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INCREASING THE DISCIPLESHIP PRACTICES OF THE
WORSHIP MINISTRY AT PARK PLACE BAPTIST
CHURCH IN PEARL, MISSISSIPPI

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PREFACE

God has placed many people in my life who have provided strength, support, and wisdom in many different areas throughout this ministry project. First, this project was completed in large part due to the love and support of my dear wife, Bethany. I am so grateful to have a wife who is devoted to seeking the Lord above and beyond anything else in her life. She is such a constant source of encouragement to me.

Second, I thank God for my parents, Bobby and Pat Brand, who taught and demonstrated to me what following Jesus looks like. I am so thankful for parents who always believed in me and pushed me in all areas of my life. Their influence in my life was an instrumental part of me surrendering into the ministry.

Third, I am thankful to Park Place Baptist Church for believing in me and making this project possible. It is such a joy to serve and minister to the faith family at PPBC. There is no greater feeling than to know that I am exactly where God wants me to be and that is leading His people in worship at PPBC.

Fourth, I am grateful for the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. I am thankful for the opportunity to study in such an institution where God's glory is on display in every avenue of study. I am specifically thankful for Dr. Joseph Crider, my doctoral supervisor, who spent countless hours investing in me and my project. Even amidst a transition to a sister Southern Baptist seminary, he continued to faithfully provide feedback and guidance. I am so grateful for his leadership and ministry.

Lastly, I give God the complete glory for allowing me to work on this ministry project. My desire is that every aspect of this project would glorify God in creating a

culture of discipleship among the worship ministry at PPBC. My prayer is that the worship ministry would become better disciple makers as we worship the Father through Jesus the Son, in the power of the Holy Spirit.

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Pearl, Mississippi

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Making disciples of all nations is a command from Jesus Himself. This Great Commission flows from Matthew 28:19-20. Park Place Baptist Church in Pearl, Mississippi, established the church's mission statement in conjunction with the Great Commission. The mission statement is, "Park Place glorifies God by making disciples of all nations." The highest task that believers have been given is to glorify God, and the church glorifies God best when it actively takes part in disciple-making. In the Great Commission, Jesus specifically said to go to all nations to teach and baptize. These two verbs best describe how discipleship is carried out. Through one-on-one relationships, whether focused on evangelism or investing in the lives of other believers, the goal of disciple-making is to create mature disciples of Christ. Through biblical teaching and instruction, along with the work of the Holy Spirit, people will continually see their desperate need for a Savior. For this reason, this ministry project sought to establish a curriculum to teach biblical discipleship to further equip the participants of the Park Place worship ministry to glorify God by becoming active disciple makers.

Context

Park Place Baptist Church, located in Pearl, Mississippi (PPBC) has a deep desire to make disciples of all nations. The leaders of PPBC created the mission statement of the church with the goal of disciple-making in mind. While making disciples is at the core of the church's mission, each individual ministry leader of the church must evaluate how effective his ministry is at making and multiplying disciples. As the worship pastor of PPBC, it is my job to effectively evaluate our process and effectiveness in making disciples within the worship ministry.

The worship ministry at PPBC is one of the most comprehensive ministries of the church, with ministry opportunities for all ages. There are choirs ranging from preschool to senior adults, and the instrumental ministry includes musicians as young as 13 and as old as 70. It is evident that God is blessing and using the worship ministry to lead His people in worship. One of the greatest strengths of the worship ministry is the people's dedication to serve. With an average of 585 worship attenders at PPBC, the worship ministry currently has well over 15 percent of the church's attendees serving within the ministry. In seasons of extra rehearsals and additional worship services, the people within the ministry faithfully serve with joy. Because the worship ministry engages a significant percentage of the church body, it provides one of the greatest opportunities for discipleship within the church.

Even though there is great potential for discipleship within the worship ministry, I do not see the choir and orchestra excelling in this area. While one-on-one discipleship can be a difficult spiritual discipline to objectively measure, indicators show that we are falling short of the mission statement to make disciples. First, in evaluating discipleship practices in the worship ministry, I examined my own discipleship efforts. If the task for every ministry area of the church is to make disciples, then as the leader of the worship ministry I am falling short in leading these efforts. While I have an active part in discipleship through weekly worship leadership for the congregation and teaching and training the worship ministry, both of these are accomplished in large group settings and outside the scope of this project. As I will discuss in greater detail later, the scope of this project focuses on one-on-one discipleship with the aim to raise up mature followers of Christ. As the worship pastor, part of my weekly routine should involve intentional times of investing in members of the worship ministry.

A second indicator that the worship ministry was not excelling in discipleship was the lack of new leadership. If true discipleship were occurring, then the current leaders would be training and discipling others in their ministry tasks. Leadership roles

consist of president, financial coordinator, social coordinator, and section leaders. Other than the section leaders, the current leadership team within the worship ministry has been the same for four years. Last year I added section leaders in order to take positive steps in adding ministry roles and training new leaders. While consistency and reliability are sometimes beneficial, believers are to cultivate an atmosphere of more people serving the Lord for His glory. The current leaders have a great opportunity to actively disciple and train new potential leaders to fill their current roles. Part of my responsibility as the worship pastor should not only be training the leaders to do their task but also training and charging them to invest in other members of the ministry with the objective to equip new leaders. Later, as I discuss the biblical discipleship curriculum, my aim is to take the leadership team through the curriculum as part of their discipleship training.

A third indicator that the worship ministry was not excelling in discipleship was the lack of new relationships formed within the ministry. Too often, the same groups of people cling together and rarely expand or start new groups. At fellowships, it is very predictable to look around and see the same cliques of people fellowshiping together. While there is nothing wrong with having a solid core of friends, the ministry as a whole must have an intentional mentality of investing in each other's lives. As a result of this discipleship project, I desired that there is more compassion and love shown to each other throughout the ministry as a whole.

The last indicator that the worship ministry was not excelling in discipleship was the lack of discipleship happening across generational lines. With the varying age ranges in the choir and orchestra, I wanted to see the older generation adopt and disciple the younger generation. From a musical standpoint, there are opportunities for the more experienced singers and instrumentalists to train and better equip the younger, newer musicians. While the benefit of helping the less experienced musicians greatly improves the overall musical ability of the ministry, the greater benefit is training and discipling the younger generation in the truths of God's Word.

In evaluating the worship ministry at PPBC, the choir and orchestra needed to improve their efforts in cultivating an atmosphere of disciple-making. To truly and honestly assess the church's goal of glorifying God by making disciples of all nations, the question needed to be asked, "What is the worship ministry at Park Place doing to carry out this goal of the church?" The answer to that question was, "Not enough." While one-on-one discipleship is a difficult spiritual discipline to objectively measure, implementing this ministry project allowed me to confirm my hypothesis about the current lack of discipleship practices. Through the use of surveys, I measured increased or decreased involvement in discipleship throughout the worship ministry.

Rationale

The biblical rationale for this project was multifold. First, while PPBC's mission statement is to "Glorify God by making disciples of all nations," the worship ministry was not doing enough to fulfill the mission of the church. Therefore, this project was beneficial to help equip the worship ministry at PPBC to be active disciple makers. While the worship ministry was actively involved in discipleship through their weekly worship leadership in the worship services, a more direct approach was needed to cultivate an atmosphere of one-on-one disciple-making as the Great Commission commands.

The second rationale was that the Bible gives clear commands on discipleship and how believers are to invest in the lives of other believers. As demonstrated in the life of Paul, he dedicated his life to investing in the lives of believers around him. In 2 Timothy 2:2, Paul taught the true picture of discipleship. Paul took it upon himself to invest in and train Timothy up so that he could effectively pastor the Ephesian church. Paul also entrusted Timothy to disciple those around him.

The third rationale for this project was that for far too long the church has relied on large group efforts and programs to teach discipleship. Whether these efforts are through church programs like *Training Union* or *Discipleship Training*, if the church analyzed how effective they have been at raising up mature disciples of Christ, it would

yield shocking results. Both Barna Research and the Southern Baptist Convention have found that up to two-thirds of high school graduates stop attending church upon entering college. With staggering statistics of how many young people leave the church, it is time to take a hard look at the church's approach to discipleship. Similarly, for the worship ministry at PPBC, it was simply not enough to consider a large group weekly ten- to fifteen-minute teaching time an effective discipleship ministry. More drastic measures were necessary if the goal of the worship ministry is to raise up the next generation of mature believers in Christ and possibly even the next generation of worship leaders.

Purpose

The purpose of the ministry project was to increase the discipleship practices of the worship ministry at Park Place Baptist Church.

Goals

The following three goals were created to assist in the completion of this ministry project. Each one of these goals represented a necessary step in increasing the discipleship practices of the worship ministry of Park Place.

1. The first goal was to assess the current discipleship practices among the worship ministry of Park Place Baptist Church.
2. The second goal was to develop an eight-week curriculum to equip the worship ministry to become active disciplemakers.
3. The third goal was to increase the level of active participation in disciple-making in the worship ministry by implementing the discipleship curriculum.

While each one of these goals was created to complete this ministry project, ultimately, the aim was to create a culture of disciple-making within the worship ministry that outlasted this project. Appropriate research methodology was put in place to ensure the completion of these goals. The research methodology is detailed in the following section.

Research Methodology

The research methodology portion of this project utilized the aforementioned three goals and created a step-by-step process to equip the worship ministry of PPBC to become better disciple makers.¹ The first goal was to assess the current discipleship practices among the worship ministry of PPBC. To assess the worship ministry's current discipleship practices, I created a biblical discipleship survey that addressed the current or previous involvement in discipleship or mentoring relationships.² In the survey, ministry team members responded to specific questions that addressed their current involvement in discipleship. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the survey was mailed to all worship ministry participants who were eighteen years of age or older. After the survey was mailed, I followed up with two weekly email reminders to ensure greater participation among the worship ministry. This goal was considered successfully met when I analyzed 50 completed surveys from the worship ministry.

The second goal was to develop an eight-week curriculum equipping worship ministry members in developing disciple-making skills. Upon analyzing the data from the surveys, I created an eight-week curriculum based upon the works and writings of Robert Coleman, Greg Ogden, and Allan Coppedge. In addition to biblical teaching on discipleship, the curriculum ended with a charge to participate in active disciple-making. PPBC's ministerial staff evaluated the discipleship curriculum based on a curriculum evaluation rubric.³ I considered the discipleship curriculum complete when all ten evaluators scored each item on the rubric with a sufficient rating of "3" or above.

The third and final goal was to increase the level of active participation in disciple-making in the worship ministry by implementing the discipleship curriculum.

¹ 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 project.

² See appendix 1.

³ See appendix 2.

The biblical discipleship survey completed for goal 1 also served in the selection process for the initial round of discipleship. I began by discipling a micro group from within the worship ministry. As a part of the curriculum, each participant retook the biblical discipleship survey⁴ to assess measurable changes in discipleship practices among the participants. This goal was considered successfully met when each of the first participants began a discipleship relationship with a new worship ministry participant.

Definitions and Limitations/Delimitations

The following definitions of key terms are used in the ministry project:

Discipleship. *Discipleship* is defined as “doing deliberate spiritual good to help others follow Christ.”⁵ In the context of this project, the discipleship curriculum involves building one-on-one relationships with other believers in order to model and teach others to deepen their relationship with Christ.

Worship ministry. The *worship ministry* at PPBC is a comprehensive ministry that includes adult choir, adult orchestra, student choir, student band, children’s choir, and preschool choir. For the scope of this project, *worship ministry* refers to the adult choir and orchestra.

This project had several delimitations. First, participants in the project had to be active in the worship ministry at PPBC. By limiting the focus of this project to the worship ministry, I was able to more effectively evaluate the spread of discipleship. A second delimitation was the length of the curriculum. The proposed discipleship curriculum took place over eight weeks. While eight weeks may be a short amount of time to adequately teach and display biblical discipleship, that timeframe fostered a better opportunity for replication of the process. The last delimitation affected the one-on-one relationships being formed throughout the discipleship process. As I charged the first

⁴ See appendix 1.

⁵ Mark Dever, *Discipling: How to Help Others Follow Jesus* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2016), 17.

group to go and disciple someone else, I emphasized the importance that men need to disciple men and women need to disciple women, unless it was in the context of married couples.

This ministry project had several limitations. First, this project relied on individuals from the worship ministry to accept the biblical command of discipleship. If the chosen participants simply went through the eight weekly sessions and did not commit to disciple someone else, then the process of discipleship would drastically slow down. Second, one-on-one discipleship can be difficult to objectively measure. Biblical discipleship surveys assisted in measuring the current and future involvement in discipleship. Lastly, this project could have been limited by the participants' level of transparency. Much of the ministry project depended on the participants to be open and honest about their involvement with one-on-one discipleship.

Conclusion

God's Word is clear on discipleship. Followers of Christ are called to invest in the lives of others to create mature believers in Christ. Christians must realize that discipleship is not optional. Jesus commanded every Christian to go and make disciples. The following chapters seek to give the reader adequate resources to understand and implement a practical discipleship curriculum in their own church setting. The following chapter focuses on four key Scripture passages, which were foundational in writing the discipleship curriculum.

CHAPTER 2

THE BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATION FOR DISCIPLESHIP

Among evangelical churches, discipleship practices vary. For some churches, discipleship is any effort to care for one another. Other churches believe that the primary goal of discipleship is evangelizing the lost. While both evangelism and caring for people are vital elements of ministry, neither of these ministry efforts fully captures Jesus' model for making disciples. The Scriptures are clear that Jesus preached the gospel to the lost, but the majority of Jesus' earthly ministry was spent investing in the lives of the disciples and equipping them for ministry. Allan Coppedge, in his book *The Biblical Principles of Discipleship*, argues that Scripture teaches a “twofold responsibility for ministry.”¹ The first responsibility for believers is to build up the body of Christ.² Paul is clear in Ephesians 4 that leaders are sent to the church to equip believers to do ministry. The second responsibility for believers, according to Coppedge, is reaching the world.³ The responsibility of reaching the world is primarily done through evangelism. The evangelical Christian church as a whole typically focuses the majority of their ministry on this second responsibility. However, the question must be asked, “What is the church doing to disciple believers into mature relationships with Christ?”

In the context of this chapter, discipleship should primarily be understood as disciples of Christ investing in other believers in one-on-one type settings. A true disciple of Christ is commanded from Scripture to teach the gospel, model a life set apart from the

¹ Allan Coppedge, *The Biblical Principles of Discipleship* (Johannesburg, South Africa: Teleios Publishers, 2017), xiv.

² Coppedge, *The Biblical Principles of Discipleship*, xiv.

³ Coppedge, *The Biblical Principles of Discipleship*, xiv.

world, invest in other believers, and build up the body of Christ. This chapter explores each of these commands in the following Scripture passages: teaching in Matthew 28:18-20, modeling in 1 Peter 2:1-9, investing in 2 Timothy 2:1-7, and building up in Ephesians 4:11-13.

Matthew 28:18-20

In Matthew 28, Jesus is beginning to conclude His earthly ministry. Chapter 28 begins with the resurrection of Jesus. As the disciples went to the mountain that they had been directed to, they saw Jesus for the first time since His resurrection (Matt 28:16-17).⁴ In this moment Jesus gave His final command to His disciples, which is known as the Great Commission. Jesus called His disciples to action to make disciples and further His kingdom. Oswald Sanders states, “It is significant that Jesus did not command His followers to go and make believers, or converts, of all nations.”⁵ Jesus emphasized the importance of making disciples. In its simplest terms, a disciple is a learner.⁶ Jesus emphasized to the disciples the importance of teaching God’s Word to make new disciples of Christ. Matthew 28:18-20 shows that biblical discipleship is rooted in teaching the gospel.

