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BE THE EXAMPLE: CHRIST-CENTERED FOLLOWERSHIP
IN THE PASTORAL EPISTLES

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**BE THE EXAMPLE: CHRIST-CENTERED FOLLOWERSHIP
IN THE PASTORAL EPISTLES**

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To my wife, Jodi,
and our children, Lydia, Lucas, Abram, and Annie:
your encouragement, sacrifices, prayers, and love enabled me to complete this process.

To my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ:
may the words of my mouth and the mediations of my heart be pleasing to you.

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1. PASTORAL EPISTLES CHRIST-CENTERED FOLLOWERSHIP MATRICES.....	261

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

- BDAG Walter Bauer, W. F. Arndt, F. W. Gingrich, and F. W. Danker. *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*. 3rd ed., rev., ed. F. W. Danker (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000)
- NIDNTT *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*, ed. Colin Brown (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1986)
- TDNT *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, ed. Gerhard Kittel, G. W. Bromiley, and Gerhard Friedrich (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964)

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PREFACE

Mentors have played a pivotal role in my life. Of course, my parents provided models of love and devotion well before I was old enough and possessed sufficient wisdom to recognize them as such. As a young Christian in college, Ben Arbaugh, Mike Halbig, and Paul Pyle graciously stepped into my life, pursued me, and delivered invaluable biblical wisdom, direction, and love. They pointed me to the Savior, instructed me to value and study his Word, and showed me how to follow him. Others, such as Campus Crusade for Christ staff Jim Sylvester and Brian McCollister, provoked me to consider how Christ might leave his imprint on all domains of my life—including how to conceptualize manhood and live as a man who recognized his identity as a son. They taught me that loving and following Jesus is the first priority of true manhood. During my time as a seminary student at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Dr. Wayne Grudem, my faculty advisor, embodied humble submission to the Lord, a high regard for Scripture, and a life of Jesus-following, joy-filled worship. His teaching and example continue to provide a pattern worthy of emulation. Of course there are others, and I am grateful to each. The Holy Spirit took their deposits of love, instruction, and modeling and multiplied those investments in my life. Perhaps this project will aid in some small fashion those who long to mentor emerging adults and help the next generation of young men to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with their God.

Chris Sarver

Fishers, Indiana

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CHAPTER 1

RESEARCH CONCERN

Over two millennia ago, Aristotle purportedly asserted, “He who cannot be a good follower cannot be a good leader.”¹ That statement suggests following and leading are tightly bound and sharply contrasts with the more recent “romance of leadership” outlook that pervaded leadership studies for decades.² For most of the twentieth century, the study of the phenomenon of leadership was largely leader-centric in its orientation, often emphasizing the traits, behaviors, and abilities of leaders.³ The role of followers, as well as the notion that being a good follower is a vital prerequisite to being a good leader, received scant attention. Barbara Kellerman, addressing the underlying cause of this neglect, states, “Leaders are presumed to be so much more important than followers that our shared interest is in *leadership*, not in *followership*. In fact, the word itself, *followership*, remains suspect.”⁴ Only relatively recently has followership emerged as an

¹ Though widely attributed to Aristotle, a search for “He who cannot be a good follower cannot be a good leader” and related terms and phrases in *Aristotle: The Complete Works* failed to yield any results. *Aristotle: The Complete Works* (Cleveland, OH: Pandora’s Box Classics, 2020), Kindle. Numerous books and online materials credit Aristotle with said statement, though they do not cite or reference any work by Aristotle himself. See, e.g., James Alexander, *The Best Aristotle Quotes* (Bath, UK: Crombie Jardine, 2013), para. 49, Kindle; Victor Ng, “You’re a Future Leader if you do these 4 Things as a Follower,” *Business Insider*, July 1, 2017, <https://www.businessinsider.com/youre-a-future-leader-if-you-do-these-4-things-as-a-follower-2017-6>; Bernhard Schroeder, “To Be A Great Leader, Learn How To Be A Great Follower: The Four Rules Of Following,” *Forbes*, December 5, 2019, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/bernhardschroeder/2019/12/05/to-be-a-great-leader-learn-how-to-be-a-great-follower-the-four-rules-of-following/#595f8ece7325>.

² J. R. Meindl, S. B. Ehrlich, and J. M. Dukerich, “The Romance of Leadership,” *Administrative Science Quarterly* 30, no.1 (1985): 78-102. See also James R. Meindl, “The Romance of Leadership as a Follower-Centric Theory: A Social Constructionist Approach,” *Leadership Quarterly* 6, no. 3 (1995): 329-41.

³ Ronald E. Riggio, “Followership Research: Looking Back and Looking Forward,” *Journal of Leadership Education* 13, no. 4 (2014): 15.

⁴ Barbara Kellerman, *Followership: How Followers Are Creating Change and Changing Leaders* (Boston: Harvard Business Press, 2008), xviii (emphasis original).

important field of inquiry in its own right.⁵

Though Jean-Jacques Rousseau recognized in the mid-eighteenth century that following and leading are closely intertwined, the contemporary interest in followership only began in earnest in 1988 with the publication of Robert Kelley's seminal article "In Praise of Followers."⁶ The intervening years witnessed a growing body of literature that sought to consider the ways followers influence and work with leaders to produce outcomes.⁷ Ronald Riggio highlights one significant reason that exploring the topic of followership is just as important for leaders as it is for subordinates: no one person singularly leads nor solely follows. Riggio summarizes his rationale as follows:

Leadership is not just the purview of the leader, and followership is not just done by followers. We know that many times in teams and organizations, followers develop ideas, strategies, and courses of action, and push these forward. In other words, followers engage in leadership behaviors. Conversely, wise leaders may elect to follow the initiatives of team members. Thus, in the real world, leaders don't "do leadership" and followers don't just follow. They work together to move the collective forward.⁸

⁵ For example, Peter Northouse's *Leadership Theory and Practice* (Los Angeles: SAGE) was first published in 1997 and lacked any reference to followership in the subject index or table of contents. The eighth edition released in 2019 was the first to include an entire chapter devoted to followership.

⁶ Robert Kelley, "In Praise of Followers," *Harvard Business Review* 66, no. 6 (1988): 141-48. Concerning the relationship between leading and following, Rousseau—over 250 years ago—penned,

Everything conspires to take away from a man who is set in authority over others the sense of justice and reason. Much trouble, we are told, is taken to teach young princes the art of reigning; but their education seems to do them no good. It would be better to begin by teaching them the art of obeying. The greatest kings whose praises history tells were not brought up to reign: reigning is a science we are never so far from possessing as when we have learnt too much of it, and one we acquire better by obeying than by commanding. (Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The Social Contract and Discourses*, trans. G. D. H. Cole [London: J. M. Dent, 1923], 65)

Kellerman's reference of Rousseau (*Followership*, xxii) prompted me to find and study this 1762 work in translation.

