How does the DT solicit feedback on the effectiveness regarding the discipleship pipeline?

12. How do you know when you have an mature, effective, & competent disciple?

13. How does the DT manage the difficulty of measuring an effective disciple?

14. In what ways is your team prone to rush through the equipping and training process to deploy disciples?

15. How are DT members encouraged to promote a churchwide discipleship philosophy?

16. What areas of the training and equipping process are weakest?

17. What would you change about the Discipleship Pipeline?

Other Comments you think would be helpful to the discipleship at Gospel City Church:

APPENDIX 2

FOUNDATIONAL COACHING:
LEADING WITH PURPOSE

SESSION 1
Foundational Coaching:
Leading with Purpose

Chapter Outline:
Colossians 1:28-29 **28** Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ. **29** For this I toil, struggling with all his energy that he powerfully works within me.

THE COACH'S CHARGE: *Leading with Purpose*
Definition of a Coach: In an effort to be dangerous for the gospel, Coaches lead with purpose by demonstrating a COMMITMENT and developing a Biblical CULTURE, all within a Hopeful CONTEXT.

A.   **The Commitment of a Coach:** A coach commits to setting the culture for small groups as a facilitator, mentor, and guide.

- **Facilitator:** As a facilitator, the coach spends time with Small Group leaders, discipling them in Spiritual Growth, providing opportunities to equip and train, and developing them as leaders. Facilitators coordinate with their small group leaders to help them solve leadership needs within each of their small groups.
  1. *Disciple Spiritual Growth*— In a relationship of one-on-one discipleship, each Coach will work with Small Group Leaders, mentoring them through a Personal Improvement Project and helping them work with small group members to do the same.
  2. *Equip and Train*— Coaches will receive monthly pastoral training, which they can use to equip each of their small group leaders at monthly team meetings. This training and equipping will assist Coaches in working with their Small Group Leaders through common issues, ongoing issues and critical issues as they arise.
  3. *Develop Leadership*— Through personal development, the Coach will also help the Small Group Leaders gain self-awareness and critical leadership skills, as they model ministry alongside them.

- **Mentor**: As a mentor, the coach helps Small Group Leaders navigate unfamiliar or unchartered territory. Mentors spend time hearing the whole story before offering advice or counsel to the people they are leading. This ensures their faith, wisdom and trust are placed upon God. Coaches

mentor Small Group Leaders through the growth or multiplication of their groups, difficult circumstances that arise within the group and helping to unlock leadership potential within each Small Group Leader.

1. *Multiplication Mentor*——Coaches spend time with Small Group Leaders planning for the healthy multiplication of their groups. Mentoring Small Group Leaders through the multiplication process will ensure more people in the church are able to connect into a group.
2. *Crisis Mentor*— Coaches are provided with training to address the needs that arise in difficult circumstances. The training enables them to assist Small Group Leaders in crisis management for crises that arise within the groups.
3. *Leadership Mentor*— Coaches are trained to discern and challenge Small Group Leaders in discipleship. This discipleship will look to spend most of its time maximizing the strengths of the Small Group Leader through life as well as helping navigate difficult circumstances that arises with in the small group. It really is more of a life on life model!

- **Guide:** As a guide, the coach motivates others to live sent, and leads others to do the same as they multiply leaders. Guides stay with the people they are leading and ensure their safety, security and community. (challenging others to greatness)
  1. *Small Group Involvement*— A coach guides small groups to actively participate in the community through projects, missions, and ministry as a group
  2. *Small Group Recruitment*— A coach guides Small Group Leaders to recruit unconnected people to small groups!
  3. *Multiplying the Leaders*— As Small Group Leaders see leadership potential in their small group members, their coach will guide them to cultivate those leaders through developing their strengths, stimulating greatness, activating their gifting, and inspiring intelligence. (Hebrews 10:24-25)

B. **Biblical Culture of a Coach:** The values that are imposed on any given topic, people group, or process within the community sets the culture. Our culture arises from our mission statement, our vision to reach the lost, and our core values that all promote increased disciple making. If the leader is not purposefully shaping the culture, the culture is shaping him. A coach accepts the responsibility to assist the church in shaping and cultivating the culture. (1 Peter 4:8-10).