The Great Commission in Matthew 28 is a command from Jesus to make disciples of all nations. Many Christians have grown up memorizing the Great Commission beginning with verse 19 which starts, “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations.” However, to best understand the command of Jesus to make disciples, believers must look at verse 18: “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.” The reason that verse 19 begins with “go therefore” is because of the authority given to Jesus by God the Father Himself. Verse 18 reaffirms Daniel’s vision in Daniel 7:14, which states, “And to

⁴ All Scripture quotations are from the English Standard Version.

⁵ J. Oswald Sanders, *Spiritual Discipleship: Principles for Following Christ for Every Believer* (Chicago: Moody, 1990), 29.

⁶ Sanders, *Spiritual Discipleship*, 29.

him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed.” What had once been a vision of the Old Testament has now become reality through Jesus’ death, burial, and resurrection.⁷

Looking back to Matthew 4, Satan tempted Jesus and offered Him authority over all the earth if He would simply bow down and worship him. However, Jesus refused to bow to Satan, following the will of His Father. Jesus was obedient to the Father even unto the cross, gaining far more than Satan could ever offer. R. T. France states, “Now the risen Jesus, vindicated over those who tried to destroy him, is now established as the universal sovereign, and his realm embraces not only the whole earth . . . but heaven as well.”⁸ Understanding the full extent of Jesus’ authority allows believers to know His sovereignty but also know the basis of the commission that is to follow in verses 19 and 20. Because of who Jesus is, believers are to make disciples.

The Great Commission requires believers to not only have a knowledge of Jesus’ command but also to follow through with action in obedience. The call to Christianity is not a call to know Jesus and be baptized and then simply sit on the church pew for years to come. Churches are filled with Christians who have been saved for numerous years who have never discipled anyone in or to Christ. It is even possible to be active in all other ministries of the church, while still neglecting Jesus’ command to make disciples. Because of Jesus’ authority, believers can have confidence in Him to go and make disciples in all the earth.⁹

⁷ R. T. France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), 1113.

⁸ France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 1113.

⁹ D. A. Carson, *Matthew 13-28*, in vol. 2 of *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, ed. Frank E. Gaebelein (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1995), 595.

D. A. Carson points out that the imperative in the Great Commission is on the command to make disciples. The verbs go, baptize, and teach are all participles in the Greek that inform the reader how to make disciples.¹⁰ The structure that Matthew used is also important. In verses 19 and 20, the order of the verbs is go, baptize, and then teach. In many Christian churches today, baptism is a point of completion for the new believer. Some churches have taken the philosophy of baptism as being the end goal of evangelism and discipleship. However, in the Great Commission, Matthew implies that baptism is at the beginning of the believer's journey. While Matthew does put baptism before teaching, he never equates baptism with salvation. It is understood that the discipler is active in sharing the gospel to the lost that they would respond positively and place their faith in Jesus. It is after salvation, as evidenced all throughout Scripture, that baptism takes place. Following baptism, the new believer is taught the Scriptures that he would become a mature follower of Christ. France states, "Matthew is presenting a different model whereby baptism is the point of enrollment into a process of learning which is never complete."¹¹

Carson explains discipleship: "To disciple a person to Christ is to bring him into the relation of pupil to teacher, 'taking His yoke' of authoritative instruction (Matt 11:29), accepting what He says as true because He says it, and submitting to His requirements as right because He makes them."¹² Disciples of Christ are those believers who hear, understand, and obey the command of Jesus to make disciples.

Jesus modeled the perfect picture of discipleship with His disciples. In Matthew's narrative, Jesus is identified as the teacher.¹³ In verse 20, Jesus finishes His command to the disciples to "[teach] them to observe all that I have commanded you." The disciples were instructed not to teach their own words and ideas, but rather the very

¹⁰ Carson, *Matthew 13-28*, 595.

¹¹ France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 1116.

¹² Carson, *Matthew 13-28*, 595-96.

¹³ France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 1118.

words of Jesus, or what He commanded. Jesus' use of the word "commandments" is not to contradict the commandments of the Old Testament, but rather, as France suggests, to "give new interpretation of the old law."¹⁴ In Jesus' teaching, it is clear that salvation is found by living in obedience to His words. Teaching the Word of God is of utmost importance in being obedient to the Great Commission. Lost people come to Christ by hearing the gospel. After someone has surrendered his life to follow Christ, he is further disciplined by learning and studying the Word of God.

In Jesus' example of discipleship, He invested His time and energy in training His disciples for ministry. In the beginning of Jesus' ministry, he recruited the disciples to join Him in ministry. In Matthew 4:19, Jesus summoned Simon Peter and Andrew when He said, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men." Verse 20 continues to say that Peter and Andrew immediately left their nets and followed him. After calling all of His disciples, Jesus disciplined them by leading them to follow Him. Throughout Jesus' ministry, the disciples watched Him preach and teach. Jesus emphasized the power of the Scriptures throughout His ministry. Bill Hull, in his book *Jesus Christ, Disciplemaker*, elaborates, "Jewish men believed in the supernatural nature of Scripture, but few had experienced more than an academic interaction with it. Christ desired something more than a mere exercise of the mind. He wanted people to witness the power and relevance of God's Word for themselves."¹⁵ It is evident in the Scriptures that Jesus demonstrated to the disciples the importance of teaching God's Word.

In Jesus' command to make disciples, He concludes by promising His presence with His faithful followers. Verse 20 ends with Jesus saying, "And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age." Believers can be comforted to know that the work of discipleship is not done alone. Discipleship is made possible through the power and presence of Jesus. Carson states that "just as Jesus introduced Himself in the prologue of

¹⁴ France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 1119.

¹⁵ Bill Hull, *Jesus Christ, Disciplemaker* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2004), 89.

Matthew as Immanuel, ‘God with us,’ he is surely still God with us, to the end of the age.”¹⁶

R. T. France suggests that in the Old Testament, God oftentimes blessed His people with His presence to “empower his inadequate servants to fulfill the task he had called them to.”¹⁷ In the same way, Jesus was promising His presence to His disciples and to all His followers to empower them to accomplish the work of making disciples. In the very moment of giving this command to His disciples, Jesus was promising His physical presence, though only for a short while. Jesus knew what was to come, and He knew that He would be sending the Holy Spirit to be with His followers in His absence. In his Gospel, John writes, “I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever” (14:16). For believers today, Jesus is still fulfilling His promised presence through the power of the Holy Spirit. There must be an acknowledgement that the work of discipleship cannot be done apart from Christ and the Holy Spirit. Without Christ speaking through faithful servants, the disciplemaker will not succeed.

The Great Commission should be an encouragement to all followers of Christ. While the task of discipleship is a daunting and often hard task, this command is not based on what believers can do themselves, but rather what the Holy Spirit can do through the believers’ obedience to Christ’s command. Throughout this ministry project, my aim is for more people in the worship ministry at PPBC to understand their true calling as a disciple of Christ. In each one of the discipleship groups, I pray we teach the gospel, model a life set apart from the world, invest in other believers, and build up the body of Christ.

First Peter 2:1-9

In his letter to exiled believers, Peter gives the expectations of holiness and righteousness for all believers (1 Pet 2:1-9). For the purposes of this ministry project, I

¹⁶ Carson, *Matthew 13-28*, 599.

¹⁷ France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 1119.

have these same expectations for each of the participants from the worship ministry. First Peter reminds those believers that they have been saved to be righteous and holy in order to give God the glory that is due His name. Living righteous and holy lives has several implications for all believers. For true discipleship to take place, a disciple must live according to the Scriptures before investing in the lives of others. Living a righteous and holy life means that disciples rid themselves of sin, hold fast to God's Word, worship and surrender all that they are to Christ, and rest in the promise of being God's chosen people. These things cannot happen through man's ability. The only way that a believer can live a holy and righteous life is by accepting God's righteousness that is placed on him by the shed blood of Christ. First Peter 2:1-9 calls all disciples to be a holy priesthood, set apart from the world to proclaim His excellencies.

Disciples of Christ are to rid themselves of sin and habits from the old way of life. For discipleship to be effective, the disciple that invests in other believers must live a life that is pleasing to the Lord. Peter, writing to exiled believers, addresses their need to confess their sin to live righteous and holy lives. Peter begins in verse 1 by saying, "So put away all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander." Since Peter started with "so put away," the reader must know that verses 1-3 represent the completion of the argument in 1 Peter 1:23-25. In chapter 1, Wayne Grudem indicates that Peter emphasizes the "permanence of God's word by contrasting it with the fading glory of human achievement."¹⁸ Believers must know that the things of this world, including human nature, will only last for a short period of time. Peter reminds those in exile that this earth will fade away, and their only hope is the eternal Word of God. The demise of the world and the flesh is a result of sin. Therefore, true disciples of Christ must die to self, take up their crosses daily, and follow Jesus.¹⁹ The verb used for "put away" has the

¹⁸ Wayne Grudem, *1 Peter*, Tyndale New Testament Commentary, vol. 17 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988), 93.

¹⁹ Luke 9:23

connotations of “taking off clothing” or commanding Christians to “put off” wrong actions.²⁰ If disciples are supposed to be a holy priesthood, set apart for God’s glory, then they must deal with their sin. As Jesus preached in the sermon on the mount in Matthew 5, disciples of Christ must seek after God’s righteousness, not their own. Seeking after God’s righteousness means that the believers constantly come before the Lord declaring their desperate need of Him because of their sin. For this ministry project to be successful, each person who accepts the challenge to disciple others from the worship ministry must strive to “put off” their wrong actions of sin.

God also instructs disciples of Christ to live strictly by His Word. In verses 2 and 3, Peter describes the next step for the repentant believer. Peter Davids notes that instead of a listing good behaviors to follow, Peter emphasizes “a call to dependence on God.”²¹ Verse 2 states, “Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up into salvation.” Davids further comments that believers should desire the appropriate food for their nourishment.²² Verse 2 should be a reminder for all disciples that they never outgrow a need for Christ and His Word.

In this project, each disciplemaker, during his or her discipleship group session, teaches on different topics straight from God’s Word. It would be my goal that every person that goes through the discipleship curriculum at PPBC not only grows in knowledge of the Bible, but also that their love for God’s Word increases. Even mature believers have a constant need for appropriate nourishment. As stated in verse 2, the milk that the believer was to long for was to be completely pure. The use of “pure” in this verse was deliberate to contrast the use of the word “deceit” in verse 1.²³ In this sense, the spiritual milk was

²⁰ Grudem, *1 Peter*, 93.

²¹ Peter H. Davids, *The First Epistle of Peter*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990), 81.

²² Davids, *The First Epistle of Peter*, 81.

²³ Davids, *The First Epistle of Peter*, 82.

not deceitful or watered down. Peter's readers would have clearly understood this analogy, as watering down milk would have been a common practice for merchants to make it last longer.²⁴ Rather, this spiritual milk was without imperfection. Peter was declaring to these believers to long for "the word that was preached to you" or "the living and enduring Word of God."²⁵ Peter's declaration is completely applicable today. Believers must devote themselves to the teachings of Jesus so that they grow up in the likeness of Him. The more that disciples of Christ study the holy Scriptures, the better disciplinarians they will be. The best picture of discipleship is when disciples teach God's Word to other believers to raise up mature followers of Christ.

Christ has also chosen His disciples and equipped them to worship Him, the Cornerstone. Now that Peter addressed the believer's need for proper nourishment, in verses 4-6 he shifts attention to abiding in Christ. Disciples must realize that their worship, or daily surrender to Christ, is vital to lead others effectively in discipleship. Throughout this ministry project, I pray that members of the worship ministry realize their daily need to abide in Christ. As worship ministry members disciple other members, they must demonstrate how to live a life that is surrendered unto the Lord.

Peter, in verse 4, begins with the phrase, "as you come to Him." According to Grudem, the verb used for "come to Him" is a frequent verb used in the Old Testament for "drawing near to God either to hear him speak or to come into His presence in the tabernacle to offer sacrifices."²⁶ That same verb is used in Hebrews for drawing near to God in worship.²⁷ Grudem states that Peter is implying that "all believers now enjoy the great privilege, reserved only for priests in the Old Testament, of drawing near to God in worship. Rather than coming to the altar or even to the holy place in the Jerusalem

²⁴ Davids, *The First Epistle of Peter*, 82.

²⁵ Davids, *The First Epistle of Peter*, 83.

²⁶ Grudem, *1 Peter*, 97.

²⁷ Grudem, *1 Peter*, 97.

temple, believers now come ‘to him’ in whom ‘the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily.’”²⁸ Christ has now called all believers to come directly to Himself to worship Him. Verse 4 also describes Christ as a living stone. Peter is referencing Psalm 118:22, which speaks of Jesus being the Cornerstone that the builders rejected. Grudem states, “The fact that Christ is the living stone shows at once his superiority to an Old Testament temple made of dead stones, and reminds Christians that there can be no longing for that old way of approach to God, for this way is far better.”²⁹ These verses are also a reminder to believers that just as Christ, the living stone, was rejected by men, they too will be rejected by the world. In Verse 5, Peter remarkably connects the living stone imagery to the believers who are reading his letter.³⁰ Now, not only is Christ considered the living stone, but all believers have the privilege of being a living stone used to build God’s spiritual house. As people come to faith in Christ, God’s kingdom, or spiritual house, is continually being built. As God’s spiritual house is being built, more and more people are coming to Him in worship.

Lastly, disciples of Christ are to rest in the promise of being God’s children and declare the excellencies of Christ. In juxtaposition to those who stumble because they disobey the Word of God, these disciples of Christ “are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that [they] may proclaim the excellencies of him who called [them] out of darkness into his marvelous light” (1 Pet 2:9). Grudem points out that Peter’s use of the phrase “chosen race,” referring back to Israel, implies that the status of God’s chosen people is inescapable: “God has chosen a new race of people, Christians, who have obtained membership in this new chosen race not by physical descent from Abraham but by coming to Christ and believing in him.”³¹ The

²⁸ Grudem, *1 Peter*, 97.

²⁹ Grudem, *1 Peter*, 98.

³⁰ Grudem, *1 Peter*, 99.

³¹ Grudem, *1 Peter*, 111.

terms “royal priesthood” and “holy nation” are a continuation of the same idea. Peter was quoting these phrases from Exodus 19:6 and 23:22, where God promised Israel that they will always belong to Him as long as they listen and keep His commandments.³²

Part of the discipleship curriculum for PPBC focuses on all believers belonging to Christ. Disciplemakers from within the worship ministry must emphasize that they invest in others because Jesus redeemed them back to Himself. Because of Christ’s love, believers should want every person within the worship ministry of PPBC to know how much God loves them. Believers should realize that their identities are not found in the race they were physically born into, but rather the race that was bought with the blood of Jesus. God has declared believers to be a people for His own possession and He will never let them go. Being in God’s possession means that believers have been set apart from the rest of the world. Christians should not conform and look like the rest of the world but rather be the light in a dark world.

The second part of verse 9 commands believers to “proclaim the excellencies of Him who called you out of darkness.” God did not save believers simply for their own enjoyment, but that they would glorify Him.³³ My fear is that too many believers in the worship ministry have received the blessings of salvation but have never proclaimed the excellencies of Christ to anyone. God’s purpose in redeeming Christians was so that the world might come to know Him. More people coming to know Christ means more people worshipping Him and giving Him glory. Grudem suggests that declaring God’s excellencies is literally “speaking of all he is and has done.”³⁴ Peter’s argument is that believers have been saved in order to be disciples of Christ. Believers are to share the good news of Christ by sharing what God has done in and through them. Peter is calling the exiled believers to be active in discipling. If the worship ministry takes seriously

³² Grudem, *1 Peter*, 111.

³³ Grudem, *1 Peter*, 112.