⁷ For a compendium of followership research up to 2014, see Mary Uhl-Bien et al., "Followership Theory: A Review and Research Agenda," *Leadership Quarterly* 25, no. 1 (2014): 83-104. See also Ronald E. Riggio, "Followership Research: Looking Back and Looking Forward," *Journal of Leadership Education* 13, no. 14 (2014): 15-20.

⁸ Riggio, "Followership Research," 16. Kellerman makes a similar point:

Sometimes leaders and managers follow; and sometimes followers lead. In addition, the line between them tends to shift. Some of us are followers most of the time and leaders some of the time. Others are the opposite: leaders most of the time and followers some of the time. Finally, many of us are superiors and subordinates simultaneously. For example, middle managers or even highly placed executives have people who are below them on the organizational ladder, and they have people above them at the same time. (Kellerman, *Followership*, xxi-xxii)

Kellerman notes a second and equally valuable reason for leaders to concern themselves with the topic of followership: everyone is first a follower. As children, human beings initially follow their parents. Even in adulthood, no one starts in the position of leadership. Rather, “we follow leaders before we lead followers.”⁹ Human leading is predicated upon following, and, as Kellerman intimates, learning to follow well may result in better leading.

The leadership literature emanating from the evangelical community has generally reflected the leader-centric focus prevalent throughout the corpus, even as it sought to elucidate—to varying degrees of success—a distinctly biblical concept of leadership.¹⁰ Leadership-related works penned by evangelicals have tended to emphasize the characteristics, actions, and competencies of leaders, with only passing attention given to followers and following.¹¹ While the study of followership over the past thirty years spawned a number of volumes on the subject aimed at audiences beyond the academy, relatively few Christian authors have written followership-related titles intended for any audience.¹²

⁹ Kellerman, *Followership*, xxii.

¹⁰ A few popular examples are as follows: Boyd Bailey, *Learning to Lead Like Jesus: Eleven Principles to Help You Serve, Inspire, and Equip Others* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 2018); Ken Blanchard and Phil Hodges, *Lead Like Jesus: Lessons from the Greatest Leadership Role Model of All Time* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2005); Leighton Ford, *Transforming Leadership: Jesus’ Way of Creating Vision, Shaping Values, and Empowering Change* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1991); Laurie Beth Jones, *Jesus, CEO* (New York: Hachette, 1995); Jones, *Jesus, Life Coach: Learn from the Best* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2004); C. Gene Wilkes, *Jesus on Leadership: Discovering the Secrets of Servant Leadership from the Life of Christ* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale, 1998).

¹¹ John S. Burns, John R. Shoup, and Donald C. Simmons Jr., eds., *Organizational Leadership: Foundations and Practices for Christians* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2014); Aubrey Malphurs, *Being Leaders: The Nature of Authentic Christian Leadership* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2003); J. Oswald Sanders, *Spiritual Leadership: Principles of Excellence for Every Believer*, rev. ed. (Chicago: Moody, 2007). These works, while seeking to provide substantive contributions to the topic of Christian leadership, illustrate the leader-centric emphasis so prevalent among evangelical treatments of the topic. In such works, followers tend to be mentioned only in passing or as the focus of leadership rather than as important contributors in their own right to a relationally based leading-following process that results in organizational outcomes.

¹² The following represents a sampling of followership works written for audiences not limited to the academy, though, in some cases, authored by recognized scholars within the field: Ira Chaleff, *The Courageous Follower: Standing to and for Our Leaders Creative Followership*, 3rd ed. (San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler, 2009); Jimmy Collins and Michael Cooley, *Creative Followership: In the Shadow of*

Michael Wilder and Timothy Paul Jones stand as some of the first evangelical academics to publish work on pastoral leadership that integrates material from followership studies into a biblically derived model. In *The God Who Goes Before You*, Wilder and Jones argue, “The leaders’ pursuit of God always takes precedence over the leaders’ positional authority. Before we are leaders, we must be followers—followers of a God who goes before us.”¹³ Their central claim reflects an important tenet found throughout followership literature: leaders are not solely leaders but also followers. Furthermore, Wilder and Jones’s contention that pastoral leaders will not lead well unless they first learn to follow echoes another theme present in the writings of others.¹⁴ Of course, in both instances, they emphasize the leader’s ongoing devotion to God and submission to his leadership as an ultimate expression of followership.

In their book, Wilder and Jones build a biblical theology of pastoral leadership informed by a careful integration of followership material resulting in a distinct model—

Greatness (Decatur, GA: Looking Glass Books, 2013); Barbara Kellerman, *The End of Leadership* (New York: HarperCollins, 2012); Kellerman, *Followership*.

Only a handful of Christian authors have produced works with an acknowledged awareness of the field of followership studies. Most are not scholarly efforts and only make passing reference to the broader followership literature base rather than seriously engaging it. See Tracy Armstrong, *Followership: The Leadership Principle That No One Is Talking About* (Shippensburg, PA: Destiny Image, 2010); Allen Hamlin Jr., *Embracing Followership: How to Thrive in a Leader-Centric Culture* (Bellingham, WA: Kirkwall Press, 2016); Omokhai Imoukhuede, *Discovering Followership: Learn the Secrets of Walking Behind and Still Staying Ahead* (Chicago: Summit House, 2011); Justin Irving and Mark L. Strauss, *Leadership in Christian Perspective: Biblical Foundations and Contemporary Practices for Servant Leaders* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2019); Rusty Ricketson, *Follower First: Rethinking Leading in the Church* (Cumming, GA: Heartworks, 2009); Leonard Sweet, *I Am a Follower: The Way, Truth, and Life of Following Jesus* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2011); Michael S. Wilder and Timothy Paul Jones, *The God Who Goes Before You: Pastoral Leadership as Christ-Centered Followership* (Nashville: B&H, 2018); Jeffrey A. Williams, *Leadership-Followership 360°: How to Create Accountable, Flexible and Dynamic Teams* (O’Fallon, IL: JefWilCo, 2011).

¹³ Wilder and Jones, *The God Who Goes Before You*, 10.