1. **Culture Shaper**: Culture is either shaped in a good way or it is shaped in a negative way, but it cannot stay neutral. Since Coaches are on the front lines of ministry and provide the first line of defense for the Small Group Leaders, it is important to shape the same culture that our church Elders and Pastors are setting. In their specific context of leadership, Coaches are to consistently shape a culture that is:

   - *Biblically True*— The foundation of any church culture has to be true to the Scriptures.

- *Gospel Centered*— Our entire life is because of the Gospel, therefore our entire ministry has to be Gospel-Centered.
- *Prayer Saturated*— As believers we are to be in prayer at all times, in the Spirit (Eph. 6:18).
- *Discipleship Concentrated*— The mission of the church is to make disciples; this is the Great Commission.
- *Forgiveness Oriented— Ready to Resolve Conflict*— (do not allow emotional build up as a leader, keep all accounts short,)
- *Others Focused*— The greatest two commandments Jesus gives in the New Testament are to Love God and Love Others. Coaches seek to serve others and remain community-oriented.

2. **Culture Cultivator:** A cultivator actively grows the culture through:
- *Purposeful Urgency*— We disciple with urgency because there is much work to be done and we do not know the future. (1 Thessalonians 5:2; Romans 13:11; Revelation 1:3)
- *Extreme Clarity*— With clarity there is no ambiguity. Clarity in any situation makes it easy to understand and know what to do with what you see. Clarity is the currency of leadership. Where clarity and leadership prowess meet, you achieve organizational effectiveness.
- *Stewarding Core Values*— 1. We Authenticate the message we preach; 2. We Energize the greatness in people; 3. We Collaborate as a diverse team; 4. We Simplify for focused alignment; 5. We Communicate with clarity; 6. We Adapt in pursuit of excellence; 7. We Replicate for boarder influence. Coaches have to be quick to affirm when people are getting it right, running to reinforce high value inputs are critical
- *Frequent Communication*— Good and frequent communication is important to help build relationships and effective teams, facilitate creativity, provide a safe environment, and increase transparency. It is important to frequently communicate with others about our core values… it infuses the culture in others!
- *Determined Consistency*— Consistency creates accountability, establishes reputation, and builds relevancy (a predictable flow of information). Consistency helps to eliminate overpromising and underdelivering by creating a channel for follow up and follow through.
- *Helpful Feedback*— Positive criticism is helpful feedback. The culture of feedback has to be open to give and open to receive. The openness of feedback by leadership will provide a safe environment, ensuring that trust is built.

C. **Hopeful Context of a Coach:** The observation of leadership trains the application of leadership. Intentionality in making disciples will result in disciples who are intentional. As Coaches are observed by their small group leaders, they will learn how to lead. The old saying that "more is caught than taught," doesn't just apply to parenting. Discipleship happen at four different levels: INTENTIONAL, DIRECTIVE, CORRECTIVE, and INTENSIVE.

Coaches Involvement Context: will always be involved in INTENTIONAL Discipleship, often involved in DIRECTIVE Discipleship, sometimes involved in

CORRECTIVE discipleship and seldomly involved in CORRECTIVE discipleship.

1. *Intentional Discipleship*: This level of discipleship should make up approximately 75% of the discipleship ministry of the church. There are a combination of 1:1 and 1:many discipleship methods within this category. The church exists to equip the saints for the work of the ministry (Eph. 4:12-16). This ministry is, or should be, essential, consistent, and preventative (2 Tim 2:2).
   - Preventative
   - Essential—
   - Consistent —
2. *Directive Discipleship:* This level of discipleship should make up approximately 15% of the discipleship ministry of the church. At this level of discipleship there is less of the 1:many, and more of the 1:1 discipleship (John 16:22).
   - Instructive —
   - Purposeful—
   - Persuasive —
3. *Corrective Discipleship*: This level of discipleship should make up approximately 8% of the discipleship ministry of the church. This level of discipleship occurs primarily with 1:1 methods and sometimes with other spiritual friends to assist in the application of God's Word. This level will also trigger a response from Biblical Soul Care Counselors. Some lower level corrective discipleship will be done by Coaches, but upper level corrective discipleship will be seen in formal biblical counseling. Small Group Leader Coaches will participate and potentially counsel the individual, until it transitions into formal biblical counseling (2 Timothy 3:16-17).
   - Authoritative (teaching) —
   - Directional (reproof) —
   - Altering (correction) —
4. *Intensive Discipleship*: This level of discipleship should make up approximately 2% of the discipleship ministry of the church. This level of discipleship occurs strictly with the 1:1 method, but it requires the presence of spiritual friends to enforce biblical principles and community (Psalm 27:4-5; Gal. 6:1-2). All intensive discipleship will be formal biblical counseling. Small Group Leader Coaches may participate in the sessions as a counselor and/or serve as an advocate.
   - Urgent —
   - Critical —
   - Vulnerable —
   - Restorative—