³⁴ Grudem, *1 Peter*, 112.

this call to proclaim God's excellencies through discipleship, then they will respond to God's love for them more deeply and passionately as they lead the church in worship.

Second Timothy 2:1-7

In Paul's second letter to Timothy, Paul shifts his attention away from specific ministry needs of the church and on to Timothy's personal ministry life. The biggest theme running through 2 Timothy is suffering and enduring for the sake of the gospel. Fully knowing the hardships that Timothy is facing, Paul seeks to provide encouragement and proper instruction for him to stay focused and make disciples. Paul's instructions to Timothy provide the scriptural model for discipleship for the worship ministry at PPBC. While the members of the worship ministry do not face the same struggles and hardships as Timothy, believers today still face many trials. The disciplemakers from within the worship ministry will be able to invest in other members and provide much needed encouragement to foster biblical discipleship.

In 2 Timothy 2:1-7, Paul addresses three main concerns for Timothy. First, Paul reminds Timothy to continue to be strengthened with the gospel. It is by God's grace and His power alone that believers have the strength to do the task of discipleship. Second, Paul commands Timothy to remain faithful in discipleship and sharing the gospel. Paul demonstrates, by the way he has invested in and trained Timothy, how to fulfill the command of the Great Commission. Paul exhorted Timothy to convey to the Ephesian church everything he had heard Paul say, so that they in turn would share with future generations. Third, Paul reminds Timothy that hardships will come, but to remain faithful and endure for the sake of the gospel. Working and doing ministry with people often gets hard. Challenges come anytime disciples address sin in other people's lives. However, Paul reminds Timothy that the gospel is worth any hardship he may face. Second Timothy 2:1-7 shows that disciples are to invest in other faithful followers of Christ by entrusting them with the gospel and preparing them to face hardships.

Disciples of Christ are to be strengthened with the gospel for the often-difficult task of being called to discipleship. Paul, one of the greatest disciplemakers, displays a life that has many challenges. Second Timothy 1 ends with Paul describing those in Asia who had turned away from him. Throughout Paul's missionary journeys, he faced people turning their backs on him, imprisonment, and even a thorn in the flesh (2 Cor 12:7-9). Even amidst the challenges, Paul exemplifies great strength in the Lord in verse 1 as he instructs Timothy to "be strengthened by the grace that is in Christ Jesus." After Paul had just praised Onesiphorus for his service to the Lord, Paul continues that same exhortation to Timothy, saying, "You then, my child."³⁵ Paul is not only telling Timothy to serve the Lord, but he is doing so with great endearment. Philip Towner suggests, "While this perhaps contributes a note of intimacy, it also reminds Timothy, and any other readers, that his special relation to Paul lends him a certain authority that positions him to continue Paul's ministry just as it obligates him to serve faithfully."³⁶ By stating "be strengthened," Paul refers back to the power of God that he mentioned in 2 Timothy 1:8. In this context, Paul connects the verb for "be strengthened" to the power and grace that believers receive in Christ Jesus. Philip Towner argues that Paul is implying "that strengthening for ministry comes through divine agency."³⁷

Disciples should be encouraged by Paul's second letter to Timothy. Paul assures Timothy that Christ's grace is sufficient for any task that has been set before him. Disciples of Christ have that same assurance that the power of God and the grace of Christ are enough to have strength for ministry and discipleship. Towner also suggests that the "strengthening" that Paul discusses also has connections with the power of the Holy

³⁵ Philip H. Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006), 488.

³⁶ Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 488.

³⁷ Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 488.

Spirit.³⁸ While connecting the grace of Christ and power of God, it would be inappropriate to not acknowledge the work of the Holy Spirit as Paul referenced in 1:6-7.³⁹ True discipleship cannot happen apart from the Triune God. God's power is manifested in believers through the power of the Holy Spirit, and it is through His leading that effective discipleship takes place. I pray that the worship ministry of PPBC knows that while discipleship is a challenging task, it is not completed apart from the Holy Spirit working in and through them. All disciples should be reminded that discipleship is not a work of man, but of God working in them. The disciples' strength comes from the power of God.

Christ also calls His disciples to share the gospel. Second Timothy 2:1-7 is one of the most foundational passages of Scripture for biblical discipleship. As Christ drew Paul to Himself, Paul studied the Scriptures and invested in the lives of others. Paul lived out the command of the Great Commission by making a disciple out of Timothy, so that he would continue the ministry Paul began.⁴⁰ Paul's model of discipleship is echoed in verse 2: "What you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also." As Paul makes this statement, he refers back to what he said earlier in 1:13-14.⁴¹ Paul encourages Timothy to "follow the pattern of the sound words that you have heard . . . in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus" (2 Tim 1:13-14). Towner suggests that Paul's use of the phrase "in the presence of many witnesses" is arguably insinuating that this letter is being read at a memorable moment or commissioning for Timothy.⁴² Robert Yarbrough suggests that Paul's use of "witness" simply means that Timothy had experienced the redemption of Christ in the

³⁸ Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 489.

³⁹ Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 489.

⁴⁰ Robert W. Yarbrough, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, The Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2018), 372.

⁴¹ Yarbrough, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 372.

⁴² Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 490.

presence of many other fellow believers.⁴³ In essence, Paul was trying to remind Timothy that numerous other believers had affirmed him in his salvation. Whether this letter was intended for a specific event in Timothy's life or not, the emphasis is placed on the command to share the good news of Christ to faithful men. In the context of this letter, Paul communicates the desperate need for leaders to be trained to be sent out to help the church. Because of the heartache and setbacks seen in Ephesus, Asia, and Rome, Paul knew that new workers needed to be trained for ministry.⁴⁴ Towner states, "The church leadership ranks were being depleted, and the itinerant Pauline mission was in danger of grinding to a halt. The command is therefore designed primarily to entrust the continuation of the church and the mission's ministry in Asia Minor."⁴⁵ Paul's command to entrust the gospel to faithful men was not simply passing the torch, but as Towner indicates, it required Timothy "to teach and to model the faith."⁴⁶ In the same way, it is my expectation that members from the worship ministry will teach and model the faith to other faithful members.

Lastly, Christ calls His disciples to suffer for the sake of the gospel. Paul's exhortation to Timothy to "share in the suffering" echoes his words in 1:8. Paul reminds Timothy that it is by the power of God that they are able to endure the suffering and hardships that may come their way. Paul's words here also serve as an assurance that persecution and hardship will come. However, Paul reassures Timothy that as a soldier of Jesus Christ, the gospel was worth any suffering that could come. Towner suggests that Paul is emphasizing that suffering "is a requirement of faithful service."⁴⁷ To explain suffering and hardships to Timothy, Paul uses analogies of a soldier, an athlete, and a

⁴³ Yarbrough, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 372.

⁴⁴ Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 490.

⁴⁵ Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 490-91.

⁴⁶ Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 491.

⁴⁷ Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 492.

farmer in verses 4-6. Towner suggests that Paul's reference to a soldier calls Timothy's attention to the "single-minded devotion to duty."⁴⁸ For disciples of Christ, the association of the command to share the gospel and make disciples to the duty of a soldier should be extremely helpful. In essence, the disciples have one job or one command to follow—make disciples at all costs. Just as a soldier follows the command of the chief officer by eliminating all distractions and focusing on the task at hand, disciples follow the command from Scripture to invest in others and make disciples to further the kingdom of God.

The second analogy Paul uses is that of the athlete. Paul's purpose in referencing the winning athlete was to stress the importance of following the rules. It could have been a temptation for Timothy to avoid the suffering or hardships placed in front of Him, which would have been a breach in the rules.⁴⁹ Instead, Paul encouraged Timothy to stay faithful with self-discipline, which would lead to victory.

Lastly, Paul uses the analogy of a farmer. The farmer, just like the soldier and the athlete, also represents a worker with "focus and diligent activity."⁵⁰ The farmer, in this sense, was not working just to work. The farmer represents a hard worker that suffered and endured to produce crops that yielded great return. For the disciplinemaker, the analogies of the soldier, athlete, and farmer are a reminder to share in the suffering that ministry brings and endure for the sake of the gospel. Every person within the worship ministry can relate in some way to the soldier, athlete, or farmer. Those who accept the call to be a disciplinemaker will face challenges, but I pray that Paul's instructions to Timothy encourage them to be strengthened with the gospel, share the gospel, and endure for the sake of the gospel.

⁴⁸ Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 492.

⁴⁹ Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 494.

⁵⁰ Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 495.

Ephesians 4:11-13

Paul's letter to the church of Ephesus stresses the importance of unity among the people of God. Throughout the letter Paul emphasizes that the church is made up of both Jew and Gentile and that both are one in Christ. As believers, it is good to know that Christ still desires the church to be unified. With Christ as the Cornerstone, the church is being built into the holy temple of God (Eph 2:21). In this passage of Scripture, God has given the church specific leaders to build up the body of Christ by training and equipping them for ministry. Ephesians 4 displays a picture of discipleship and serves as a great reminder for the worship ministry of PPBC to be active in discipling in order to raise up a mature generation of Christ followers. Ephesians 4:11-13 shows that each member of the worship ministry should be actively involved in building up the body of Christ.

God has appointed leaders to build up the body of Christ. Church leaders need to understand that serving God in a ministry role is not something that should be taken lightly. God calls faithful servants to follow Him and places them in areas of service in the church. While Ephesians 4:11-13 is directly associated with full-time vocational church leaders, the message of building up the body of Christ applies to every believer who is serving Christ. Every church has significant needs, and if believers are faithful to seek the Lord's guidance in their lives, God will lead them to certain ministry areas. While it is the job of every church leader to build up the body of Christ, Christ ultimately does the work. Frank Thielman argues that Christ equips and builds up the church by "giving gifts to discrete groups of people so they, in turn, can equip others to serve and edify the church."⁵¹ Verses 11-12 state, "And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ." Paul is saying that God gave these church leaders specific gifts in order that they would disciple and build up the church. While Paul does give distinctions between the individual positions, the emphasis in the passage is less focused on the positions and

⁵¹ Frank Thielman, *Ephesians*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2010), 273.

more on the ministry that Christ has equipped them to do.⁵² As mentioned, this passage applies to the daily lives of every believer as well. God has commanded every follower of Christ to make disciples of all nations. While it is true that God equips church leaders with the skills and talents they need for their ministries, God also equips every believer with the ability to make disciples. All believers should read this passage of Paul's letter to the Ephesians as if they are leaders in the church of God and have been appointed by God to build up the body of Christ. In whatever capacity believers serve the church, they can know they are fulfilling God's command to make disciples.

Church leaders are also called to equip the saints through biblical discipleship. In verse 12, Paul specifically writes that leaders are to build up the body by equipping the saints for ministry. All church leaders should realize that it is their job to train the next generation of leaders for the church. For example, worship pastors must take seriously their job to disciple young musicians in order to train the next generation of worship pastors and church musicians. This truth of discipleship is the same for every ministry area whether pertaining to Sunday school teachers equipping others to teach, or pastors training young men who feel called to pastor.

Much debate has occurred over verse 12 concerning who does the work of ministry.⁵³ Some scholars interpret verse 12 to understand that church leaders should do the work of ministry as well as equipping others for that ministry. Other scholars interpret verse 12 to mean that church leaders are to focus on equipping and training others so that they can do the work of ministry. While at first glance verse 12 seems to say that God has sent leaders to equip the saints, do the work of ministry, and build the body of Christ, Frank Thielman argues that this is probably not what Paul was trying to emphasize.⁵⁴ Thielman presents the idea that instead of understanding the prepositional phrases to imply

⁵² Thielman, *Ephesians*, 273.

⁵³ Thielman, *Ephesians*, 277.

⁵⁴ Thielman, *Ephesians*, 277, 279.

that the church leaders do each one of those tasks, “The three prepositional phrases build on each other, and the apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers of 4:11 equip all believers to do the work of ministry for the edification of Christ’s body.”⁵⁵ With Thielman’s understanding of this passage, the focus for church leaders should be placed on equipping and training the saints. However, Thielman’s understanding does not imply that church leaders never do the work of ministry. Thielman would instead take the approach that church leaders should actively train and equip others instead of just doing everything themselves. Thielman’s understanding of 4:11 can also be explained by using an athletic analogy of a player/coach. The player/coach trains and equips his players *and* engages in the heat of the contest with the team. In the same way, church leaders are to be training and equipping the saints for ministry while actively serving alongside them.

The best way to equip the saints for ministry is to disciple one-on-one or in small group settings. While Thielman’s understanding of 4:12 places the emphasis on equipping and training, church leaders should still be actively involved in ministry. Church leaders equip the saints by teaching them to love and to care for other believers, share the gospel, and serve the church in whatever way possible. This does not mean that church leaders quit loving and caring for others as well as sharing the gospel. In one-on-one discipleship, disciples are able to equip the saints by allowing them to see how they do ministry.

Lastly, church leaders disciple the church to attain the unity of the faith. In verse 13, Paul declares that leaders build up the body of Christ in order to have “union with Christ in all his fullness.”⁵⁶ The work of building up the church is one that never stops here on this earth. Verse 13 instructs leaders to continue the work of ministry “until we all attain the unity of the faith.” Paul references an arrival point that is not attainable until all believers are in glory with almighty God. Thielman states, “Paul is not saying

⁵⁵ Thielman, *Ephesians*, 279.

⁵⁶ Thielman, *Ephesians*, 280.

that Christ continues to give apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers to the church ‘until we all arrive,’ but that the work of building up the church continues ‘until we all arrive.’”⁵⁷ Just like the sanctification process is not complete until believers are in heaven, complete knowledge of Christ also comes when believers are with Him in heaven.

Verse 13 also addresses the need for discipleship. Again, while this passage is addressed to the leaders of the church, believers can know that the work of ministry has been placed on them through the Great Commission. Believers should know that the work of making disciples does not end until Christ comes again. As long as believers have breath to speak, investing in the lives of others and raising mature followers of Christ should be on the forefront of their minds. As Paul describes “attaining the unity of the faith,” Thielman suggests that he implies that church leaders should attain a unity in “acknowledging a particular body of doctrine, the ‘one faith.’”⁵⁸ One of the main things that Paul fought against in his teachings was false doctrine. As Paul exhorts the church leaders to build up the body of Christ, he exhorts them to do so in hopes to purify the church from false teachings.⁵⁹

All believers should find motivation and encouragement from this passage of Scripture. While it is true that believers have already joined in the victory of Christ, this passage confirms that there is still work to be done for the church. As Matthew 5:13-16 says, all disciples of Christ are to go be salt and light in a lost and dying world. In a culture that is entangled with sin and has embraced a false gospel, disciples must recommit their lives to building up the body of Christ until the church has reached its full union with Christ.

⁵⁷ Thielman, *Ephesians*, 280.

⁵⁸ Thielman, *Ephesians*, 281.

⁵⁹ Thielman, *Ephesians*, 281.

Conclusion

God's Word is clear on the biblical principles of discipleship. Each one of the Scripture passages in this chapter helps establish the foundation for the biblical discipleship curriculum of this ministry project. At the core of this project, every participant from the worship ministry must realize that he is a disciple of Christ, and as a disciple, he is called to be a disciplemaker. First and foremost, as evidenced in Matthew's gospel, teaching God's Word is foundational in any discipleship setting. Therefore, each session of the discipleship curriculum is centered around the disciplemaker teaching from God's Word. My aim is for each participant to not only grow in knowledge of the Scriptures but also grow in his passion of reading and studying the Bible.

Second, in studying Peter's second letter to the exiled believers, it is also clear that Peter was reminding his readers that they have been saved in order to live holy and righteous lives all for the glory of God. In this ministry project, each disciplemaker is challenged to model a life of righteousness that is set apart from the world. For the eight weeks of each discipleship cycle, disciplemakers from within the worship ministry walk alongside other members, and it is vital that they display lives that seek after Christ's righteousness. It is the job of disciplemakers to remind their disciples that they can stand victoriously over sin because of Jesus' death and resurrection.