¹⁴ For example, Wilder notes that the apostle Peter’s life and ministry reflected this supposition. Though Peter himself denied Christ three times prior to Jesus’s crucifixion, this former fisherman nonetheless went on to become an effective pastoral leader, feeding, guarding, guiding, and even dying on behalf of the flock of God. Wilder and Jones attribute these hallmarks of Peter’s leadership to the fact that he had first followed Christ, who had taught and demonstrated these very characteristics and commissioned Peter in John 20 to do the same. Wilder and Jones, *The God Who Goes Before You*, 167-68. Henri Nouwen offers thoughts on the leader as a follower of Christ. Henri J. M. Nouwen, *In the Name of Jesus: Reflections on Christian Leadership*, 3rd ed. (Chestnut Ridge, NY: Crossroad, 1989), 71-85.

Christ-centered followership. Even though their volume is both comprehensive and thorough, it lacks substantial consideration of the Pastoral Epistles: 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus. In fact, Wilder and Jones make only glancing references to these three New Testament letters. Furthermore, while they mention the importance of following and setting an example and imitation within their model, they undervalue their importance, especially in light of their significance within the Pastoral Epistles. Finally, the authors restrict the application of Christ-centered followership to local church leaders.

In view of those limitations and given the ground-breaking nature of *The God Who Goes Before You*, a number of questions emerge: (1) In what ways, if any, is Christ-centered followership—as framed by Wilder and Jones—evidenced in the Pastoral Epistles? (2) How does the phenomenon of imitation within the Pastoral Epistle nuance Christ-centered followership? (3) How might Christ-centered followership as demonstrated in and adjusted by the Pastoral Epistles be deployed in the development of Christian emerging-adult males as spiritual leaders?

Answering these questions entails far more than satisfying mere intellectual curiosity or improving upon a particular leadership model. The ultimate concern of this study is to better know God, his works, and his ways in order that his people would faithfully follow, worship, and serve him. The penultimate interest of this thesis is to resource Christian leaders in their efforts to guide God’s people to the end of loving and obeying him—both now and into the future—by his appointed Christ-centered means as disclosed in his Word. Thus, the task of shepherding and developing the next generation of Christian leaders for the church is no more pressing than doing so among those currently in the life stage often referred to as “emerging adulthood.”¹⁵ Nonetheless,

¹⁵ Within this project, the term “emerging adult” refers to someone between the age of eighteen and twenty-nine. Jeffery Jenson Arnett first coined “emerging adulthood” in 2000 to describe the lengthening timeframe in certain cultural and demographic contexts that many individuals experience between adolescence and actual adulthood. He observed five definitive characteristics of emerging adulthood: (1) identity exploration, (2) instability, (3) self-focus, (4) feeling “in-between” or in transition, and (5) optimism concerning the future or possibilities. Jeffery Jensen Arnett, “Emerging Adulthood: A

today's emerging adults present a particular set of challenges to Christian discipleship.¹⁶ Reflecting upon the formidable impediments that today's young adult spiritual milieu poses to evangelical Christianity's discipling efforts, David Kinnaman suggests, "We need new architects to design interconnected approaches to faith transference."¹⁷

While contemporary emerging-adult men and women share several similar barriers to Christian formation and, by extension, leadership development efforts, young adult men present their own unique set of obstacles.¹⁸ Thus, Christian leaders inside and outside local church contexts face a confluence of cultural and demographic headwinds

Theory of Development from the Late Teens through the Twenties," *American Psychologist*, 55, no. 5 (2000): 469-80; Arnett, *Emerging Adulthood: The Winding Road from the Late Teens through the Twenties* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 8.

Christian Smith, affirming Arnett's thesis that emerging adulthood represents a "new phase in the American life course," notes at least four societal factors that contributed to the rise of this phenomenon: (1) the growth in higher education and the increasing length of time young people devote to post-secondary schooling; (2) the postponement of marriage to later and later ages throughout the post-war period; (3) vocational instability and frequent job changes and transitions; and (4) the increasing willingness of parents to extend financial support to their children throughout, and even beyond, the collegiate years. Christian Smith, *Souls in Transition: The Religious and Spiritual Lives of Emerging Adults* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 4-6.

¹⁶ For an excellent treatment of emerging-adult spiritual formation and its related challenges, see David P. Setran and Chris A. Kiesling, *Spiritual Formation in Emerging Adulthood: A Practical Theology for College and Young Adult Ministry* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2013). See also Richard R. Dunn and Jana L. Sundene, *Shaping the Journey of Emerging Adults: Life-Giving Rhythms for Spiritual Transformation* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2012); Sharon Daloz Parks, *Big Questions, Worthy Dreams: Mentoring Emerging Adults in Their Search for Meaning, Purpose, and Faith* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2019).

¹⁷ David Kinnaman, *You Lost Me: Why Young Christians Are Leaving Church . . . and Rethinking Faith* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2011), 13.

¹⁸ Christian Smith, for example, highlights five serious problems confronting emerging adults: (1) moral confusion; (2) consumerist and materialistic life goals; (3) substance abuse; (4) unregulated sexuality; and (5) disengagement from civic and political life. Christian Smith, *Lost in Transition: The Dark Side of Emerging Adulthood* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011). Neither Arnett nor Smith differentiate between the challenges and barriers that emerging-adult women and men face. Michael Kimmel is one of the few researchers to give attention to the unique set of difficulties that emerging-adult males must navigate. Michael Kimmel, *Guyland: The Perilous World Where Boys Become Men* (New York: HarperCollins, 2008).

Throughout this project, I use the terms "Christian formation," "spiritual formation," and "spiritual growth" interchangeably. I understand these to refer to the progressive process whereby the Holy Spirit transforms a Christian's character, desires, and behaviors into greater accord with Christ's own. While deeply rooted in justification and ultimately accomplished by the Holy Spirit, believers are not to remain passive; instead, they must responsibly participate in this divine work by exercising faith—expressed as obedience—and employing and engaging with God-provided means of grace. This process of an individual Christian becoming more holy and Christ-like is often referred to as "sanctification" or, more specifically, "progressive sanctification."

that require new and concerted efforts if a cadre of spiritually mature male leaders is to be available to influence their homes, churches, mission fields, and workplaces for Christ in the coming decades.¹⁹ Building upon Kinnaman’s supposition, the evangelical community would do well to consider afresh its approach to developing young adult male spiritual leaders. The purpose of this study, therefore, is to examine the Pastoral Epistles for evidence of Christ-centered followership in order to affirm and adjust Wilder and Jones’s framework and consider its implications for leadership development efforts among Christian emerging-adult males.