APPENDIX 3

DIRECTIONAL COACHING: LEADING WITH
CHRIST-CENTERED COACHING

SESSION 2
Directional Coaching:
Leading with Christ Centered Coaching

<u>Chapter Outline:</u>
James 3:13-18 Who is wise and understanding among you? By his good conduct let him show his works in the meekness of wisdom. But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast and be false to the truth. This is not the wisdom that comes down from above, but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic. For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there will be disorder and every vile practice. But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial and sincere. And a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.

THE COACH'S CONSTITUTION: A coach's constitution exemplifies the 5 C's of Biblical coaching, The coach that thrives has a developing CHARACTER, growing COMPENTENCE, enthusiastic CHEMISTRY, balanced CAPACITY, and increasing COMMITMENT to Christ and His kingdom. Personality

A. **Character** The character of a person is made up of an aggregate of features. These can be positive or negative. "Character is a necessary, but not sufficient, element for great leadership." (*The Extraordinary Leader* by Zenger)
  - *Integrity*— People follow a leader who demonstrates the quality of being honest, possesses strong moral principles, makes decisions with the organization paramount in their mind, and creates a good feedback loop that reveals people are being listened to and heard. (1 Peter 3:16)
  - *Generosity*— A coach is liberal with giving of time, finances and emotions. Energy levels tend to decrease when people horde rather than give. (You can own stuff but stuff can't own you.) (2 Corinthians 9:6-8;
  - *Self-Control*— Coaches have maturity and display the ability to use diplomacy, and to control one's own behavior, emotions, and desires, especially in difficult situations.

B. **Competence** Coaches demonstrate not only an understanding of what it takes to be a coach, but an increased competence that will give small group leaders a greater level of confidence in the coach. Coaches must be increasing in

KNOWLEDGE, building their SKILLS, and demonstrating continued PROFICIENCY.

- *Knowledgeable* — A coach knows the Bible and also knows the competencies of being a coach (discipleship continuum, knows 1:1 discipleship)
- *Skillful*— A coach skillfully employ tactics to demonstrate their knowledge.
- *Proficient* — A coach demonstrates an advanced understanding or competence related to skills necessary to being a coach (as seen in the remainder of this training).

C. **Chemistry** Three things people desire when the spend time together are shared HUMOR, shared ENCOURAGEMENT, and shared MINISTRY. If a person operates in fear, these will not be present and others will feel unsafe and want to flee (1 Thessalonians 5:14).

- *Shared Humor*— In order to truly share humor together there must be a feeling of mutual safety. To have a shared humor, it is important to want to be around each other. Humor does not simply come from jokes, it results from a desire to be near each other, sharing life and moments together! (Proverbs 17:22)
- *Shared Encouragement*— Life is difficult and Coaches need a safe place to experience mutual ministry through a shared encouragement. This takes place amongst coaches, but also between a Coach and their small group leaders (Hebrews 10:24-25).
- *Shared Ministry*— Ministry is difficult. The chemistry between leaders increases when they experience difficult times together. It is important to ensure leaders are doing ministry together, that Coaches are partaking in ministry with their small group leaders, not just coaching them. It is equally important for Small Group Leaders to observe Coaches being led by Pastors or Elders (Ecclesiastes 4:9-12).

D. **Capacity** A coach's actual or potential ability to perform is determined by their urgency to be FAITHFUL, their desire to be AVAILABLE and their ability to determine what is ESSENTIAL.

- *Faithful*— A coach's influence and faithfulness is determined by their ability to be true to their word, follow up and follow through (Matthew 25:23).
- *Available*— A key to the success of a Coach is being available to the Small Group Leader. Availability demonstrates care, concern and compassion for the Small Group Leader and communicates to them that their coach has their back when times are difficult (Matthew 20:26).
- *Essential*— Priorities are important, and keeping things in their proper order ensures that the essential things get done. A coach's priorities should be: 1. God, 2. Spouse, 3. Family, 4. Work, and 5. Ministry. Then it is necessary for Coaches to determine what ministry is ESSENTIAL for them to do. No one else can or is able to determine that for them (Proverbs 4:23).