Third, in 2 Timothy, Paul actively trained faithful men to not only know the gospel, but to also train others to live according to the gospel. A good portion of the eight-week cycle focuses on teaching the truths of God's Word, but eventually the training starts to focus on replicating the discipleship process with other members. While the success of these discipleship efforts relies upon obedience from each participant in the worship ministry to answer the call of discipleship, Scripture teaches that God is the one doing the work of discipleship through the power of the Holy Spirit. Even through great trials and struggles, the worship ministry participants must realize that the power of God is at work in them. God will not leave believers alone to complete what He has called

them to do. The Holy Spirit will guide each disciplemaker through every challenge and hardship.

Last, in Ephesians, Paul instructs the church at Ephesus that it is the job of every believer to invest in other believers in order to raise up mature followers of Christ. In the context of this ministry project, my desire is to train and disciple members of the worship ministry to do the work of ministry. Paul reminded the church leaders that they should not be doing the work of ministry alone but instead they are to disciple others to work alongside them. Therefore, my aim at PPBC is for more people from the worship ministry to hear and answer God's call on their lives to submit to lives of discipleship.

CHAPTER 3
THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL ISSUES
RELATED TO DISCIPLESHIP

Discipleship practices are implemented in many different ways. The aim of this chapter is to present the theories and practices of different theologians who contributed invaluable resources to the church on the spiritual discipline of discipleship. Each of these theories provides insight into creating the eight-week discipleship curriculum that will be implemented within the worship ministry at PPBC. While each of these theologians is firmly rooted in God's Word, each scholar presents a slightly different approach to discipleship. Theologians Robert Coleman, Greg Ogden, and Allan Coppedge have written extensively on the biblical command and process of discipleship. After presenting each philosophy, I compare the similarities and differences in order to clearly articulate the essential elements of biblical discipleship as they relate to the discipleship development process in the worship ministry at PPBC.

Robert E. Coleman

Robert E. Coleman has had a long career in teaching, writing, and speaking. Teaching at numerous seminaries, including Asbury Theological Seminary, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Wheaton College, and Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, Coleman has spent nearly his entire career teaching men and women to fulfill their calling to make disciples. In 1963, Coleman published *The Master Plan of Evangelism*, which is one of the best resources to help believers implement a plan of discipleship. While the title of the book is *The Master Plan of Evangelism*, Coleman's master plan clearly articulates a method of discipleship that fosters evangelism. Coleman

presents an eight-step process of biblical discipleship: selection, association, consecration, impartation, demonstration, delegation, supervision, and reproduction.

Coleman's first step in the process of discipleship is selection. Allowing Jesus to be the perfect model, Coleman bases this first step upon Jesus selecting the disciples to follow Him. One of the most striking facts in Jesus' selection of the disciples was that most of them were common laborers.¹ Jesus was not concerned with choosing prominent men in the community or synagogues. Instead, Jesus chose men who were willing to serve and humble themselves before Him. Coleman also stresses the practical truth of how Jesus disciplined His closest men. Jesus purposely and effectively chose a small number to be his closest followers.² Coleman's selection process focuses on selecting a few of the right people. As the perfect example, Jesus spent the majority of His earthly ministry investing in the lives of a few men. With Jesus' popularity among the commoners, He could have drawn in the masses to follow Him.³ Instead, Jesus chose a few men to train and instruct in doing the work of ministry.

This selection process, as indicated in Ephesians 4:12, should also be demonstrated by the church today. Rather than leaving the evangelistic efforts of the church to a single plea from the pulpit to the masses, the church should demonstrate an effective plan of discipleship to be more effective at evangelism. Church leaders can effectively fulfill the call of the Great Commission by investing in a small group of people so that sincere relationships are built, which foster growth in Christ. This selection process can be utilized either with a small group of lost individuals in hope that they come to know Christ, or with a small group of Christians who are new to the faith and need to be nurtured into a deeper relationship with Christ. Evangelism is best carried out through discipleship.

¹ Robert E. Coleman, *The Master Plan of Evangelism* (Grand Rapids: Revell, 1993), 22.

² Coleman, *The Master Plan of Evangelism*, 24.

³ Coleman, *The Master Plan of Evangelism*, 28.

The next step in Coleman’s process of discipleship is association. This step is best defined in the conclusion of the Great Commission as Jesus says, “And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age” (Matt 28:20). Jesus taught and invested in His disciples by being with them. Coleman emphasizes that Jesus’ best strategy of educating His disciples was allowing them to follow Him.⁴ In contrast with the strategy of the scribes and Pharisees, Jesus’ strategy was simple yet life changing as the disciples walked where Jesus walked. As Jesus called His disciples, Scripture details the simplicity of His commands. In John 1:39, “John and Andrew were invited to ‘come and see’ the place where Jesus stayed.”⁵ Philip, in John 1:43, was called in a similar manner as Jesus said, “Follow me.”⁶ Each of the disciples was called in a manner that called them out to do life with Jesus. Church leaders today should also call out church members with whom to do life. Church leaders should invest in the lives of their church members so that the ministry of Jesus is replicated. Again, Ephesians 4:12 calls leaders to equip the church to do the work of ministry. Coleman stresses that “preaching to the masses, although necessary, will never suffice in the work of preparing the leaders for evangelism.”⁷ Every church must establish a method of discipleship that allows people to live life with other mature believers.

Third, Coleman discusses the step of consecration. This third step is displayed in Jesus’ command, “Take my yoke upon you” (Matt 11:29). As Coleman highlights, Jesus expected full obedience from His closest followers.⁸ While Jesus called the disciples with a simple invitation like “follow me,” “implied in their initial invitation was a call to

⁴ Coleman, *The Master Plan of Evangelism*, 33.

⁵ Coleman, *The Master Plan of Evangelism*, 34.

⁶ Coleman, *The Master Plan of Evangelism*, 34.

⁷ Coleman, *The Master Plan of Evangelism*, 40.

⁸ Coleman, *The Master Plan of Evangelism*, 43.

faith in the person of Christ and obedience to His Word.”⁹ Following Jesus meant significantly more than simply walking behind Him. As a disciple of Christ, it meant “surrendering one’s whole life to the Master in absolute submission to His sovereignty.”¹⁰ For the disciples, this meant completely forsaking sin and the things of the world. Jesus called them to Himself expecting complete surrender. Jesus even made it clear to His disciples that their obedience was a proof of their love toward Him. Jesus said to the disciples in John 14:15, “If you love me, you will keep my commandments.”

The church today must also remember this command. A believer’s love for the Father is best displayed by an obedience to God and His Word. As church leaders invest in the lives of other people, there must, first and foremost, be an understanding of complete surrender and obedience to God. Christians all over the world today have damaged or even killed their witness because of their lack of obedience to the Father. One cannot be indifferent to the commands of God’s Word. Jesus corrected the thoughts of the Pharisees after He had healed a demon-possessed man, and said, “Whoever is not with me is against me, and whoever does not gather with me scatters” (Matt 12:30). May the church today know that to be with Jesus means to be obedient to His Word.

Coleman’s fourth step is impartation. The step of impartation refers to Jesus completely giving Himself away to His disciples. Jesus’ investment in the disciples exemplifies someone who was willing to give everything that He was to them. The best example of Jesus’ impartation is found in His willingness to go to the cross for a lost world. In obedience to His father, Jesus humbled Himself to the point of death on a cross so that the world might be saved through Him. Coleman explains, “God gave all he had to those he loved, even his ‘only begotten Son.’”¹¹

⁹ Coleman, *The Master Plan of Evangelism*, 44.

¹⁰ Coleman, *The Master Plan of Evangelism*, 44.

¹¹ Coleman, *The Master Plan of Evangelism*, 54.

In God's perfect love, He completely gave Himself away so that the lost might be saved. After Jesus' death and resurrection, He appeared again to the disciples. After issuing the Great Commission, Jesus promised them that He would be "with them always, to the end of the age" (Matt 28:20). In the promise of being with the disciples, Jesus knew He was about to send the Holy Spirit to them. Jesus again demonstrated giving Himself away through imparting the Holy Spirit to His disciples. John 16:13 says, "When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on His own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come." Even though Jesus was about to physically leave, His ministry would not end. Coleman emphasizes, "Just as Jesus had ministered to the disciples for three years, now the Spirit would guide them into all truth."¹² Jesus continued to give Himself away through the Holy Spirit. It is vital for church leaders to live by the example that Jesus set. As Coleman argues, "We cannot give something away which we do not possess ourselves."¹³ Before leaders begin the process of discipleship, they must understand that it is the Spirit's work inside of them that brings about successful discipleship. Any work apart from Christ is dead and meaningless. Therefore, leaders must affirm their own salvation and be rooted in Christ themselves before they can give themselves away. Ultimately, just as Christ gave His life away for the whole world, believers must die to self daily to give their life away in Christ.

Next, Coleman describes demonstration as his fifth step. This step was noticeable in the way that Jesus taught the disciples. There are many topics Jesus could have chosen to verbally teach, but instead He often chose to demonstrate exactly how the disciples should carry out different tasks. Coleman gives two examples of how Jesus demonstrated two specific spiritual practices. First, Jesus demonstrated for the disciples how to pray. While Jesus did teach the disciples how to pray in the Sermon on the Mount,

¹² Coleman, *The Master Plan of Evangelism*, 58.

¹³ Coleman, *The Master Plan of Evangelism*, 60.

He also on numerous occasions demonstrated to the disciples how to pray. The disciples frequently saw Jesus praying to His heavenly Father. Coleman also notes that not only could the disciples see Jesus praying to the Father, but also “they could see the strength which it gave to His life.”¹⁴ Jesus’ active prayer life led the disciples to say, “Lord, teach us to pray” (Luke 11:1). Jesus responded by giving His disciples an example—the Lord’s prayer.

Second, Jesus demonstrated an unwavering reliance upon the Holy Scriptures. In nearly all of His teaching, Jesus utilized God’s Word as He called people to Himself. Coleman states that Jesus used at least “sixty-six references to the Old Testament in his dialogues with the disciples in the four Gospels, as well as more than ninety allusions to it in his speaking with others.”¹⁵ Jesus demonstrated how the disciples should not only read and study God’s Word, but also display a love for the Scriptures in their own lives.¹⁶ Jesus never spoke or taught anything that He did not display in His own life. Church leaders should live by Jesus’ example of demonstration. If leaders preach and teach God’s Word, but do not live it out, then their ministry is done in vain. The church needs men and women to love people in a way that demonstrates how Christ loves the church. Discipleship is most effective when God’s people demonstrate how to love and serve God.

Delegation is Coleman’s sixth step in his process of discipleship. This sixth step is demonstrated by the way that Jesus sent His disciples out to do the work of ministry. First, when Jesus called the disciples to Himself, they followed and studied the way Jesus did ministry. As Jesus sent the disciples out, He instructed them to “preach the kingdom of God, and to heal the sick.”¹⁷ As the disciples went out and did the work of Jesus’

¹⁴ Coleman, *The Master Plan of Evangelism*, 64.

¹⁵ Coleman, *The Master Plan of Evangelism*, 65.

¹⁶ Coleman, *The Master Plan of Evangelism*, 65.

¹⁷ Coleman, *The Master Plan of Evangelism*, 73.

ministry, Jesus gave His authority and power to them.¹⁸ Jesus was very clear to His disciples that as they went out, their work was done in His name, as if He was there doing the work Himself. The disciples became the “actual representatives of Christ as they went forth.”¹⁹ Just as Jesus sent the disciples out to preach about the kingdom of God, the church must realize that this is a command for them as well. Coleman emphasizes that “Christian disciples are sent men and women—sent out in the same work of world evangelism to which the Lord was sent, and for which he gave his life.”²⁰ This is the ultimate command or commission for the church. Church leaders should hold their congregations accountable for doing the work of discipleship. While church leaders should actively participate in discipling and investing in other believers themselves, they should also delegate or create assignments for church members to carry out. This approach carries out the philosophy and meaning of Ephesians 4:12. Church leaders should not only do the work of ministry, but most importantly, train their people to disciple others as well.

Next, Coleman utilizes supervision as his seventh step. Still following Jesus’ example with His disciples, supervision allowed Jesus to continue teaching in practical scenarios. For example, after Jesus sent the disciples out on their first journey of ministry, Mark 6:30 describes the disciples coming back to Jesus to give a report. Mark states, “The apostles returned to Jesus and told him all that they had done and taught” (6:30). As Coleman points out, this meeting probably afforded Jesus the opportunity to further invest in the disciples as they shared their progress. In another example, Jesus intervenes in casting out an unclean spirit in a young boy. Mark 9:17-29 tells this story about the disciples unsuccessfully helping this young boy with an unclean spirit. As Jesus comes onto the scene, the father cries out to Jesus, “Teacher, I brought my son to you, for he has a spirit that makes him mute. . . . I asked your disciples to cast it out, and they were not

¹⁸ Coleman, *The Master Plan of Evangelism*, 76.

¹⁹ Coleman, *The Master Plan of Evangelism*, 76.

²⁰ Coleman, *The Master Plan of Evangelism*, 79.

able” (Mark 9:17-18). In an effort to correct the disciples, Jesus instructs them, “This kind cannot be driven out by anything but prayer” (Mark 9:29). Though Jesus expected His disciples to fulfill their tasks of ministry, He never left them completely on their own while He was on earth.

Church leaders should learn from Jesus’ example of supervision. “We dare not assume that the work will be done merely because we have shown a willing worker how to do it, and then sent him or her out with a glowing expectation of results.”²¹ Coleman argues that if this is the leader’s approach to ministry, then they are not adequately caring for those doing the work of ministry. Coleman continues, “It is thus crucial that those engaging in the work of evangelism have personal supervision and guidance until such time as they are matured enough to carry on alone.”²² In discipleship, the goal is to raise up mature followers of Christ. Before disciples are sent out to do their own work of ministry, it is vital that leaders guide them until they are mature and confident in what Christ can do through them.

Coleman’s eighth and final step in the process of discipleship is reproduction. This step is seen through the multiplication of disciples throughout Jesus’ ministry. Coleman describes, “Jesus had built into his disciples the structure of a church that would challenge and triumph over all the powers of death and hell. It had started small like a grain of mustard seed, but it would grow in size and strength until it became a tree ‘greater than all the herbs.’”²³ Ultimately, the success of the church rested upon the disciples being faithful to their call to make disciples. Coleman continues, “This was the way the church was to win—through the dedicated lives of those who knew the Savior so well that His Spirit and method constrained them to tell others.”²⁴ Today, the continued success of the

²¹ Coleman, *The Master Plan of Evangelism*, 86.

²² Coleman, *The Master Plan of Evangelism*, 86.

²³ Coleman, *The Master Plan of Evangelism*, 89.

²⁴ Coleman, *The Master Plan of Evangelism*, 91.

church still lies with Christ's body of believers to take the Great Commission seriously. The church's success cannot be measured simply by the number of new followers of Christ. Instead, the church will succeed when those who win people to Christ disciple them into mature leaders in the faith, who themselves then disciple others. Reproduction grows the church.

In this same manner, my goal is for participants within the worship ministry to realize that success in ministry is determined by discipling others into deeper relationships with Jesus, so that they may worship Him more fully. While the biblical discipleship survey reveals the detailed data of current discipleship practices among the worship ministry, my assumption was that the worship ministry was falling short of Jesus' command to make disciples. Implementing elements of Robert Coleman's eight steps in the discipleship curriculum allowed specific milestones to be achieved throughout the eight weeks.