Introduction of Thesis

I argue that material within the Pastoral Epistles validates Wilder and Jones’s model of Christ-centered followership and nuances it in light of the imitation motif.²⁰ Furthermore, I consider the implications of an imitation-adjusted model of Christ-centered followership for emerging-adult male Christian leadership development efforts.

Wilder and Jones define Christ-centered followership as “the Christ-following leader—living as a bearer of God’s image in union with Christ and his people—develops a diverse community of fellow laborers who are equipped and empowered to pursue

¹⁹ David Anderson, Paul Hill, and Roland Martinson’s research stands relatively alone in exploring some of the unique challenges to emerging-adult male spiritual formation. They also propose some practical ways forward at the conclusion of their work. David W. Anderson, Paul G. Hill, and Roland D. Martinson, *Coming of Age: Exploring the Identity and Spirituality of Younger Men* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress Press, 2006). Thomas Shaw also recognizes the distinct barriers to emerging-adult male spiritual development and proposes a model that emphasizes faith and vocation integration as an important component. Thomas G. Shaw, “Male Call: The Role of the Church in Awakening Young Men to Their Vocational Purpose” (DMin thesis, George Fox University, 2014).

²⁰ Andrew Clark’s research on Pauline imitation surveys many of the relevant biblical texts and the significant works on the subject within the broader literature corpus. His insights provide important background for this particular project and its understanding of imitation. Andrew D. Clark, “‘Be Imitators of Me’: Paul’s Model of Leadership,” *Tyndale Bulletin* 49, no. 2 (1998): 329-60. He concludes that Paul sought to imitate Christ’s example of servant leadership, viewed his own model of leadership as a less than perfect reflection of Christ’s, and taught that “in their own imitation of Christ, leaders should direct all believers to imitation of Christ, in contrast to the secular models” of the day (360). Ultimately, Clarke understands Paul’s calls for others to imitate him not as egotistical or as some sort of power play over them but as genuine attempts to engender personal imitation of Christ. He points to the fact that the apostle also exhorted those under his charge to look to the examples of others as well as his own.

shared goals that fulfill the creation mandate and the Great commission in submission to the Word of God.”²¹ Three key principles frame the authors’ distinctively biblical model of followership: (1) the leader’s union with Christ establishes him as a steward; (2) the leader exercises delegated authority on behalf of God; and (3) the leader proclaims God’s entrusted Word.²² Wilder and Jones maintain that their Christ-centered followership model and its attendant principles are scripturally derived, so one would anticipate their presence within the correspondence addressed to Timothy and Titus. I submit that the elements and principles of Wilder and Jones’s framework are not only present in the Pastoral Epistles but are also nuanced in light of the imitation motif found within 1 Timothy, Titus, and 2 Timothy.²³

The imitation motif threads its way through the three letters written to Timothy and Titus and comprises an important aspect of the books’ contents. At a number of points, the apostle Paul affirms or alludes to his submission to God (e.g., 1 Tim 1:15-17; Titus 1:1-3; 2 Tim 1:3), even as he writes and issues imperatives to Timothy and Titus in his role as their leader.²⁴ Paul understands himself to be simultaneously follower (i.e., a

²¹ Wilder and Jones, *The God Who Goes Before You*, 16.

²² Wilder and Jones, *The God Who Goes Before You*, 10.

²³ This thesis recognizes the chronological ordering of the Pastoral Epistles to be as follows: 1 Tim; Titus; 2 Tim. As a result, these letters will be discussed and referenced in that sequence rather than their canonical arrangement.

²⁴ I acknowledge that many biblical scholars question Pauline authorship of the Pastoral Epistles. Nonetheless, I hold that Paul authored those three New Testament letters, perhaps with Luke or another of Paul’s close associates functioning as an amanuensis. Gloer and Stepp point out that most New Testament scholars “reflexively reject” Pauline authorship with pseudonymity now the “default position” (though usually assumed and not validated). Nonetheless, they contend that “a strong minority continues to view the Pastoral Epistles as Pauline,” pointing out that of the seven major commentaries on the Pastoral Epistles written from the mid-1990’s to 2008, four “directly or indirectly” affirm Pauline authorship. W. Hulitt Gloer and Perry L. Stepp, *Reading Paul’s Letters to Individuals: A Literary and Theological Commentary on Paul’s Letters to Philemon, Titus, and Timothy* (Macon: GA: Smyth and Helwys, 2008).

For treatments favoring Pauline authorship, see William D. Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 46 (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2000), lxxxiii-cxxiii; Terry Wilder, “Pseudonymity, the New Testament, and the Pastoral Epistles,” in *Entrusted with the Gospel: Paul’s Theology in the Pastoral Epistles*, ed. Andreas J. Köstenberger and Terry L. Wilder (Nashville: B&H, 2010), 28-51. For a treatment that rejects both Pauline authorship and pseudonymity in favor of allonymity, see I. Howard Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, International Critical Commentary (New York: T & T Clark, 1999), 57-91. I also hold that individuals named Timothy and Titus were the original, intended recipients of the Pastoral Epistles.

follower of God) and leader (i.e., an apostle). From his follower-leader identity, he points to his example across a number of domains of life and ministry as one to be closely followed by those under his charge (e.g., 1 Tim 1:16; 2 Tim 1:13; 3:10).²⁵ In turn, Paul exhorts Timothy and Titus, follower-leaders in their own contexts, to be patterns for others to imitate (e.g., 1 Tim 4:12; Titus 2:7-8; 2 Tim 2:14-26). Paul embraces a leader-as-follower framework that coincides with Wilder and Jones's framework, and he intends for his model to serve as a pattern for others to emulate.

The challenges to developing the next generation of Christ-centered, example-providing male follower-leaders for the church seems especially acute in today's climate. For example, Hanna Rosin observes, "Man has been the dominant sex since, well, the dawn of mankind. But for the first time in human history, that is changing—and with shocking speed."²⁶ Concerning the rapidity of these sociological and cultural changes, Thomas Shaw observes, "Changing perceptions of masculinity complicate the formation of male identity. Many young men appear to be languishing, uncertain about their purpose and contribution to the good of society."²⁷ Such challenges do not disappear at the church entrance. David Anderson, Paul Hill, and Roland Martinson note that what

²⁵ Willis de Boer and Andrew Clark both understand 1 Tim 1:16; 2 Tim 1:13; 3:10 to sit squarely within the phenomenon of Pauline imitation. Willis Peter de Boer, *The Imitation of Paul: An Exegetical Study* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 1962), 196-200; Andrew D. Clark, "'Be Imitators of Me,'" 354-57.