E. **Commitment** Coaches demonstrate a desire to be engaging, involved and committed to God and to their Small Group Leaders. A Coach's pledge to God first, and their Small Group Leaders second, is to demonstrate a life that is DEDICATED, ENTHUSIASTIC and desires to be a MULTIPLIER of ministry.

- *Dedicated*— Dedication to Small Group Leaders demonstrates a willingness to come alongside and be wholly committed to what they are being asked to be a part of.
- *Enthusiastic*— Coaches demonstrate a willingness, passion and excitement in helping others within the church.
- *Multiplier*— Coaching involves the ability to demonstrate love for others, seeking to help other leaders be intensified, grown and invested in, to the point of being multiplied into other leaders.

F. **Core Values** Core Values of a Small Group Leader Coach: Live out the Core Values (develop the small group core values; non-negotiables)
- *Humble Leaders*— Authentic Leaders are broken and contrite (Psalm 51, 1Peter 5:5)
- *Healthy Leaders*— Spiritual, Social (spouse, family & friends), Physical, Professional, Financial
- *Growing Leaders*— Students of God's Word, Students of God's Son, Students of God's People
- *Courageous Leaders*— Connection, Confession, Correction (given and received)
- *Multiplying Leaders*— Discipling others to disciple others

APPENDIX 4

RELATIONAL COACHING: LEADING TOWARD
AUTHENTIC BIBLICAL COMMUNITY

SESSION 3
Relational Coaching:
Leading toward Authentic Biblical Community

Chapter Outline:
Philippians 2:3-7 Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men.

The Coach's Promise:
Coaches promise to continue increasing their personal LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT, mentoring LEADERSHIP ALIGNMENT, increasing LEADERSHIP EXECUTION, seeking LEADERSHIP FEEDBACK, modeling LEADERSHIP CORE VALUES, and increasing LEADERSHIP CARE.

A.   **Leadership Definitions:**
  - *Definition of a leader*— "Someone who consistently leads with INTEGRITY teaches with WISDOM and shepherds with COMPASSION." (from UCL201)
  - *Definition of a Developing Coach*— Someone who seeks to increase abilities of Small Group Leaders through regularly assessing Small Group HEALTH, leading CULTURE toward alignment, and WALKING WITH Small Group Leaders through difficult situations.

B.   **Leadership Alignment**: To maintain consistent alignment amongst Small Groups, Coaches conduct regular assessments, evaluations, receive feedback and develop a plan for future advancement for each specific group.
  - *Assessment*—To determine where Small Group Leaders are in their understanding of Mission, Vision, Core Values and their Role.
  - *Evaluation*— To discover training needed and determine resources that would be helpful.
  - *Advancement*—Develop a Ministry Action Plan.

C.   **Leadership Execution**: The coach's approach has to involve a strategic plan that involves SPECIFIC functions, INTENTIONAL efforts, MEASURABLE outcomes, completion of a PROCESS, LEVERAGING strengths and skills of others and ENERGIZING those around them.

- **S**: Specific (Clear—Direction)
- **I**: Intentional (Urgent—Movement)
- **M**: Measurable (Simple—Organization)
- **P**: Process (results, outcome and Leadership Focused)
- **L**: Leverage (the relationship, the skills and the leadership of a coach)
- **E**: Energize (with Emotional Intelligence: EQ skills: Situational Awareness, Relational Awareness, Empathy for Others, Diplomacy—ability to regulate one's own emotions in a given situation, Motivation—understanding what motivates others, Consultation—knowing when to seek help from others)

D.   **Leadership Feedback**: Receive and Provide Positive Feedback
- *Requesting Feedback—*
- *Receive Feedback—*
- *Evaluate feedback—*
- *Opportunities of Feedback—*
- *Implement Change from Feedback—*