Greg Ogden

Greg Ogden, author of *Discipleship Essentials: A Guide to Building Your Life in Christ*, retired from full-time church leadership in 2012. Prior to his retirement, he served as Pastor of Discipleship at Christ Church of Oakbrook, Illinois. Ogden also spent numerous years in the academic world as he served as the Director of the Doctor of Ministry program at Fuller Theological Seminary. Alongside his many years of ministry, he was an active speaker and teacher on the disciple-making mission of the church. *Discipleship Essentials* has been translated into fifteen languages and continues to provide the church with a practical plan of discipleship. Ogden's goal is to provide believers with a guide to implement "small, reproducible discipleship units."²⁵ Therefore, after I conduct the first cycle of discipleship with participants from the worship ministry, each one of them will be charged to disciple at least one person utilizing the same eight-week

²⁵ Greg Ogden, *Discipleship Essentials: A Guide to Building Your Life in Christ* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1998), xi.

curriculum that was taught to them. Each micro group that is formed will represent a reproducible discipleship unit. In Ogden's discipleship plan, each of these discipleship units focuses on three essential elements of biblical discipleship: the Word of God, transparent relationships, and accountability.

The first essential element of biblical discipleship is the Word of God. In a modern culture that does not adhere to objective truth, it is becoming increasingly more difficult to fight the tides of secularism. Although the church stands on the promises of God that they will one day be with Him in glory, it seems as if they are fighting a never-ending battle in attempting to stand on the Word of God as the ultimate authority. Ogden states that in today's culture "it is assumed that all lifestyles and moral convictions are equal, because all truth is personal."²⁶ Ultimately, the church has become a symbol of hate because of its unwillingness to be tolerant with all lifestyles. Ogden argues that the "unchanging truth of God's Word provides a 'core truth' that is true for all, because the source of this truth is a God who is the same for all."²⁷ Church leaders must take seriously the call of teaching God's Word through discipleship. Without teaching the truths of God's Word, discipleship efforts fall drastically short and simply teach people to be good citizens. Disciples of Christ should teach that the "Scriptures of the Old and New Testament are the uniquely inspired revelation of God and the standard of truth in all matters of faith and practice."²⁸ Ogden emphasizes, "The Bible is to the spirit what food is to the body."²⁹ It is the job of every believer to invest in the lives of others by laying a firm foundation of objective truth built upon God's Word.

The second essential element of biblical discipleship is transparent relationships. Ogden stresses that "for the truth of God's Word to be released in its transforming power,

²⁶ Ogden, *Discipleship Essentials*, xi.

²⁷ Ogden, *Discipleship Essentials*, xi.

²⁸ Ogden, *Discipleship Essentials*, 25.

²⁹ Ogden, *Discipleship Essentials*, 25.

it must be pursued in the context of trusting, intimate and lasting relationships.”³⁰ After many efforts of trial and error, Ogden concluded that the most appropriate setting for biblical discipleship is in what he calls “triads” or “micro groups.”³¹ While one-on-one settings are typically viewed as the traditional model of discipleship, Ogden resolves that this model sets the precedent for a teacher-student relationship.³² While the teacher-student relationship is not always a bad model, it potentially places a heavy burden on the disciplemaker to always be the one in charge and the one with all the answers. When two or three people are added, the dynamic shifts to an intentional group setting where each person brings equal value.³³ The micro group setting allows for several people to join together in different life scenarios while pursuing mature relationships with Christ. Each micro group must be built with transparent relationships that constitute a safe place for God’s Word to be applied.³⁴

Throughout the cycles of discipleship in this ministry project, I will urge each participant to utilize the micro group model when they begin their discipleship process. However, the specific charge for each participant upon completion of the curriculum will be to reproduce the discipleship process to at least one other member from the worship ministry. I fear that some from the worship ministry might feel overwhelmed in discipling two or three people at a time and not be able to invest as deeply as needed in each relationship. Ogden states, “At the core of every human being is the desire for deep and satisfying relationships because we are created in the image of God. God made us for relationship with Himself and with one another.”³⁵ Church leaders should recognize the

³⁰ Ogden, *Discipleship Essentials*, xi.

³¹ Ogden, *Discipleship Essentials*, xii.

³² Ogden, *Discipleship Essentials*, xii.

³³ Ogden, *Discipleship Essentials*, xii.

³⁴ Ogden, *Discipleship Essentials*, xii.

³⁵ Ogden, *Discipleship Essentials*, xii.

importance of discipling through intimate relationships. It is simply not enough to preach and teach the gospel and not live it by building and investing in friendships within the congregation. A proven method of teaching is demonstrating what one teaches. With Jesus being the perfect example, church leaders should invest in small group relationships to live out what they preach and teach.

The third essential element of biblical discipleship is accountability. According to Ogden, “Accountability is taking the relational context of discipleship to another level.”³⁶ Accountability is vital if true biblical discipleship is to take place. There should be a realization within the micro group that each person is a sinner. Having transparent relationships is contingent upon everyone in the micro group being vulnerable and sharing the difficulties and struggles of their lives. In the discipleship context, accountability does refer to confidentiality between members, but more importantly, accountability is best described as holding each person responsible to keep commitments that are made to one another, and most importantly, to God.³⁷ In Ogden’s micro groups, he creates a document called “A Disciple’s Covenant” that each person signs.³⁸ In the covenant, each person in the micro group commits to complete all assignments, meet weekly, submit fully to the Lord, contribute to a culture of honesty and confidentiality, and lastly, to invest in at least two other people upon completion.³⁹ Church leaders should remember that accountability is necessary in making their discipleship practices successful. If people do not feel open to share their struggles of life, then there is a breakdown in either the transparent relationships or accountability. While some might view a covenant form too legalistic, it provides a resource for leaders who are serious about maintaining an atmosphere of accountability.

³⁶ Ogden, *Discipleship Essentials*, xii.

³⁷ Ogden, *Discipleship Essentials*, xii.

³⁸ Ogden, *Discipleship Essentials*, xvi.

³⁹ Ogden, *Discipleship Essentials*, xvi.

Ogden's essential elements provide great insight for my discipleship curriculum at PPBC. Again, Ogden stresses the importance of adhering to God's Word. The whole discipleship curriculum will help each participant establish the foundation that God's Word is the final authority and the source of objective truth. Also, Ogden's explanation of transparent relationships offers the reminder that the relationships formed as a result of this discipleship process must be built with love and sincerity. It is not my desire that participants agree to disciple someone just to fulfill an agreement made to me. Rather, I hope that out of the love they have for the Lord and that person, they would invest and replicate their love for Christ in them. Lastly, accountability is a requirement for successful discipleship. In the discipleship process at PPBC I will stress the importance of each micro group being open and honest with each other. Part of discipleship involves helping one another process through the struggles and challenges of life. Each participant from the worship ministry will be tasked with holding others accountable to living a life that would be pleasing to God.

Allan Coppedge

Prior to retirement, Allan Coppedge, author of *The Biblical Principles of Discipleship*, served for over thirty years in the Beeson Chair of Christian Theology at Asbury Theological Seminary. To promote discipleship ministries in local churches and seminaries, Coppedge created the Barnabas Foundation, which has equipped thousands for active discipleship. Coppedge is still active in preaching and teaching throughout the country. In *The Biblical Principles of Discipleship*, Coppedge presents three essential principles for biblical discipleship: life-to-life transference, spiritual disciplines, and accountability.

Coppedge's first essential principle for biblical discipleship is life-to-life transference. This element of life-to-life transference is "based on the concept of modeling. . . . Life transference occurs when a person shares wisdom, knowledge, experience, and

maturity with another.”⁴⁰ This principle of discipleship takes advantage of the learning opportunities in informal life scenarios. Coppedge agrees that while learning does occur in structured settings, “some things are easier caught than taught.”⁴¹ As mentioned in the previous two discipleship models, Jesus is the perfect example when describing life-to-life transference. In Jesus’ relationship with the twelve disciples, He “created an atmosphere in which he could pour His life into theirs.”⁴² The disciples had many opportunities to see how Jesus reacted to real life scenarios. Coppedge emphasizes that life-to-life transference requires two things: time and energy.

First, life-to-life transference requires the disciplemaker to spend a lot of time investing in a person.⁴³ It is important to note, Coppedge argues that while some time will be spent in formal teaching opportunities, the majority of the time required will be in informal settings. In informal settings, the disciple will be able to see the true character of the disciplemaker on display.

Second, life-to-life transference requires energy.⁴⁴ The energy required for this discipleship principle is spiritual energy, emotional energy, and physical energy.⁴⁵ To have the spiritual energy required for discipleship, the disciplemaker must have a love for God’s Word and be mature in his walk with the Lord. When discipling others, emotional energy is required because the disciplemaker must display great patience in meeting the needs that the disciple might have.⁴⁶ Last, physical energy is needed for discipleship because of the

⁴⁰ Allan Coppedge, *The Biblical Principles of Discipleship* (Johannesburg, South Africa: Teleios Publishers, 2017), 47.

⁴¹ Coppedge, *The Biblical Principles of Discipleship*, 47.

⁴² Coppedge, *The Biblical Principles of Discipleship*, 47.

⁴³ Coppedge, *The Biblical Principles of Discipleship*, 48.

⁴⁴ Coppedge, *The Biblical Principles of Discipleship*, 48.

⁴⁵ Coppedge, *The Biblical Principles of Discipleship*, 49.

⁴⁶ Coppedge, *The Biblical Principles of Discipleship*, 49.

amount of time that is required for true biblical discipleship to take place. Coppedge states, “No one, including Jesus, has unlimited energy.”⁴⁷ Coppedge explains that “because Jesus took on the limitations of human flesh,” even He “could not disciple more than twelve in an intimate way.”⁴⁸ Church leaders must realize that true biblical discipleship refers to life-to-life transference. If the efforts of the church only include formal teaching times, then discipleship, as seen in the New Testament, does not happen. The disciple must be able to see the disciplinemaker react to unexpected life scenarios. If the disciple only gets to see the polished and “professional” side of church leaders, then discipleship has not occurred.

Coppedge’s second essential principle of biblical discipleship is spiritual disciplines. According to Coppedge, spiritual disciplines are defined as “those regular habit patterns that result in an intimate relationship with God.”⁴⁹ Coppedge was the only scholar to mention specifically teaching spiritual disciplines. In full agreement, I will be teaching important spiritual disciplines as an instrumental part of the discipleship curriculum at PPBC. My goal would be that members from within the worship ministry would commit to daily habits that will grow their relationships with the Lord.

Coppedge discusses seven specific spiritual disciplines that disciples should actively pursue. First, all disciples must be disciplined to spend time in the Word. Jesus, on numerous occasions, called His disciples’ attention to the Holy Scriptures. In Matthew 5:17-18, Jesus said, “Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law of the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished.” Jesus taught the disciples that they must submit to the authority of His Word. It is not possible to have an intimate relationship with Jesus without submitting fully to God and

⁴⁷ Coppedge, *The Biblical Principles of Discipleship*, 49.

⁴⁸ Coppedge, *The Biblical Principles of Discipleship*, 49.

⁴⁹ Coppedge, *The Biblical Principles of Discipleship*, 50.

His Word.⁵⁰ Second, every disciple must commit Scripture to memory. The Psalmist said, “I have stored up your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you” (Ps 119:11). Also, while Jesus was tempted by Satan in Matthew 4, Jesus quoted Scripture to Satan in order to resist the temptation. Jesus even emphasized to His disciples that He recited the Scripture not by His supernatural power but in His human abilities.⁵¹ Third, the spiritual discipline of fellowship is vital. Coppedge states, “Fellowship is another means to accomplish God’s objectives.”⁵² Throughout Jesus’ public ministry, He interacted with people. Fellowship becomes the primary way to display the love of Jesus to others. Fourth, every disciple must give unto the Lord. This discipline of giving refers to tithing a portion back to God of what He has given to the disciple. Tithing allows disciples to “tangibly express their gratitude for God’s many blessings.”⁵³ Fifth, the disciple must have an active prayer life. Coppedge argues, “If men are to know God, they must hear from Him through His Word and must respond in prayer.”⁵⁴ In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus even instructed His disciples how to communicate with the Father.⁵⁵ Sixth, every disciple must be active in fasting. Fasting, even as evidenced in Jesus’ teaching in the Sermon on the Mount, is closely connected with prayer. Fasting allows the disciple to sacrifice food to prioritize certain prayer concerns. Last, every disciple must be involved in public worship. Jesus clearly set this discipline into practice as He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath to worship His Father. The author of Hebrews also instructed those believers to be active in worship by “not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near” (10:25). While

⁵⁰ Coppedge, *The Biblical Principles of Discipleship*, 51.

⁵¹ Coppedge, *The Biblical Principles of Discipleship*, 52.

⁵² Coppedge, *The Biblical Principles of Discipleship*, 52.

⁵³ Coppedge, *The Biblical Principles of Discipleship*, 53.

⁵⁴ Coppedge, *The Biblical Principles of Discipleship*, 54.

⁵⁵ Coppedge, *The Biblical Principles of Discipleship*, 54.

these seven disciplines do not constitute an exhaustive and complete list of every spiritual discipline that a disciple should pursue, this list represents many of the essentials for growing a relationship with the Lord.

Coppedge's third essential principle of biblical discipleship is accountability. Jesus' relationship with His disciples continues to be the perfect example for accountability. The twelve disciples were constantly in the presence of Jesus, and as they fulfilled their duties, Jesus was always near to monitor and instruct them to cultivate the appropriate skills for ministry. Coppedge describes that as Jesus disciplined the twelve, "they lived and worked together while Jesus held them to account."⁵⁶ Not only were the disciples accountable to Jesus, but "they were also accountable to each other."⁵⁷ Coppedge explains, "When assigned to training missions, Jesus sends them two by two. Part of the reason for ministry teams is fellowship and encouragement, but another part is accountability."⁵⁸ As Jesus assigned ministry responsibilities, Scripture points to the fact that the disciples did not work alone. Coppedge writes, "The disciples were responsible to a larger group committed to the same purposes."⁵⁹

Again, accountability will be an important aspect of this discipleship curriculum at PPBC. My goal is that each participant holds one another accountable to help each other live the lives to which they are called. I must remember that the worship ministry is made up of sinners, and oftentimes those sinners fail to make the best decisions in their walks with Christ. I pray that accountability within each micro group provides the opportunity for participants to deny themselves and take up their crosses daily and follow Jesus (Luke 9:23). The linchpin for this discipleship project is accountability.

⁵⁶ Coppedge, *The Biblical Principles of Discipleship*, 56.

⁵⁷ Coppedge, *The Biblical Principles of Discipleship*, 56.

⁵⁸ Coppedge, *The Biblical Principles of Discipleship*, 56.

⁵⁹ Coppedge, *The Biblical Principles of Discipleship*, 57.

Synthesis of Scholars

In researching these three scholars I found that Robert Coleman, Greg Ogden, and Allan Coppedge have all contributed great, practical resources for churches to implement a plan of discipleship. While members of the worship ministry might feel overwhelmed with the obligation to impart themselves to another person, these three scholars have broken down the essentials of discipleship and provided a step-by-step approach to investing in the lives of other believers. While each method is structured slightly differently, they all have similar elements.

First, each of the discipleship methods places a high value on God's Word. The overall goal in each method is to utilize God's Word to raise up mature followers of Christ. Ultimately, the power of God and His Word changes the lives of people. Second, each of the methods implies some kind of impartation or life-to-life transference. Practically speaking, discipleship cannot take place if believers do not bring people into their spheres of life to invest in them. Part of learning how to be a follower of Christ is watching and learning from other believers. As mentioned, much of the discipleship process takes place in informal settings. The informal setting allows for the disciples to watch and even mimic the disciplinators as they are in real life scenarios.