²⁶ Hanna Rosin, "The End of Men," *Atlantic*, July/August 2010, <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2010/07/the-end-of-men/308135/>. I do not intend to suggest that men ought to be the dominate gender. In fact, many—though certainly not all—men have historically—and even currently—used positions of power to exploit and even abuse others, including—and especially—women. Rosin's article does not harken for an earlier male-dominated period, nor does this project, by its focus on the development of young male leaders, seek a return to such a period. Furthermore, this project does not suggest that the spiritual and leadership development of women should be neglected. Rather, the significant cultural and economic shifts that Rosin describes have occurred with such rapidity that a significant segment of the male population has experienced a degree of dislocation. Rosin observes declining male engagement across a number of domains of society, including economic participation and higher education. A renewed focus within the evangelical church on young adult male spiritual leadership development may contribute to more positive outcomes and, perhaps, counter some of the negative trends highlighted by the likes of Smith (*Lost in Transition*, 226-27) and Kimmel (*Guyland*, 1-13).

²⁷ Shaw, "Male Call," 4.

little research does exist on “the religiosity of young men” suggests that it is and has been much lower than that of young women and that this phenomenon reflects a long-term trend.²⁸ These realities animate a renewed urgency for biblically informed ministry models to engage and develop young adult males as spiritual leaders who, in turn, can positively influence their peers by means of their own example of Christ-centered followership.²⁹ This work, then, seeks to nuance the Christ-centered followership model with the imitation motif as observed within the Pastoral Epistles and to extend its application to the development of emerging-adult male spiritual leaders.³⁰

Void in the Existing Literature

As noted above, leadership research historically has been biased toward leaders and leadership, resulting in the neglect or devaluing of followers and the critical role they play in the process of leading and the co-creation of organizational outcomes.³¹ Similarly, a survey of the books written by evangelical authors demonstrates a prejudice toward the leader and leadership, with little attention given to the qualities and behaviors of

²⁸ Anderson, Hill, and Martinson, *Coming of Age*, 8.

²⁹ By “spiritual leaders” I mean individuals capable of exercising self-analysis, self-diagnosis, and self-leadership in light of scriptural norms, values, and behaviors as well as providing a positive model and actively influencing those around them (e.g., at work, in the home, in a local church small group, among friends) in view of those norms, values, and behaviors. Spiritual leadership need not entail holding an official office or position within an ecclesiastical structure. Nonetheless, spiritual leadership—as envisioned within this project—would, at a minimum, be required for the offices of a local church elder or deacon. A spiritual leader is someone who is able to lead him or herself and help others move toward God’s ends by his appointed means in a variety of settings. Spiritual leadership as conceptualized here is developed more fully in chapter 5 of this work.

³⁰ My selection of the Pastoral Epistles as the texts from which to validate and adjust Wilder and Jones’s framework and ultimately apply it to emerging-adult male leadership development should not be taken as recognition of a one-to-one correspondence between Paul’s ministry in Timothy’s life—an older man developing a younger man—and contemporary older males mentoring emerging-adult males. Significant socio-cultural differences exist between Timothy on one hand and today’s emerging adult males in a North American context on the other to warrant rejection of any claim that holds Timothy as some sort of proto-emerging adult or Paul as an early emerging-adult mentor to be mimicked in every detail. Rather, the value in examining the Pastoral Epistles lies in part in identifying the pedagogy as well as the theological emphases present in Paul’s inter-generational leadership development efforts with respect to individuals within the context of his overall ministerial endeavor.

³¹ Uhl-Bien et al., “Followership Theory,” 90.

followers or to the leader as follower.³² Recently, followership research has flowered into its own discipline, with its interest in exploring “*the nature and impact of followers and following in the leadership process.*”³³ During this period, scholars have approached followership from relational, role-based, constructionist, and post-structuralist vantage points.³⁴ Furthermore, taxonomies of follower characteristics and behaviors have been advanced.³⁵ Taken as a whole, these developments have served to produce a deeper understanding of the complex leading-following and follower-leader dynamics. Yet, with only one or two exceptions, evangelicals have not sought to explore—in serious fashion at least—the ways in which followership research might aide them in their efforts to develop and employ biblically grounded models of leadership.³⁶

Granted, evangelical authors have produced a relatively large and important subcategory of literature that uniquely straddles the usual leader-centric genre and those followership contributions that acknowledge that leaders are followers, too. Works of this type draw upon the slave-servant and shepherd themes that run throughout the Bible and are important—even primary—to any biblical leadership paradigm.³⁷ In fact, it is best

³² A few popular examples are as follows: Mark Brisebois, *Five Smooth Stones: Leadership Lessons from the Life of King David* (Spruce Grove, Alberta: Watchman, 2011); Reggie McNeal, *Practicing Greatness: Seven Disciplines of Extraordinary Spiritual Leaders* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2016); Andy Stanley, *Next Generation Leader: Five Essentials for Those Who Will Shape the Future* (Colorado Springs: Multnomah Books, 2003).

³³ Uhl-Bien et al., “Followership Theory,” 89 (emphasis original).

³⁴ Uhl-Bien et al., “Followership Theory,” 89-95.

³⁵ Uhl-Bien et al., “Followership Theory,” 89-95. For example, Kelley’s taxonomy of followers utilizes a dual axis, with one moving from passive to active and the other from dependent to independent. Kelley, “In Praise of Followers, 144. Kellerman’s five-fold linear typology of followers emphasizes engagement and moves from the isolate to the bystander to the participant to the activist—and finally—to the diehard. Kellerman, *Followership*, 84-93.

³⁶ Wilder and Jones, *The God Who Goes Before You*, is the most notable example.

³⁷ Three significant works on the slave-servant motif are Timothy Cochrell, *Slaves of the Most High God: A Biblical Model of Servant Leadership in the Slave Imagery of Luke-Acts* (Nashville: B&H, 2018); Murray J. Harris, *Slave of Christ: A New Testament Metaphor for Total Devotion to Christ*, New Studies in Biblical Theology 8 (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1999); Don N. Howell Jr., *Servants of the Servant: A Biblical Theology of Leadership* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2003). Two important volumes on the shepherd-shepherding theme are Timothy S. Laniak, *Shepherds after My Own Heart: Pastoral Traditions and Leadership in the Bible*, New Studies in Biblical Theology 20 (Downers Grove,

understood that the model of a leader as slave and under-shepherd of God himself sets the theological foundation for any leader-as-follower construct. Yet, as significant and biblically grounded as the best examples of these projects are, none seek to incorporate and apply the insights gained from followership research within a distinctly Christian framework.³⁸ As noted above, only a very limited number of evangelical writers have attempted such an undertaking. Within that tiny subset, Wilder and Jones stand out as those who have assumed that task while simultaneously drawing heavily from the prominent biblical slave and shepherd motifs.³⁹

Evangelicals have published several works over the years addressing such topics as male mentoring, men's ministries, the unique spiritual needs of men, and even male church participation.⁴⁰ Furthermore, titles have been written that discuss, on the one hand, developing Christian leaders generally and, on the other hand, developing qualified men to serve specifically as elders in local church settings.⁴¹ Even emerging-adult ministry has recently received growing attention by evangelical scholars and authors.⁴²

IL: InterVarsity Press, 2015); Derek Tidball, *Skillful Shepherds* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1986).