E.   **Leadership CARE:** Discerning the right level of care at the right time Discipleship Continuum—Right CARE at the right time: Apprenticeship Model (more is caught than taught)
- *Connecting Before Correcting—* (Pr. 18:13; Heb. 14:15-16):
  - Creating a safe place w/ NO CONDMENAT ON – how well do you know them?
  - Demonstrate compassion, longsuffering and patience (2 Tim 2:24-26).
  - Go vertical, Give Hope so that you Gain passport: Greatest problem has been solved
- *Assessing by Drawing Out the Heart—* (Pr. 20:5):
  - Watch: What's their tone, countenance, body language?
  - Ask Heart Revealing Questions to get to the root of the problem.
    1. Describe the situation? (Pr. 18:13, 15, 17)
    2. What were you thinking/feeling? (Psalm 139:23-24; Eph. 4:22-24)
    3. What did you want? (Matthew 6:19-21)
    4. How did you respond? (Luke 6:43-45)
    5. What was the outcome/consequences? (Galatians 6:7-8)
    6. What is God trying to teach you? (1 Peter 1:6-7)
    * Remember: Questions prick the Conscious and accusations harden the heart
  - Listen to Understand vs. listening to Respond
    (Where are they at vs giving your opinion to solve the problem too quickly)
    1. Lies (Thought themes) of life (1 Cor 10:13; 2 Cor 10:5)
    2. Motives (Desires) of the heart (Mt 6:21)
    3. Salvation Testimony
  - Know their S.O.S.
    1. Severity (Acute/Chronic; Difficult/Urgent)
    2. Ownership: teachability/contributed
    3. Support: (Who is their community to help)
- *Responding in Grace and Truth—* (Jn. 1:14-17; Gal 6:1-2)

- o Go Gently: goal is always reconciliation and restoration
- o Go Back to Go Forward:
  1. Understand where they've come from
  2. Put the past into place biblically
  3. Reframe issues biblically & center on identity in Christ
  4. Heart transformation vs Behavioral Modification
- *Encouraging*— Abiding in Christ and Application in Community
  - o Give Hope in their Identity in Christ and the Gospel
    1. Key: indicatives (identity) empower imperatives (Commands/Obedience)
  - o Anchor in God's word and Fellowship in Authentic Community
  - o Leverage Advocate relationship(s)
  - o Give precise "Homework" Action steps to heart issues

APPENDIX 5

TRANSFORMATIONAL COACHING: LEADING
OTHERS TOWARD SPIRITUAL MATURITY

SESSION 4
Transformational Coaching:
Leading Others Toward Spiritual Maturity

Chapter Outline:
1 Peter 1:13-16 Therefore, preparing your minds for action, and being sober-minded, set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance, but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, since it is written, "You shall be holy, for I am holy."

Biblical Outline:

THE COACH'S TRANSFORMATION:
The transformational coach first works through TRANSFORMATIONAL LIVING, and then begins to develop others through TRANSFORMATIONAL SHEPHERDING, while learning how to provide TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP and finally passing on all they have learned through TRANFORMATIONAL TEACHING.

A.   **Transformational Living** Transformational living comes from a discipline, passion, compulsion and urgency for the Gospel in our own lives and in the lives of others. In order to have transformational living, you have to have a Transformed Devotion (increase biblical literacy)!
  1. *Increasing Discipline* for Gospel Investigation
  2. *Increasing Passion* for Gospel Explanation
  3. *Increasing Compulsion* for Gospel Application
  4. *Increasing Urgency* for Gospel Transformation (self and others: head, heart, hands)

B.   **Transformational Shepherding:** Shepherding involves more than just a title. It can sometimes be difficult to care for others and it starts as a passion to CARE, LEAD, COACH and develop TRANSPARENT relationships.
  1. *Passion to Care for Others*— (In times of victory and in times of difficulty)
  2. *Passion to Lead Others*— (Through INTENTIONAL DISCIPLESHIP: through stages of Assimilation: Guest to Leader: Assimilation, Connection, Multiplication)(Increased personal INVOLVEMENT leads to increased biblical COMMITMENT, leads to increased Great Commission ENGAGEMENT!)