There are also some unique differences between the discipleship methods. First, Robert Coleman's method was an eight-step process strictly based on the relationship between Jesus and His disciples. Coleman's discipleship method was the most comprehensive of the three. However, while this method covered many steps of discipleship, Coleman did not describe the fine details of each step. For example, in the first step of *selection*, Coleman describes that Jesus chose a few to disciple (twelve). Coleman leaves it open to the disciplinor to ultimately choose the most effective number for himself. He did not weigh the pros and cons of investing in one disciple versus five.

Second, Greg Ogden has a three-step discipleship method. Ogden's method was the most practical of the three. For example, in the first step of utilizing God's Word,

Ogden has his disciples memorizing Scripture as well as reading several Bible passages. Also, while each of the three methods had an element of accountability, Ogden's third step was life-changing accountability. He requires his disciples to sign a discipleship covenant that states that they will be accountable first and foremost to God, but also to each other.

Last, Allan Coppedge provides a three-step discipleship method as well. Coppedge was the only one of the scholars who specifically stressed the importance of spiritual disciplines. For example, each of his disciples must spend time in the Word, actively memorize Scripture, fellowship with other believers, actively give, spend time in prayer, spend time fasting, and attend worship. While all of the scholars probably teach these things indirectly in their discipleship methods, Coppedge's method is clear on the expectations of spiritual disciplines. While each of these scholars provides an effective method of discipleship on their own, my aim is to create a discipleship method for the worship ministry of PPBC utilizing all three methods.

A Discipleship Method for the Worship Ministry of Park Place Baptist Church

Synthesizing the works of Robert Coleman, Greg Ogden, and Allen Coppedge allowed me to create a discipleship method for the worship ministry of PPBC. My goal in discipling people from the worship ministry is to select a micro group of believers who desire to learn more about Christ and walk more intimately with Him, and to walk through life with them as I demonstrate the disciplines of a follower of Christ in hopes that they will, in turn, become disciplemakers themselves. My discipleship method consists of five steps, which are to select, teach, impart, demonstrate, and reproduce.

Following Jesus' example, the first step of this discipleship method is to select the disciples. As Ogden described, my plan was to utilize a micro group made up of three couples from the worship ministry. As mentioned, a smaller group allows for greater transparency and accountability. In the past I have relied on traditional one-on-one

settings for all of my discipleship efforts. While there has been some fruit produced from these one-on-one relationships, I agree with Ogden that the teacher-student relationship often creates a heavy burden on the teacher of always being the sole person in charge. I hoped that micro groups would create a different atmosphere that provided more discussion led by the disciples. My method of selecting the micro group came from the results of the biblical discipleship survey. In the survey, participants within the worship ministry responded to specific questions regarding their current discipleship practices. After analyzing the results of the surveys, my aim was to target those who had either never been discipled or displayed a desire to grow in their walk with the Lord.

The second step in the discipleship method is teaching God's Word. Every session of the discipleship curriculum was centered around a key Scripture text. The worship ministry participants had to realize that God's power is strengthened and illuminated in their lives through His Word. My desire for discipleship is not simply for the members to gain knowledge, but that they will instead learn to live and breathe by the inspired Word of God. I pray that the Bible becomes more than just a book filled with stories. Rather, I pray it is the very offensive weapon that it is intended to be; a living and active double-edged sword (Heb 4:12). It is imperative that each participant knows that God's Word is the final authority and should guide every decision in his life. Ultimately, as Coppedge emphasizes, all disciples must "live under the authority of God and His Word."⁶⁰

The third step of this discipleship method was to impart oneself to the disciple. The majority of this step takes place through doing life with the disciples. From Coppedge's step of life-to-life transference, imparting oneself refers to the disciplemaker serving the disciples by giving of himself. First John teaches that believers love others because of God's love for them (4:7-21). Following John's instructions to love others,

⁶⁰ Coppedge, *The Biblical Principles of Discipleship*, 51.

disciplemakers “give themselves away out of their service and devotion to the Lord.”⁶¹ In this discipleship method, my goal was to give myself away through displaying my love for Christ. Hopefully, the participants understand that my investment in them is a result of God’s love for me and my love for Him. Impartation cannot completely take place in a formal teaching session. Much of this step occurred in informal settings where the disciple can see my true character in different scenarios of life. For example, I planned to have each micro group in my home at some point throughout the eight-week cycle. While impartation typically is a slow and steady process, I had to find ways within the set time frame of the curriculum for the micro group to fellowship and share life together.

The fourth step of this discipleship method was to demonstrate how a follower of Christ walks intimately with the Lord. Closely related to impartation, demonstration refers to the disciples watching and gleaning from the way the disciplemaker seeks and serves the Lord. In Jesus’ relationship with His disciples, He demonstrated on every level how to do ministry. The disciples followed Jesus closely as they learned by watching Jesus serve His Father. One of the best ways to demonstrate to disciples how to follow Jesus is for the disciplemaker to teach them his habits of spiritual disciplines. Coppedge stresses the idea of teaching spiritual disciplines to the disciples. Coppedge explained spiritual disciplines to be “those regular habit patterns that result in an intimate relationship with God.”⁶² In my micro groups, I planned to emphasize the importance of specific spiritual disciplines that are vital for an intimate walk with the Lord. For example, I hoped to demonstrate that seeking and serving the Lord means that a disciple will hunger for God’s Word, worship with other believers, evangelize the lost, pray to the Lord, and make disciples for God’s glory.

The fifth and final step in this discipleship method was for the disciple to reproduce this model with another person in hopes of continuing the process of

⁶¹ Coleman, *The Master Plan of Evangelism*, 60.

⁶² Coppedge, *The Biblical Principles of Discipleship*, 50.

discipleship. As is evident from Paul's instructions to Timothy to entrust the gospel to faithful men so that they may do the same, discipleship hinges on the reproduction process (2 Tim 2:2). If disciples never share the good news of Jesus or invest in the lives of new believers, then they are not living out the Great Commission to go and make disciples. Ogden holds his disciples accountable to reproduction by having them sign a covenant. By signing this covenant, Ogden's disciples agree to invest in one or two people within a month of completing his discipleship process. In my discipleship method, I specifically asked for each of the people in the initial micro group to select one or two other people from the worship ministry to disciple. My goal was for this discipleship process to spread throughout the majority of the worship ministry. The effectiveness of the overall discipleship process hinged on disciples becoming disciplemakers. After the ministry project was complete, each participant retook the biblical discipleship survey. I hoped that through strong biblical teaching and demonstration, each member would understand and submit to Jesus' command to make disciples. After reevaluating the surveys, I had an objective measurement for the spiritual growth from within the worship ministry at PPBC.

CHAPTER 4

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MINISTRY PROJECT

This chapter describes the preparation and implementation of the ministry project executed at Park Place Baptist Church (PPBC). The purpose of this project was to increase the discipleship practices of the worship ministry at PPBC. This seventeen-week project took place from March 18, 2020, through July 10, 2020.

Target Group

The target group for this ministry project was the adult members of the choir and orchestra at PPBC. The youngest participant was eighteen years of age while the oldest participant was seventy-nine years of age. While every member of the worship ministry over eighteen years of age received a biblical discipleship survey, participation in the ministry project was completely voluntary.

Project Implementation

This ministry project had three primary goals. The first goal was to assess the current discipleship practices among the worship ministry at PPBC. The second goal was to write a biblical discipleship curriculum that addressed the needs of the worship ministry. The third and final goal was to increase the discipleship practices of the worship ministry. In the seventeen weeks between March 18, 2020 and July 10, 2020, weeks 1 through 4 were specifically designed to assess the discipleship practices of ministry participants. Weeks 5 and 6 were dedicated to collecting and analyzing the surveys (pre-tests) as they were returned. Also, during these two weeks much time was spent writing the curriculum that would be taught in the first micro group sessions. Weeks 7 through 14 represented the core of the project: teaching the biblical discipleship curriculum. Weeks 15 and 16

were reserved for the post-test, as well as analyzing the data. In week 17, each of the initial micro group participants, including myself, began discipling another member of the worship ministry.

Week 1

During week 1 of the ministry project, I created an instrument to accurately assess the discipleship practices of the worship ministry at PPBC. This biblical discipleship survey¹ served as the pre-test in this ministry project. The final survey included thirty questions addressing many of the spiritual disciplines that a disciple of Christ should exhibit. Each of the questions were based on a ten-point Likert scale. I purposefully allowed each participant to grade himself on a scale of 0 to 10 on each question. My desire for this large range scale was to give the worship participants a better opportunity to accurately describe their discipleship practices.

Week 2

Once the survey was completed, I piloted the instrument on the ministerial staff at PPBC to seek their feedback. The ministry team at PPBC includes ten part-time and full-time staff members. Each member of the ministerial staff received a biblical discipleship survey during staff meeting on March 24, 2020. I requested that the staff complete the survey within one week.

Week 3

Based on the feedback I received from the PPBC staff, I made final edits to the survey and submitted it to the ethics committee at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. After my survey and project were approved, the next step was to distribute the survey to the participants of the worship ministry. Due to the restrictions of COVID-19, I was unable to meet in person with the worship ministry to physically hand out the

¹ See appendix 1.

surveys. However, prior to canceling on-campus activities, I had explained how I hoped that the worship ministry would be a part of my doctoral project. On April 1, 2020, I mailed each worship ministry participant a survey as well as a self-addressed stamped envelope to facilitate better participation.

Weeks 4-6

I began to receive completed surveys during weeks 4 and 5. As the surveys were returned, I started analyzing the data. As predicted in the rationale of chapter 1, there were obvious strengths and weaknesses in the discipleship practices among the worship ministry. For example, in the areas of reading God's Word, praying, loving people, living a life above reproach, and serving others, the worship ministry overall scored very well. From the 52 surveys submitted, 97 percent of the people scored themselves at a 5 or above that they strive to read God's Word daily. Similarly, 94 percent of the people scored themselves at a 5 or above that they actively pray without ceasing. The surveys also revealed two main weaknesses in the discipleship practices. First, active discipleship, not involving one's children, was almost nonexistent. From the surveys collected, only 1 person indicated with a score of 5 or above that they actively form new relationships with the intention of discipling that person into a more mature relationship with Christ. Second, evangelism was a significant weakness. Less than 10 percent of the people indicated that they actively share the gospel with others with the intent of leading a lost person to Christ.

While I collected and analyzed surveys as they were returned, I also began writing the curriculum during weeks 5 and 6. Considering both the research done in chapter 3 and the strengths and weaknesses of the worship ministry as revealed by the surveys, I centered the biblical discipleship curriculum around eight topics: following Christ; studying the Bible; praying; worshipping; witnessing; serving; loving; and discipling. Similar to the probing questions in Donald Whitney's book *Ten Questions to*

Diagnose Your Spiritual Health,² I decided to phrase each week’s lesson title as a question. The titles of the eight weeks of lessons were “Are You a Disciple?,” “Are You a Student of the Word?,” “Are You a Prayer Warrior?,” “Are You a Worshipper?,” “Are You a Witness?,” “Are You a Humble Servant?,” “Are You a Lover of People?,” and “Are You a Disciplemaker?” Each lesson contained three specific sections—an introductory question to initiate conversation on the specified topic, Bible teaching on a specific passage of Scripture, and finally, both a Scripture memory challenge as well as a practical challenge that related to that particular study.

Weeks 7-14: Weekly Lessons

Throughout weeks 7–14, I implemented the model of discipleship synthesized from the scholars researched in chapter 3. Utilizing the works and philosophies of Robert Coleman, Greg Ogden, and Allen Coppedge, I created a five-step discipleship model for the worship ministry of PPBC. The five steps of discipleship were to select, teach, impart, demonstrate, and reproduce. During the eight weeks of discipleship, all five of these steps were implemented. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, the first seven weeks of the discipleship meetings did not occur in person. Each Thursday night at 8:30 p.m., I sent a Zoom invitation to the group and we met online for the discipleship session. Thankfully, on week 8, we were finally able to meet in person and complete the initial cycle of discipleship. Also, I sent text messages and emails during the week with helpful reminders of the weekly challenges as well as words of encouragement. This communication allowed me to stay engaged with the participants in between meetings.

Week 7: “Are You a Disciple?” After selecting three couples from the worship ministry, along with my wife, I began to meet with them weekly as the initial micro group of this ministry project. April 23, 2020 was the first session. The goal of this lesson was

² Donald Whitney, *Ten Questions to Diagnose Your Spiritual Health* (Colorado Springs: NavPress, 2001), 9.

to use God's Word to truthfully answer the question, "Are you a disciple?" Looking at Scripture as the authority of truth, we examined John 8:31-32, which says, "So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed him, 'If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.'" According to this passage of Scripture, only those people who submit to the teachings of God's Word are truly disciples of Christ.

The main teaching of this discipleship session came from Mark 8:34-38. In this gospel account, Jesus began to teach those around Him that following Him meant crucifying the flesh. In this session, we spent time talking about denying the flesh and coming after Jesus (v. 34). Group members gave practical examples of how they take up their crosses daily and follow Jesus. After examining verses 35-38, we discussed how, as believers, we save our lives by losing them.

The session ended with two challenges. First, participants shared their salvation experiences and how they came to know Christ. I challenged them to utilize Scripture to give evidence of their salvation. The second challenge was for participants to memorize John 8:12: "Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, 'I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.'"

Week 8: "Are You a Student of the Word?" The second session of the discipleship group was focused on making God's Word a priority in their lives. Prior to starting the main teaching passage, I asked the participants to share their routines of reading and studying God's Word. While all group members testified that they read God's Word regularly, there was a consensus that studying the Bible was a much needed area of growth to draw nearer to the Lord.

The Bible teaching in week 8 came from Psalm 119:1-16. We spoke in depth about how the Scriptures represent God's Law. In this passage of Scripture, the psalmist is clear that those who keep God's Law and seek Him with their whole hearts will be blessed (v. 2). Following the teaching of Psalm 119:11, we also discussed the importance

of memorizing Scripture. The psalmist says, “I have stored up your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you.” Before we finished our teaching time, I read 2 Timothy 3 aloud, and we discussed Scripture’s ability and power to teach, reprove, correct, and train. To end the session, I issued two challenges: have a daily quiet time focused on reading God’s Word, and memorize 2 Timothy 3:16-17, which states, “All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.”

Week 9: “Are You a Prayer Warrior?” The main concept during this discipleship session was that prayer is a dialogue with our heavenly Father. As we began the session, we discussed the necessity of prayer in having a close relationship with the Lord. Just as communication is vital in earthly relationships, it is also necessary for a sincere relationship with Christ. Prior to the teaching time I challenged participants to evaluate their prayer lives. I explained that prayer is a marker in the lives of believers that gives evidence to their maturity in walking with the Lord.

The main teaching passages in this session were Luke 11:5-13 and Luke 18:1-8. In examining these passages, we compared the friend in Luke 11 to the widow in Luke 18. While we show obedience unto the Lord when we approach Him in prayer, we also know that we can approach God confidently and unashamed. We also discussed that both Scripture passages point to God’s generosity toward His people. To end the session, I challenged each person to have a daily prayer time this week focused on adoring God, confessing sin, giving thanks to God, and interceding for others. The Scripture challenge for this week was to memorize the Lord’s prayer from Matthew 6:9-13.

Week 10: “Are You a Worshipper?” This discipleship session focused on believers’ worship given unto the Lord. We discussed the fact that worship should be the main goal of the church. In John Piper’s book *Let the Nations Be Glad*, he argues, “Missions is not the ultimate goal of the church. Worship is. Missions exists because

worship doesn't. Worship is ultimate, not missions, because God is ultimate, not man."³ Transitioning to the main teaching passage for the week, I pointed the group to Revelation 4–5. In these chapters of Scripture is a glimpse of what Greg Ogden calls “eternal vocation,” which is worshipping our Savior.⁴

Revelation 4–5 describes John's vision of the worship scene around the throne of God. After reading through both of these chapters in their entirety, we discussed the different characteristics ascribed to God in this passage. Much of the conversation centered around Jesus being the only worthy One. God created humans to worship Him alone because He alone is worthy to be worshipped. Lastly, I challenged the participants to practically live out Romans 12:1 every day of the coming week by presenting themselves as “a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God.” The Scripture memory challenge was Revelation 4:11: “Worthy are you, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they existed and were created.”