³⁸ I intend no criticism by this statement. In the vast majority of slave-servant and shepherd themed works, there is little to no awareness on the part of the authors of the development of followership research. In any case, none sought to undertake such an integrative project, so any criticism of that fact would be unwarranted. I simply make the point in order to demonstrate a gap in the existing literature base.

³⁹ Wilder and Jones (*The God Who Goes Before You*) draw heavily upon the shepherd and slave metaphors found in Scripture and build their Christ-centered followership model of leadership upon them. They devote chap. 5 ("The Shepherd Leader," pp. 109-31) to the topic of leader-as-shepherd and chap. 6 ("The Shepherd's Call: Fearing and Following God," pp. 137-54) to the leader-as-slave.

⁴⁰ For example, a few popular titles among a plethora of works are Phil Downer, ed., *Effective Men's Ministry: The Indispensable [sic] Toolkit for Your Church* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001); Patrick Morley, David Delk, and Brett Clemmer, *No Man Left Behind: How to Build and Sustain a Thriving, Disciple-Making Ministry for Every Man in Your Church* (Chicago: Moody, 2006); David Murrow, *Why Men Hate Going to Church*, rev. ed. (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2011); Jay Payleitner and David Murrow, eds., *How to Disciple Men (Short and Sweet): Forty-Five Proven Strategies from Experts on Ministry to Men* (Racine, WI: BroadStreet, 2017).

⁴¹ See, e.g., Eric Geiger and Kevin Peck, *Designed to Lead: The Church and Leadership Development* (Nashville: B&H, 2016); Aubrey Malphurs and Will Mancini, *Building Leaders: Blueprints for Developing Leadership at Every Level of Your Church* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2004); Robert H. Thune, *Gospel Eldership: Equipping a New Generation of Servant Leaders* (Greensboro, NC: New Growth Press, 2016).

⁴² Two notable examples are Setran and Kiesling, *Spiritual Formation in Emerging Adulthood*;

Yet, a void exists within the literature base concerning the application of a Christ-centered followership model of leadership for the cultivation of emerging-adult men as spiritual leaders.⁴³

Research Methodology and Argument Development

Following a literature review (chapter 2), I undertake an exegetical and theological analysis of the Pastoral Epistles in order to validate and critique Wilder and Jones's model of Christ-centered followership (chapter 3). The methodology utilized in this study mimics the general pattern employed by Wilder and Jones in *The God Who Goes Before You*, wherein they (1) follow the development of specific leadership themes, pronouncements, typologies, and examples throughout Scripture; (2) synthesize that information utilizing the conceptual principles of biblical theology; (3) draw conclusions, and (4) make application to contemporary pastoral leadership. However, whereas Wilder and Jones survey the entire canon of Scripture to construct their model, this study seeks to nuance their construct using the insights gained from an in-depth examination of the Pastoral Epistles.

Furthermore, George M. Wieland, in his volume on soteriology within the Pastoral Epistles, deploys a methodological schema in his analysis of those three books that informs this study's particular approach.⁴⁴ He employs grammatical-historical exegesis throughout each letter to identify and examine specific texts related to his topic of concern. He then correlates and synthesizes his findings to draw theological

Dunn and Sundene, *Shaping the Journey of Emerging Adults*.

⁴³ As mentioned above, Thomas Shaw is one of the few who has sought to address the unique challenges of the spiritual development of emerging-adult men. However, his interest lies more in helping young men identify their vocational purpose as a means of greater spiritual growth and engagement rather than spiritual leadership development. Shaw, "Male Call."

⁴⁴ George M. Wieland, *The Significance of Salvation: A Study of Salvation Language in the Pastoral Epistles* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2006). His work is reproduced in abridged form in "The Function of Salvation in the Letters to Timothy and Titus," in Köstenberger and Wilder, *Entrusted with the Gospel*, 153-72.

conclusions and point out a number of implications.

After providing an overview of *The God Who Goes Before You*, I examine, in detail, Christ-centered followership as presented within its pages. Then, I utilize a historical-grammatical hermeneutic as a means of considering the Pastoral Epistles for indicators of Wilder and Jones' framework. Specifically, I lexically assess key terms within individual verses in order to determine whether they coincide with and support the leader-as-follower's identity, relationships, roles, and practices, as described within *The God Who Goes Before You*. Next, I undertake a detailed exegetical analysis of specific verses in order to verify their support of key Christ-centered followership tenets.

This study continues by identifying and analyzing texts within 1 Timothy, Titus, and 2 Timothy that contain references or allusions to setting examples or patterns, following the behavior or activity of another, and conduct meant for others to observe and mimic (chapter 4). Here, I employ a similar methodological approach as utilized in chapter 3. The results from this analysis inform an adjustment to Wilder and Jones's Christ-centered followership model. Then, I consider the possible implications of a nuanced understanding of Christ-centered followership to spiritual leadership development efforts among Christian emerging-adult males (chapter 5). I conclude by providing summary reflections as well as presenting possible avenues for further investigation (chapter 6).

This research project draws upon sources within biblical and theological studies, leadership and followership research, and human development and sociological scholarship. Therefore, I utilize a text-based methodology with the Protestant Bible as its primary document.⁴⁵ I conduct all exegetical work within the Pastoral Epistles utilizing both original language texts and English translations, commentaries, lexical resources,

⁴⁵ I recognize the Scriptures to be divine revelation, inspired, inerrant, infallible, clear, sufficient, and authoritative.

monographs, journals, and other volumes. I consult a range of leadership and followership books, journal articles, and dissertations giving particular attention to *The God Who Goes Before You*. Lastly, I engage scholarly resources in the fields of sociology and developmental psychology so as to better understand emerging-adult males and apply this study's findings to the cultivation of spiritual leaders among Christians within that particular demographic.