3. *Passion to Coach Others*— (speak the truth in Love, Getting Invasive, moving toward biblical relationships of (Authentic, Transparent, Venerable)
4. *Passion for Transparency*— (you can't lead where you have not gone)

C.   **Transformational Leading**: Coaches lead through transformation in a way that is beneficial to each of the people they lead. Transformational leading happens when a coach has persistent Gospel CONVERSATIONS, persistent Gospel RELATIONSHIPS and persistent Gospel PARTNERSHIPS. This type of leadership leads to a transformed, heart, a transformed community and a transformed church. Transformational leading is a Trust from God to the Elders/Pastors given to the Coaches and Small Group Leaders! Let's steward it well!
1. *Persistent Gospel Conversations* —Lead conversations to evangelism and deeper application, building relationships through encouraging Gospel Conversations.
2. *Persistent Gospel Relationships* —Gospel Relationships require persistence. It starts with a desire to lead others into an authentic, transparent, biblical community within Small Groups. This community is not just in our own church, it is with people from other churches too.
3. *Persistent Gospel Partnerships* —Persistent Gospel Partnerships facilitate leading in biblical community. Developing relationships with other Gospel oriented biblical organizations, and partnering for the sake of the Gospel within the community, demonstrates the love discussed in John 13:35.

D.   **Transformational Teaching** transformation teaching begins with the Bible. The Scriptures are the only thing that can transform someone's life. Coaching others toward this transformation takes good COMMUNICATION, increasing CONFIDENCE, concern for the COMMUNITY and setting high EXPECTATIONS for all involved. (Simple, Clear, Urgent: Biblical Engagement, Biblical Explanations, Biblical Application)
1. *Communication*— (*Message Sent*: Engaging [free of distractions], Clear objectives, Understood. *Message Received (teacher is)*: Listening, Reflective, Approachable, Flexible [adjustments as necessary-room management])
2. *Confidence*— through Preparation, Passion, & Organization for subject matter, (love of learning and passing it on)
3. *Community*— Passion for people, relationships, growth, sense of belonging, warm, accessible, enthusiastic and caring
4. *High Expectations*— Clear, Urgent, Simple… Knowledge, Application, Respect,

APPENDIX 6

MISSIONAL COACHING: LEADING OTHERS TO
LIVE SENT IN ALL OF LIFE

SESSION 5
Missional Coaching:
Leading Others to Live Sent in All of Life

Chapter Outline:
Matthew 28:19-20 Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.

Biblical Outline: (5-7min)

- Evangelism: Salvation Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,
  a. Making disciples is not limited to our location and is the beginning of new life!
  b. Decisions for Christ is a work of the Spirit in conjunction with a work of our flesh!
- Equipping: Sanctification *teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.*
  a.
- Encouraging: Steadfast *And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age*
  a. The Spirit of God will be with you ALWAYS (now and until His eminent return)

THE COACH'S COMMISSION:
All Gospel saved Christian Coaches seek to LIVE SENT in their community and circle of influence, as well as LIVING TO SEND others toward the front line of ministry. (the focus is less on fulfilling the Matt 28 and more about helping others do it)

A.   **Living Sent:** Christ calls the church to the mission of living sent: locally (within the walls of our church), and in the community (outside the walls of our church). Gospel relationships are found at four different levels. At the most foundational level are COINCINDENTAL relationships, then CALCULATED relationships, followed by DETERMINED relationships, and finally INTENTIONAL Gospel Relationships.

1. *Coincidental Gospel Relationships*— Taking advantage of open doors that seem like coincidence in timing but are really an act of God bringing someone into your life!
2. *Calculated Gospel Relationships*— Looking for opportunities in the future and seeking to take advantage of the situation to proclaim the Gospel.
3. *Determined Gospel Relationships*— Setting your mind on taking advantage of all opportunities to proclaim the Gospel through your life and words.
4. *Intentional Gospel Relationships*— Planning for opportunities to proclaim the Gospel and lead someone in a conversation of surrender!

B. **Leading to Send** sentence to summarize with clarity (helping others to understand their call to live sent, Disciples making disciples, Disciple to make disciples, The Call, The Commission, The Continuation
   1. *General Call*— It takes a Willingness. Coaches are to lead Small Groups Leaders to understand that Christians are called to Go make disciples as a part of life. They are called to live sent! This is a way of living, not just something Christians do.To receive the greatest gift in the world and have an ability to pass it on, is an awesome thing. As a person who has been saved, it is a call to help others understand the Gospel so they too have the opportunity to receive or reject! The general call to make disciples happens in the grocery store, work place, parks, etc. (2 Cor. 5:14-21)
   2. *Specific Call*— It takes a Desire. Coaches lead others to understand a calling to ministry. This calling is not for just those in occupational ministry but to all believers. Often times the Lord places a specific person, group of people, ministry, church or a specific context on our heart to help reach with the Gospel. The specific call generally includes a strategy at some point. There are Local strategies and global strategies. To reach into local strategies it is important to develop an outreach strategy and develop partnerships with local ministries. To reach out to Global missions it takes increased effort in developed partnerships through churches or other nonprofit agencies to assist in international trips. One of the most effective outreach programs is to plant churches with a Pastor that understands the local community, either international or domestic.
   3. *Continuing Call*— It takes a Passion. The call to make disciples has no end to it. It is an ongoing calling to all people who are believers in Christ. Helping others to understand their responsibility to make disciples. (Matthew 28:19, John 15:8, Romans 10:14-15)