Week 11: “Are You a Witness?” The discipleship session for week 11 emphasized the importance of all believers being witnesses for Jesus Christ. The introductory comments included a discussion of Romans 10:14-15. In the passage, Paul asks a series of questions about how people might come to know the Lord if Christians do not preach and teach the gospel to them. The only way the lost will know the love of Christ is if believers share that love with them. Before transitioning into the main teaching time, I asked the group members to share their current routines of evangelizing. Admittedly, all the members of this group felt that evangelism was a weakness in their spiritual walks with the Lord.

³ John Piper, *Let the Nations Be Glad: The Supremacy of God in Missions* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2010), 35.

⁴ Greg Ogden, *Discipleship Essentials: A Guide to Building Your Life in Christ* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1998), 40.

The central Bible teaching was on John 4:1-30. After reading this passage together, we examined the conversation between Jesus and the Samaritan woman. Jesus' purpose of going to the well that day was to reveal His true identity to this woman. We discussed the many barriers that Jesus faced, but He chose to cross those social and spiritual barriers to reveal Himself to her as God. As we finished the teaching time, I posed this question: "What does Jesus' conversation with the Samaritan woman teach us about witnessing?" The two main answers were that all believers should be active in sharing the gospel to all people—not just people who look like them, and that knowledge does not equate to salvation. As evidenced by the Samaritan woman's responses to Jesus, she knew about God; however, it was not until she realized that Jesus was God that she experienced saving faith.

The practical challenge this week was for each participant to share the gospel with at least one person during the upcoming week. Due to COVID-19, I challenged them to be creative. I described my plan to share the gospel, which was to write a letter to a friend who I knew was lost. I was very encouraged by their feedback and excitement to be witnesses for Christ. Lastly, the memory verse challenge was Acts 1:8: "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

Week 12: "Are You a Humble Servant?" The central focus of the discipleship session for week 12 was for the participants to demonstrate their love for Christ through serving others. I began by reading Hebrews 9:14: "How much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify our conscience from dead works to serve the living God." According to this passage, Christ saves people for them to serve God.

The main Bible teaching for this session came from John 13:1-17. After we read this passage together, we discussed in detail how Jesus was the perfect Servant. By washing the disciples' feet, Jesus demonstrated complete humility and servanthood. We

also spent significant time discussing what Jesus meant in verse 8 when He said, “If I do not wash you, you have no share with me,” and in verse 10 when He stated, “The one who has bathed does not need to wash, except for his feet, but is completely clean. And you are clean, but not every one of you.” Ultimately, Jesus was explaining that if a person has been saved through faith in Him, he is not in need of saving again. However, Jesus did imply in verse 10 that believers, as sinners, still need to daily confess sin before Him. Believers are to follow Jesus’ example and serve Christ by serving others.

The practical challenge for this week was to find someone to serve out of humility and a love for Christ. Again, due to COVID-19, I encouraged the group to be creative since face-to-face interactions were still limited. Lastly, their memory verse challenge was Galatians 5:13: “For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.”

Week 13: “Are You a Lover of People?” For this week of discipleship, the focus was specifically on loving people. Examining Christ as the perfect example, we began by reading Romans 5:8: “But God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” Jesus’ love for mankind was demonstrated by the way He came to save them. After we discussed this verse, the participants shared some specific examples of how they routinely demonstrate their love for others.

The main Bible teaching for this session came from two separate passages: John 17:20-26 and Ephesians 4:1-6. In John 17, Jesus explained that God’s love was not only for those who believed in Him. In verses 20-21, Jesus prays specifically for those people who do not know Him yet. The discipleship group also discussed the unity that believers have in Christ, as compared to Jesus and the Father being in each other and believers in them (John 17:21-23). In contrast, we also discussed issues that cause division within the church rather than promote love. Second, we read through Ephesians 4:1-6. As a group, we considered how believers can walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which they have been called (v. 1). The participants shared how they try to live lives that

display the gospel. Most importantly, we all agreed that Christians can best display their love for Christ by loving all people.

The practical challenge for the discipleship group this week was to find at least one person to demonstrate their love for, similar to the previous week's service challenge. Whether they chose a spouse, child, or someone they had never met, I encouraged them to go above and beyond what they typically would do. The memory verse for this week was 1 John 4:11: "Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another."

Week 14: "Are You a Disciplemaker?" The last session of the initial discipleship group focused specifically on making disciples. While the previous weeks' sessions were taught via Zoom, the group decided to meet in person for the last session. As we began, each person gave a personal definition of *discipleship*. During my opportunity to share, I quoted Ogden's definition found in his book *Discipleship Essentials*: "Discipling is an intentional relationship in which we walk alongside other disciples in order to encourage, equip, and challenge one another in love to grow toward maturity in Christ."⁵ Ogden's definition clearly defines that *discipleship*, as exemplified by Jesus, is when believers invest and replicate themselves in other believers with a goal of them becoming more and more like Christ. The main purpose of this session was for the participants, as disciples of Christ, to understand their call to make disciples.

The Bible passages for this week were found in Luke 6:12-16 and 9:1-6. In these passages of Scripture, Jesus demonstrated that He lived His life investing in His disciples. We began by discussing Jesus praying all night for those whom He would soon call as His disciples. I emphasized that, in the same way, as we select people to disciple, we need to pray for God's wisdom regarding whom He wants us to invest in. In Luke 9:1-6, when Jesus sent His disciples out to do ministry, He instructed them to take nothing with them. We examined how Jesus taught His disciples to trust in Him completely for all

⁵ Ogden, *Discipleship Essentials*, 3.

of their needs. When Jesus sent the disciples out, He equipped them with His power and authority to “proclaim the Kingdom of God and to heal” (Luke 9:2). We discussed in depth how believers can replicate Jesus’ model of discipleship. First and foremost, I shared that Jesus, through the power of the Holy Spirit, is the One who actually does the life changing work. While God expects believers to obey His call to make disciples, we do not have the ability to cause change in someone else’s life. However, God can use the disciplemaker’s obedience to bring about good in the disciple’s life.

As we completed this final session, the last practical challenge was for each participant to pray for wisdom about discipling another member of the worship ministry. I asked that the discipleship group take two weeks to determine who to invest in, contact that person to initiate a relationship, and, for accountability, to report to me who they would disciple. The final memory verse challenge was Matthew 28:18-20: “And Jesus came and said to them, ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.’” The last thing that I asked the discipleship group to do was to retake the biblical discipleship survey at some point during the following week. This survey served as the post-test for the ministry project.

Weeks 15 and 16

My goal during week 15 was to follow up with each person in the initial discipleship group to gather the completed discipleship surveys. As previously mentioned, this post-test revealed any changes in discipleship practices for those participants. If the participants completed each of the weekly challenges, then their discipleship practices should have trended in a positive direction. Once I received all of the post-test surveys, I began to analyze each of the surveys to measure any change in practices.

Week 17

During week 17, the initial discipleship group participants began discipling their new discipleship partners utilizing the same eight-week discipleship curriculum that I led them through. My aim is that every ten weeks, new discipleship relationships will be formed from within the worship ministry.

Conclusion

This ministry project focused on increasing the discipleship practices of the worship ministry at PPBC. While I spent the first six weeks of the project in preparation and writing, and the last three weeks in analyzing data and overseeing the beginning of new discipleship groups, weeks 7 through 14 were the primary teaching weeks of the project. The eight-week curriculum that was created focused on specific spiritual disciplines that help a believer grow in his walk with Christ. The goal of this curriculum was that any participant would understand that God has called every believer to be a disciplemaker. While the start of the second cycle of discipleship groups completed this ministry project, my prayer is that this project, and ultimately God's Word, will change the culture of discipleship within the worship ministry at PPBC.

CHAPTER 5

EVALUATION OF THE PROJECT

Introduction

This seventeen-week ministry project was a rewarding journey. Prior to the implementation of the project, God began to create in me a passionate desire for discipleship. Early in my doctoral studies, God used the Contextualized Writing class to reveal to me that I was not doing an adequate job of discipling the worship ministry at PPBC. Knowing that the church's mission statement was, "Park Place Glorifies God by Making Disciples of All Nations," I had to ask myself, "What is the worship ministry doing to make disciples?" In the context of micro groups and one-on-one discipleship, the answer to that question was that the worship ministry was not doing enough. Every step of this journey allowed me to grow not only as a disciple of Christ but also as a disciplemaker. This chapter will function as the formal evaluation of the ministry project as well as provide helpful insight for others who seek to implement a study to improve discipleship practices in a specific context.

Evaluation of the Project's Purpose

The purpose of this ministry project was to increase the discipleship practices of the worship ministry at Park Place Baptist Church. To determine the success of the project, I evaluated the data from two perspectives. In the first perspective I compared the pre-test scores of the entire worship ministry with the post-test scores of those who completed the biblical discipleship curriculum. First, I compiled the pre-test scores to determine a mean score for the discipleship practices among the participants. The biblical discipleship survey served as the pre-test that allowed me to evaluate current discipleship practices of the participating members of the worship ministry. The survey consisted of

thirty questions and allowed participants to rate themselves on a scale from 0 to 10 on each question. The mean score from the fifty-two surveys submitted was 166.7.

After I completed the teaching of the initial discipleship micro group, each of those participants took the biblical discipleship survey again. This survey served as the post-test for those who completed the biblical discipleship curriculum. To compare the results of the pre- and post-test surveys, I used an unpaired *t*-test. Assuming a level of significance set at .05, there was no statistically significant difference ($t_{(57)} = 0.31$, $p = .3773$) in the change of discipleship practices from within the worship ministry. This result was anticipated since I compared all fifty-two pre-tests to the seven post-tests. While six of the seven participants who went through the biblical discipleship curriculum increased their discipleship practice scores, statistically, the increases were not enough to improve the overall score of the entire worship ministry.

However, a second perspective was needed to determine the increase of discipleship practices of only those who participated in the eight-week teaching of the biblical discipleship curriculum. In this evaluation, I utilized a paired *t*-test since I was comparing only the pre-test and post-test of each participant in the initial discipleship group. Assuming the same level of significance of .05, there was a statistically significant difference ($t_{(6)} = 2.11$, $p = .0398$) in the change of discipleship practices of those who participated in the biblical discipleship curriculum. The significant increase was also displayed in the group's pre-test and post-test mean scores. The group's pre-test mean was 137.1, while their post-test mean increased to 170.1.

While the data did not present a statistically significant change in discipleship practices when the micro group was compared to the worship ministry as a whole, there was a significant change when I evaluated solely the initial micro group. As the curriculum continues to be taught throughout the worship ministry every eight weeks, further evaluation will be needed to determine the change in discipleship practices of the whole worship ministry. If each person that participates in the biblical discipleship curriculum

accepts the final challenge to disciple someone else from within the worship ministry, then it should take five cycles of teaching the curriculum for each person in the worship ministry to have an opportunity to be disciplined.

Evaluation of the Project's Goals

This ministry project had three primary goals to assist in its completion. Each goal represented a necessary step in creating a culture of discipleship within the worship ministry.

Goal 1

The first goal was to assess the current discipleship practices among the worship ministry at PPBC. I assessed these practices through the biblical discipleship survey.¹ This survey served as the pre-test for this ministry project. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, I mailed the survey to all worship ministry participants who were eighteen years of age or older. My aim was to have at least fifty completed surveys submitted as pre-tests. This goal was considered successfully met as I collected fifty-two surveys from within the worship ministry.

Goal 2

The second goal was to develop an eight-week curriculum to equip the worship ministry to become active disciplemakers. After researching Scripture and the writings of discipleship scholars Robert Coleman, Greg Ogden, and Allan Coppedge, I synthesized my research into an eight-week biblical discipleship curriculum that focused on following Christ, studying the Bible, praying, worshipping, witnessing, serving, loving, and discipling. In each of the eight sessions, a central Bible teaching rooted that week's spiritual discipline in God's Word. Each session also had a Scripture memory challenge as well as a practical challenge that would be completed to apply the spiritual discipline.

¹ See appendix 1.

The ministerial staff at PPBC served as the evaluators for the biblical discipleship curriculum. The staff members evaluated the curriculum based on a curriculum evaluation rubric.² I considered this second goal complete when all ten staff evaluators scored each item on the rubric with a sufficient rating of “3” or above.

Goal 3

The third and final goal was to increase the level of active participation in discipling in the worship ministry by implementing the discipleship curriculum. I selected three couples, along with my wife, from the worship ministry to comprise the initial micro group. Throughout the eight weeks of teaching, we answered the following questions: Are You a Disciple?, Are You a Student of the Word?, Are You a Prayer Warrior?, Are You a Worshipper?, Are You a Witness?, Are You a Humble Servant?, Are You a Lover of People?, and Are You a Disciplemaker? Once the eight weeks of teaching were complete, each participant in the initial micro group took the biblical discipleship survey again, which served as the post-test.

As mentioned, I evaluated the discipleship practices of the micro group by comparing their pre-test and post-test results. Utilizing a paired *t*-test, I measured a statistically significant change in discipleship practices of just those in the micro group. However, when I conducted an un-paired *t*-test to compare the micro group’s results to those of the worship ministry as a whole, there was no statistically significant difference in the change of discipleship practices. The lack of change in discipleship practices was due to comparing all fifty-two pre-tests to only seven post-tests. However, I considered this goal successfully met when the average of the pre-test/post-test results of the initial micro group improved from 137.1 to 170.1

² See appendix 2.

Strengths of the Project

There were several noteworthy strengths of this ministry project. First, this ministry project established the initial steps for creating an atmosphere of discipleship within the worship ministry. According to the pre-test assessment, one-on-one or micro group discipleship was not actively occurring throughout the ministry. As a result of this project, at least the seven participants of the initial micro group, as well as myself, have committed to continually disciple others with God's Word. Prior to this ministry project, none of the micro group participants, myself included, were actively discipling other believers with the intention of creating more mature followers of Christ. This project challenged each participant to take seriously Jesus' command to make disciples. In many ways, this project allowed the worship ministry to refocus on the church's mission statement. With confidence, I can now say that the worship ministry is taking steps to glorify God by making disciples.

The second strength of this ministry project was the depth of Scripture throughout the biblical discipleship curriculum. My aim in creating this discipleship curriculum was for every session to be firmly rooted in God's Word. It is important for disciples of Christ to obey Jesus' command to make disciples, and we do so through teaching the authoritative Word of God. Another reason the curriculum is based so heavily upon Scripture is because only God and His Word have the ability to change lives. Second Timothy 3:16-17 says, "All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work." There is nothing that a disciplemaker could say that would be of more worth than God's Word. God's Word has the ability to penetrate the hearts and minds of its readers and conform them into the image of Christ. As a result of this project, the worship ministry at PPBC now has a practical resource to utilize to lead other believers to be mature followers of Christ.

The third strength of this ministry project was that new relationships were formed within the worship ministry. In the initial micro group, a testimony I received

from one participant was that he was anxious going in to the eight weeks of teaching, but soon realized that the group allowed him to strengthen the bonds he had with each participant. I was encouraged with the level of trust and openness that every one of the participants displayed during the teaching sessions. While each couple knew the other couples at the start, stronger bonds were built as a result of growing in Christ alongside one another throughout the eight weeks. Personally, I have been able to follow up and provide encouragement to the couples that I disciplined throughout the teaching sessions. Without the implementation of this ministry project, many of those deeper relationships and ministry opportunities would not have taken place.