Delimitations

First, this thesis will not address the various disputes within contemporary biblical scholarship over the authorship, historical setting, recipients, nature of heretical problems, and dating of the Pastoral Epistles. A discussion of who originally penned the Pastoral Epistles resides outside the purview of the current research project as the matter lacks direct impact upon the nature of the study and its conclusions. Furthermore, the aims of this effort exclude interaction with theories that maintain that expressions of congregational life evidenced in the Pastoral Epistles were forced to come to terms with a delayed parousia and, as a result, were turning inward and accommodating themselves to the surrounding culture.⁴⁶ Finally, time and space limitations as well as the specific scope of this project prohibit a review of the arguments for and against positions favoring a later dating (sometime in the first half of the second century CE) of the Pastoral Epistles.⁴⁷ Whether or not the Pastoral Epistles were composed in the 2nd century has negligible bearing on the conduct and outcome of this particular work.

⁴⁶ In keeping with Philip Towner, I hold that the nature of the instructions in the Pastoral Epistles is fundamentally a response to the false teaching and resulting unethical behavior circulating in Ephesus and Crete. See Philip H. Towner, *The Goal of Our Instruction: The Structure of Theology and Ethics in the Pastoral Epistles* (Sheffield, UK: Sheffield Academic Press, 1989). In addition, it is beyond the scope of this project to address the nature of the Ephesian heresy, though I recognize that that, too, is in dispute.

⁴⁷ I hold to an earlier (i.e., late first century CE) dating of the Pastoral Epistles, but I acknowledge the dispute surrounding the date these letters were actually composed.

Second, this project does not engage in a study of the nature and practice of the imitation motif within the broader Pauline corpus. However, reference is made to the extensive works of Willis de Boer and Victor Copan, among others, on the topic of Pauline *mimesis* as their titles provide important lexical and historical background for this current project.⁴⁸ Furthermore, this endeavor relies upon previous studies to provide the necessary extra-biblical and in-depth lexical analysis important to any linguistic examination. This project engages in discussions of key lexical terms encountered within the Pastoral Epistles, but it does so by drawing upon, and interacting with, earlier studies rather than providing a comprehensive analysis. As with the aforementioned, such a deep lexical analysis lies beyond the aim of this project.

Third, given the exegetical and theological nature of this study, I maintain that as long as appropriate hermeneutical and theological methodologies are employed and carefully grounded in the text of Scripture, generalization of the theological dimensions of any conclusions are virtually unrestricted. Nonetheless, how those deductions are applied will be predicated upon the needs and realities of a particular cultural context. While volumes have been written on hermeneutics, the theologizing process, and contextualization, the limited nature of this thesis excludes interaction with various contending theories or approaches.

Terminology

For the purposes of this project and to provide clarity as well as avoid misunderstandings, the following definitions are utilized throughout the entirety of this

⁴⁸ See Willis Peter de Boer, *The Imitation of Paul: An Exegetical Study* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 1962), 213; and Victor Copan, *Saint Paul as Spiritual Director: An Analysis of the Imitation of Paul with Implications and Applications to the Practice of Spiritual Direction* (Colorado Springs: Authentic, 2007). For another important work on Pauline imitation particularly focused upon the Pastoral letters, see Benjamin Fiore, *The Function of Personal Example in the Socratic and Pastoral Epistles*, *Analecta Biblica* 105 (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1986). For a critical analysis, see Elizabeth A. Castelli, *Imitating Paul: A Discourse of Power* (Louisville, KY: Westminster, 1991).

study:

Christ-centered followership as pastoral leadership. Wilder and Jones define *Christ-centered followership as pastoral leadership* as follows: “*The Christ-following leader—living as a bearer of God’s image in union with Christ and his people—develops a diverse community of fellow laborers who are equipped and empowered to pursue shared goals that fulfill the creation mandate and the Great Commission in submission to the Word of God.*”⁴⁹ The foundational premise that undergirds their entire framework is the notion that “the leaders’ pursuit of God always takes precedence over the leaders’ positional authority. Before we are leaders, we must be followers—followers of a God who goes before us.”⁵⁰

Emerging adult. Within this study, the term *emerging adult* refers to someone between the ages of eighteen and twenty-nine. Jeffery Jenson Arnett first introduced the concept of “emerging adulthood” in 2000 to describe the lengthening timeframe in certain cultural and demographic contexts that many individuals experience between adolescence and full-fledged adulthood.⁵¹ Arnett avers that emerging adulthood may span from eighteen to twenty-fives years of age—what he considers a “conservative range”—to a longer period, eighteen to twenty-nine.⁵² As noted, this project adopts the latter span and also uses the terms “emerging adult,” “young adult,” and “twentysomething” interchangeably.

Emerging-adult spiritual leadership as Christ-centered followership. Building upon the central elements of Wilder and Jones’s Christ-centered followership schema and

⁴⁹ Wilder and Jones, *The God Who Goes Before You*, 16 (emphasis original).

⁵⁰ Wilder and Jones, *The God Who Goes Before You*, 10.

⁵¹ Arnett, “Emerging Adulthood,” 469.

⁵² See, e.g., Jeffrey Jensen Arnett, *Emerging Adulthood: The Winding Road from the Late Teens through thTwenties*, 2nd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), 7.

modifications made to Sharon Parks’s emerging-adult, faith-grounded leadership framework, I propose in chapter 5 the following definition of *emerging-adult spiritual leadership as Christ-centered followership*: The Christ-following emerging adult—living by faith as a bearer of God’s image in union with Christ and his people—seeks to influence and mobilize those around him or her for the purposes of meeting challenges and solving problems related to fulfilling the creation mandate and, in conjunction with other Christians, participating in the great commission in submission to the Word of God.⁵³

Evangelical. Within this project, the term *evangelical* refers to persons who align with a particular subset of North American Christianity: evangelicalism or evangelical Christianity. Albert Mohler defines evangelicalism historically, phenomenologically, and normatively.⁵⁴ Historically, he observes that contemporary evangelical Christianity within the United States emerged in the post-war period under the guidance of the likes of Carl F. Henry who sought “to maintain a clear and unquestioned commitment to theological orthodoxy and to oppose theological liberalism in all its forms” while also aiming “to distinguish themselves and their movement from fundamentalism” which they saw as anti-intellectual and unwilling to engage the broader culture among other things.⁵⁵ On a phenomenological level, Mohler, drawing from David W. Bebbington’s work, presents four specific dimensions that characterize evangelical beliefs: (1) “conversionism” (i.e., stress upon individual life change), (2) “activism” (i.e.,

⁵³ See especially Wilder and Jones, *The God Who Goes Before You*, 16; and Parks, *Big Questions, Worthy Dreams*, 153-54.