APPENDIX 7

MISSION FOCUS IN MINISTRY

Assessing a Leaders Ability to Maintain an Emphasis on Discipleship
A Qualitative Survey Instrument

Discipleship Pipeline Course Evaluation					
Identify Weakness and Course Development					
1=insufficient 2=requires attention 3=sufficient 4=exemplary					
Criteria	1	2	3	4	Comments
Were each of the weaknesses identified in the survey addressed?					
Were each of the weaknesses addressed thoroughly?					
Did the course increase the awareness of discipleship and effectively train leaders?					
Were each of the weaknesses given adequate time in the training?					
Was the course was developed fittingly for the discipleship pipeline					
Did the course spend an adequate amount of time on the right topics?					
Was the data collected and assimilated appropriately?					

APPENDIX 8

MISSION FOCUS IN MINISTRY

Assessing a Leaders Ability to Maintain an Emphasis on Discipleship
A Qualitative Survey Instrument

Discipleship Pipeline Course Evaluation					
Communication, Implementation and Sequencing Process					
1=insufficient 2=requires attention 3=sufficient 4=exemplary					
Criteria	1	2	3	4	Comments
Will the course be congruent within the discipleship pipeline?					
Does the course length meet the required discipleship elements necessary?					
Do the implementation tactics meet the needs of the discipleship pipeline for the church?					
Will the planning of the course communications be effective?					
Does the recommended sequencing of the course contribute to the effectiveness of discipleship?					
Does the recommended timing of the course fit within the discipleship flow and process?					
Will the course meet the expectations for the communications plan?					

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ABSTRACT

DEVELOPING LEADERSHIP TRAINING FOR GOSPEL
CITY CHURCH IN GRANGER, INDIANA,
TO PROMOTE DISCIPLEMAKING

Nathan Gilbert Scroggins, D.Min.
The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2019
Faculty Supervisor: Dr. Shane W. Parker

This project sought to develop leadership training for small group leader coaches of Gospel City Church in Granger, Indiana, to promote disciple making. Chapter 1 presents a history of Gospel City Church in its context, while giving the rationale for the project, and outlining the purpose and goals. Chapter 2 focuses on the biblical call to mission focus by examining Nehemiah 1:1-7:4, which outlines Nehemiah's call to mission focus, and then surveys the book of Matthew where Jesus demonstrated his ability to maintain mission focus. Both men followed three steps to maintain mission focus: (1) recognize the opportunity, (2) establish leadership, and (3) develop core tactics. Chapter 3 investigates the extrabiblical call to mission focus by researching current philosophies of leadership and drawing out the same pattern of leadership development as observed in Nehemiah and Jesus. These authors also followed a pattern of three steps to maintain mission focus with their leadership: (1) recognize the opportunity, (2) establish leadership, and (3) develop core tactics. Chapter 4 outlines the process by which I utilized the same pattern of leadership development for the purpose of improving opportunities found within the discipleship ministry at Gospel City Church. Chapter 5 evaluates the efficacy of the project. This project sought to demonstrate the clear pattern of leadership development from Nehemiah to Jesus Christ, and all the way to current philosophies of leadership. In addition, this project sought to demonstrate the efficiencies of remaining focused on the mission while avoiding distractions. Ultimately,

this project sought to call Gospel City Church to an increased awareness of discipleship while promoting disciple making to the glory of God.

VITA

Nathan Gilbert Scroggins

EDUCATIONAL
        B.A., The Master's University, 2002
        M.Div., The Master's Seminary, 2007

MINISTERIAL
        Director of Summer Intensive Programs, The Master's University, Santa
            Clarita, California, 2008-2011
        Pastor of Discipleship and Soul Care, Harvest Bible Chapel, Rolling
            Meadows, Illinois, 2011-2015
        Executive Pastor, Gospel City Church, Granger, Indiana, 2015-