Weaknesses of Project

There were also several notable weaknesses of this ministry project. The first weakness was the length of the discipleship curriculum. After leading the initial micro group through the eight-week teaching, I sensed that the curriculum was too short. While I had confidence in the abilities and spiritual maturity of each participant in the initial micro group to disciple other members from the worship ministry, I do not think that an eight-week curriculum will be substantial for some who have never been involved with one-on-one discipleship. As I began my second cycle of discipleship, this time in a one-on-one setting, I realized that I would need to be flexible, spending more time on certain topics before being confident that a person was ready to disciple others. At times during the second cycle of teaching, I worried that I was moving too quickly and simply jumping from topic to topic without giving adequate time for the disciple to apply each spiritual discipline to his life. However, there were some advantages to having a shortened discipleship curriculum. First and foremost, the eight-week curriculum allowed me to carry out the ministry project in the allotted timeframe governed by the seminary schedule. Second, my goal was for every member of the worship ministry to eventually have the opportunity to be disciplined as a result of this ministry project. For that goal to be accomplished, an eight-week curriculum seemed more beneficial. Third, the shortened

curriculum seemed more manageable for worship ministry participants' already busy schedules. However, even with the advantages of a shortened timeframe, the spiritual maturity of the disciple should dictate the speed and length of the curriculum.

The second weakness of this ministry project was the lack of open-ended discussion questions in the curriculum. While the curriculum centered around the teaching of God's Word, I realized that too many of the Bible questions could be answered with short responses. My desire in creating the curriculum was to foster in-depth conversation on each spiritual discipline. While the topics were adequately taught, some sessions lacked lengthy conversations on the application of the spiritual discipline.

A third weakness of the ministry project was having to teach sessions 1–7 via Zoom. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, virtual communication software was the only option for carrying out the beginning of this ministry project. While I am thankful that this technology provided a way to connect with group participants, Zoom definitely made the teaching and interaction more difficult. I also believe that some of the lack of in-depth conversations was due to the fact that we were meeting via Zoom. Thankfully, we were able to meet in person for the final session of the initial micro group and discussed Jesus' command for to be disciplemakers.

The last weakness of the project was the mode of administering the surveys to the worship ministry. The original plan for administering the surveys was to hand them out during consecutive Wednesday night rehearsals. I believe that the personal contact with worship ministry members would have translated to a higher submission rate. However, due to COVID-19, I mailed the surveys to every worship ministry member who was over the age of eighteen. While I met the goal of receiving at least fifty completed surveys, I suspect that I could have had a higher submission rate had I been able to extend a personal invitation to participate in the doctoral project.

What I Would Do Differently

After completing the project and assessing its strengths and weaknesses, I would implement several elements differently if I replicated the entire project again. Many of the following changes are directly related to the weaknesses mentioned. This section will describe those elements of the project that I would have done differently and will hopefully help others who may seek to implement similar discipleship projects in their ministry contexts.

The first change I would implement addresses the length of the curriculum. Instead of an eight-week curriculum, I would add five to eight weeks to have a twelve to sixteen-week curriculum. As mentioned, there would be several benefits of the curriculum being expanded. Adding five to seven weeks would simply have given the discipleship group more freedom to slow down and spend longer than one session on any given topic. For example, if I am discipling a new believer, I would prefer to spend two weeks on each topic. This would allow me to devote the first week to teaching from God's Word the importance of that spiritual discipline and issue a challenge for the coming week. We would use the following session to evaluate how effectively the new disciple implemented the spiritual discipline, as well as walk through another passage of Scripture that reinforces the importance of that spiritual discipline. By implementing an expanded curriculum with extra time, the discipleship cycles would not feel rushed. This approach would also give extra time for the disciple to become more equipped to disciple someone else.

A second change I would make in a future discipleship project would be to plan fellowships throughout the twelve to sixteen weeks. At some points throughout the discipleship meetings, I felt that the settings were too formal. While Zoom was a large contributor to that formal feeling, I could have been more intentional in providing a more relaxed atmosphere and less of a teacher-student atmosphere. In my second discipleship cycle I began to implement a few different settings for those meetings. The most productive setting that I used for discipleship occurred at a coffee shop where we ate breakfast together and then transitioned to a time of teaching and interaction. The coffee shop

setting, in many ways, allowed for us to not only feel more relaxed, but also that we were equals coming together to talk about God’s Word. This setting also provided more of an opportunity for “life-to-life transference”, as Allan Coppedge described in *The Biblical Principles of Discipleship*.³

A third change to a future discipleship project would be to implement the project in a way that involves the larger ministry throughout the duration of the project. In my ministry project, once the initial survey was completed, it could potentially take up to five cycles of discipleship before every member has a chance to be discipled, assuming each future discipleship setting is one-on-one. Five cycles of discipleship, with an extended curriculum, could potentially take up to sixty to eighty weeks. One way to address this concern would be to begin the project with two initial discipleship groups so that the replication process would happen twice as fast. A second way to address this concern would be to implement a weekly devotion during rehearsal times that is directly connected to creating a culture of discipleship within the worship ministry. While I would not want to teach the same biblical discipleship curriculum to the worship ministry in a large group setting, I could still teach the biblical and theological foundations of discipleship utilizing Matthew 28:18-20, 1 Peter 2:1-9, 2 Timothy 2:1-7, and Ephesians 4:11-13. All four of these passages would give me the opportunity to apply discipleship in the context of the worship ministry at PPBC.

A last change for a future discipleship project would be to survey the worship ministry participants with more anonymity. I should not have tracked pre-tests and post-tests using the names of the people in the study. By eliminating the “Name” line and utilizing randomized numbers, more accurate results would have been realized on the discipleship survey. One limitation of an anonymous survey is that analyzing the

³ Allan Coppedge, *The Biblical Principles of Discipleship* (Johannesburg, South Africa: Teleios Publishers, 2017), 47.

increased discipleship practices of micro groups would become more challenging without asking those participants to take the discipleship survey an extra time.

Theological Reflections

This ministry project greatly influenced my understanding of discipleship. Prior to the in-depth study I did in preparation for this ministry project, my definition of discipleship was limited only to what I had experienced in the past. Unfortunately, my understanding of discipleship was not adequate, and I certainly was not answering Jesus' command to make disciples as a follower of Christ should. As discussed in chapter 2, I learned that discipleship should be displayed by teaching the Word of God, modeling a life of righteousness, investing in other believers, and building up the church for the work of ministry.

While churches have many different areas of ministry, discipleship should be an active part of each ministry. In my context, the worship ministry at PPBC is not exempt from making disciples. First and foremost, teaching the Word of God should be a priority in everything I do as a worship pastor. Whether I am leading rehearsals, leading the church in corporate worship, or discipling a member of the worship ministry, my job is to teach God's Word to the people that God has allowed me to serve and help them apply it to their lives.

Second, it is my job to model a life of righteousness, both publicly and in the context of discipleship relationships. As the worship pastor of PPBC, I should seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness (Matt 6:33). Practically, this means that I must choose to live a life above reproach and diligently seek God's wisdom in leading the worship ministry. I cannot actively and willingly do things that would hurt my witness to the church and specifically the worship ministry. If I want to continue to have the opportunity to teach and disciple those I love so dearly, then I must strive to live a life that would be pleasing unto God, fully realizing that He is the One doing the good work in me.

Third, answering Jesus' command to make disciples means that I should actively invest in those whom God has placed in the ministry that I lead. Discipleship, as described in this project, is actively investing in other believers to help them become mature followers of Christ. It is my job as the worship pastor at PPBC to disciple worship ministry members with God's Word in hopes that they grow closer in their walks with the Lord and in turn and become active disciplemakers themselves.

Last, God has called me to train and equip the church to do the work of ministry. For the worship ministry at PPBC, this means that I seek to find those whom God is calling out to serve Him and train them to be the next generation of worship pastors. Too often, pastors and church leaders fail to apply the teachings of Ephesians 4:11-12, which calls them to train others for the work of ministry. The temptation in ministry is for church leaders to carry out ministry tasks alone. However, as Paul writes in Ephesians 4, we are to actively train and equip leaders of the church so that they can participate in the work of ministry.

Personal Reflections

One of the most significant effects of this project on me personally was the realization that I was not doing my part in creating a culture of disciplemaking within the worship ministry. While I was actively teaching the Bible in large group settings and leading the church in corporate worship, I was not fostering a culture of discipleship in a one-on-one context.

While implementing a new discipleship program was an intimidating task, I was constantly reminded that God, through the power of the Holy Spirit, would equip me for this work. As Jesus gave the disciples the Great Commission, He concluded by saying, "And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age" (Matt 28:20). Jesus promised His presence to all believers and is with them through whatever He is calling them to do. Jesus does not leave His children alone to do the work of ministry. In every teaching session, it was comforting to know that I was not in control of the spiritual good that

manifested in the lives of those I disciplined. While I was being obedient in teaching and discipling those from the worship ministry, I was not responsible for the Holy Spirit's work. I am thankful to God for every good thing that He accomplished as a result of this ministry project.

Conclusion

This ministry project was a rewarding journey that cultivated a strong passion within me to invest in other believers. The purpose of this project was to increase the discipleship practices of the worship ministry at PPBC. Through much research, I was able to create and implement a biblical discipleship curriculum that would lay the groundwork for establishing a culture of discipleship within the ministry.

Thankfully, even after my project's completion, the micro group participants and I are still creating new discipleship relationships, and I see that the worship ministry is making progress in creating the new discipleship culture. I pray that the Holy Spirit will continue to work in the lives of the worship ministry participants as discipleship efforts continue. As a result of this ministry project, I hope that we continue to see the fruit of what God has accomplished long after the project is complete. One of the things that I am most grateful for is the deeper, stronger relationships built as a result of studying the Word together. As these new relationships are formed throughout the worship ministry, I fully expect that our love and devotion for one another will increase and we will be more effective overall in leading worship together at PPBC. "Not to us, O Lord, not to us, but to your name give glory, for the sake of your steadfast love and your faithfulness!" (Ps 115:1).

APPENDIX 1

BIBLICAL DISCIPLESHIP SURVEY

Agreement to Participate

The research in which you are about to participate is designed to assess discipleship practices in the worship ministry at Park Place Baptist Church. This research is being conducted for the purpose of enhancing and equipping the worship ministry to become active disciple makers. In this research, you will be asked to answer questions about your current discipleship practices as a follower of Christ. 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 totally voluntary and you are free to withdraw from the study at any time. By your completion of this Personal Discipleship Survey, you are giving informed consent for the use of your responses in this research.

On a scale from 1-10, rate the following statements on how accurately they describe your discipleship practices.

1. I daily make an intentional effort to deepen my understanding of God's Word.
(Not at all) (Could not do a better job)
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
2. I intentionally live my life attempting to follow Paul's command to "pray without ceasing."
(Not at all) (Could not do a better job)
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
3. I daily confess my sin unto the Lord.
(Not at all) (Could not do a better job)
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
4. I actively do my best of modeling a life of righteousness according to the Scriptures.
(Not at all) (Could not do a better job)
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
5. I actively disciple my children (lead daily family devotion and prayer time) with the intent of raising them to be mature followers of Christ.
(Not at all) (Could not do a better job)
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

6. I actively look for opportunities to teach God's Word in my daily setting (work, school, etc...).
- (Not at all) (Could not do a better job)
- 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
7. I actively share the gospel with others with the intent of leading a lost person to Christ.
- (Not at all) (Could not do a better job)
- 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
8. I actively form relationships and meet with other believers with the intent of discipling them to be more mature followers of Christ.
- (Not at all) (Could not do a better job)
- 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
9. On a regular basis, I have families in my home with the intent of discipling them to be families that honor the Lord.
- (Not at all) (Could not do a better job)
- 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
10. I actively encourage others to worship with other believers in a local church setting.
- (Not at all) (Could not do a better job)
- 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
11. Reading God's Word is the highest priority of my day.
- (Not at all) (Could not do a better job)
- 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
12. I strive daily to spend a significant amount of time in prayer knowing that God hears me.
- (Not at all) (Could not do a better job)
- 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
13. Throughout my day, I actively try to recognize my sin and confess it to the Lord.
- (Not at all) (Could not do a better job)
- 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
14. I strive daily to live a life above reproach.
- (Not at all) (Could not do a better job)
- 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

15. I strive daily to teach my children to love others more than themselves.
(Not at all) (Could not do a better job)
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
16. I strive daily to have gospel-centered conversations with friends and co-workers.
(Not at all) (Could not do a better job)
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
17. I always have a goal of sharing my testimony at least two times per week.
(Not at all) (Could not do a better job)
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
18. Within my church family, I am always looking for another believer that I could invest in.
(Not at all) (Could not do a better job)
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
19. I actively try to display radical hospitality to my church family as a result of being a disciple of Christ.
(Not at all) (Could not do a better job)
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
20. I am in a daily routine of inviting people to my local church gathering.
(Not at all) (Could not do a better job)
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
21. I strive daily to read God's Word with the intentions of drawing closer to Him.
(Not at all) (Could not do a better job)
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
22. I actively pray as if my life depends on God answering my prayers.
(Not at all) (Could not do a better job)
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
23. Part of my daily prayer time consists of recognizing what God has done in my life in spite of my sin.
(Not at all) (Could not do a better job)
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
24. I strive daily to live my life in a way that would be pleasing God.
(Not at all) (Could not do a better job)
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

25. I actively look for opportunities to have gospel-centered conversations with my children.
 (Not at all) (Could not do a better job)
 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
26. I actively memorize Scripture with the intent of always being ready to share God's Word with someone.
 (Not at all) (Could not do a better job)
 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
27. When I am in public, I actively look for opportunities to share the gospel with lost people.
 (Not at all) (Could not do a better job)
 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
28. It is always my goal to be in a routine of discipling at least one person.
 (Not at all) (Could not do a better job)
 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
29. I actively look for other couples that my spouse and I could invest in.
 (Not at all) (Could not do a better job)
 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
30. When I am discipling someone, I emphasize the importance of serving in a local church.
 (Not at all) (Could not do a better job)
 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

APPENDIX 2
CURRICULUM EVALUATION RUBRIC

Discipleship Curriculum Evaluation Rubric					
1= insufficient 2=requires attention 3= sufficient 4=exemplary					
Criteria	1	2	3	4	Comments
The curriculum is clearly relevant to the issue of biblical discipleship.					
The curriculum is faithful to the Bible's teaching on discipleship.					
The curriculum is theologically sound.					
The curriculum contains points of practical application.					
The curriculum is sufficiently thorough in its coverage of the material.					
Overall, the curriculum is clearly presented.					

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ABSTRACT

INCREASING THE DISCIPLESHIP PRACTICES OF THE WORSHIP MINISTRY AT PARK PLACE BAPTIST CHURCH IN PEARL, MISSISSIPPI

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This project seeks to increase the discipleship practices of the worship ministry at Park Place Baptist Church in Pearl, Mississippi. Chapter 1 presents the ministry context, rationale, and the methodology for this project. Chapter 2 provides biblical support for the need of the project. In looking at Matthew 28:18-20, 1 Peter 2:1-9, 2 Timothy 2:1-7, and Ephesians 4:11-13, it is evident that every believer is commanded to be a disciple maker. Chapter 3 presents a practical method to how the worship ministry at PPBC seeks to create a culture of discipleship. Chapter 4 describes the project in detail, covering the methodology and the curriculum used in this project. Chapter 5 evaluates effectiveness of the project based upon the completion of the set goals. Finally, the project seeks to equip the worship ministry at PPBC with the knowledge, confidence, and ability to invest in the lives of others to create a culture of biblical discipleship.

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