⁵⁴ R. Albert Mohler, Jr. “Confessional Evangelicalism” in *Four Views on the Spectrum of Evangelicalism*, ed. Andrew David Naselli and Collin Hansen (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2011), 70.

⁵⁵ Mohler, “Confessional Evangelicalism,” 72. For an excellent and concise treatment on the historical development of evangelical Christianity within the United States, see Collin Hansen, introduction to *Four Views on the Spectrum of Evangelicalism*, 9-18. For a longer treatment, see Douglas A. Sweeney, *The American Evangelical Story: A History of the Movement* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2005). Carl F. H. Henry, *The Uneasy Conscience of Modern Fundamentalism* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1947).

the need for individuals to engage in behaviors and behaviors consistent with the gospel), (3) “biblicism” (i.e., holding the Bible in high regard), (4) “crucicentrism” (i.e., an emphasis upon Christ’s death on a cross).⁵⁶ In a normative sense, Mohler contends that evangelicals, in contrast to both Protestant liberalism and Roman Catholicism, “seek a conscious convictional continuity” with the theological pronouncements that emerged from the Protestant Reformation, aim to preserve “this faith in the face of reduction or corruption,” and are committed to the global proclamation of the good news about Jesus Christ.⁵⁷ An evangelical, then, for the purposes of this project, is understood as someone whose religious beliefs and practices fall within the evangelical tradition in North America as described by Mohler.⁵⁸ Finally, throughout this work, the term “Christian” refers specifically to an evangelical Christian.

Followership. Mary Uhl-Bien and her colleagues contend that a definition of followership must include the different variables related to follower and leader characteristics, followership and leadership behaviors, and followership outcomes.⁵⁹ Thus, in their view, the formal examination of followership “is *not* the study of leadership from the follower perspective” but “is the study of how followers view and enact following behaviors in relation to leaders.”⁶⁰ Uhl-Bien et al., therefore, define *followership* as “the study of the nature and impact of followers and following in the leadership process” in which followers and leaders are understood as leadership “co-

⁵⁶ Mohler, Jr. “Confessional Evangelicalism,” 73. David W. Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain: A History from the 1730s to the 1980s* (New York: Routledge, 1989).

⁵⁷ Mohler, “Confessional Evangelicalism,” 76-77.

⁵⁸ Simply put, Mohler points out that an evangelical is characterized “by a passion for the gospel of Jesus Christ, by a deep commitment to biblical truth, by a sense of urgency to see lost persons hear the gospel, and by a commitment to personal holiness and the local church.” Mohler, “Confessional Evangelicalism,” 69.

⁵⁹ Uhl-Bien et al., “Followership Theory,” 96-97. In fact, Uhl-Bien and her co-writers maintain that any definition of followership must recognize the importance of context as well as begin with followers rather than leaders given the historic bias toward leaders in the literature (97-99).

⁶⁰ Uhl-Bien et al., “Followership Theory,” 96.

creators” by means of their relational interaction.⁶¹

Imitation. Victor Copan defines the Greco-Roman concept of *imitation* as “the intentional emulation of a person or thing, which functions as a model, pattern and example for another.”⁶² “The basic *purpose* of human imitation was the improvement of the character or the specific skills of an individual (the imitator) through orienting herself on a ‘virtuous’ model. Based on this exemplar, one could observe with all the senses how a virtuous person lived, thereby having a pattern for one’s own life.”⁶³ Pauline imitation entails Paul’s appropriation of the commonly utilized imitative-pedagogy of his day as means to bring about distinctly Christian ends. As Willis de Boer notes, “Paul found in urging the imitation of himself on his readers he was stimulating them in building their Christian lives. He was teaching them the Christian way and helping them to bring Christ to expression their lives.”⁶⁴ In essence, Paul was providing in himself an example of what it meant to follow Christ and live accordingly such that his readers would ultimately imitate Christ themselves.⁶⁵

Leadership. Boaz Shamir describes *leadership* as follows: “By my definition, leadership exists only when an individual (sometimes a pair or a small group) exerts

⁶¹ Boaz Shamir offers a helpful nuance at this point that informs this study as well. He rejects the notion that “leadership” is produced in non-role differentiated “shared leadership” arrangements. Rather, he maintains that leaders and followers play different but nonetheless equally important roles in the co-production of leadership and, ultimately, outcomes. He writes:

Therefore, to explain the phenomenon of leadership in a comprehensive manner, we need a balanced model of leadership that includes both leaders and followers as causal agents. On the one hand, such a model needs to correct the overemphasis on leaders in many current theories of leadership and include the many ways by which followers influence the leadership process. On the other hand, such a model cannot ignore the leader and be totally follower-centered, as thousands of studies have demonstrated the impact of leader characteristics and behaviors on followers’ motivation, attitudes, and performance (Boaz Shamir, “From Passive Recipients to Active Coproducers: Followers’ Role in the Leadership Process,” in *Follower-Centered Perspectives on Leadership: A Tribute to the Memory of James R. Meindl*, ed. Boaz Shamir et al., ix-xxxix [Greenwich, CT: Information Age, 2007], xx).

⁶² Copan, *Saint Paul as Spiritual Director*, 45.

⁶³ Copan, *Saint Paul as Spiritual Director*, 219 (emphasis original).

⁶⁴ de Boer, *The Imitation of Paul*, 213.

⁶⁵ de Boer, *The Imitation of Paul*, 215.

disproportionate noncoercive influence on others, that is, his or her influence on the group or organization is greater than that of the other members There is no leadership without leaders and followers because without leaders and followers a leadership relationship does not exist.”⁶⁶ Leadership, then, emerges from the influence exerted by leaders on followers and also followers on leaders within a relational dynamic.⁶⁷ Parks builds her understanding of emerging-adult leadership around the idea of influence. She distinguishes the exercise of leadership from merely exerting positional authority within an organizational structure and envisions the employment of personal influence for the purposes of solving complex problems.⁶⁸ Specifically, Parks holds that emerging adults can employ this concept of leadership-as-influence wherever and whenever leadership is required because everyone finds himself in a setting that experiences challenges and requires some level of leadership to bring about change.⁶⁹ Leadership, then, can be exercised regardless of organizational position and in various contexts since it is about individuals utilizing influence to mobilize others to address problems.⁷⁰

Mentoring. Old Testament scholar Walter Brueggemann defines *mentoring* as “a relationship between someone of an older generation with more experience providing guidance and counsel for someone in a younger generation.”⁷¹ Parks describes the

⁶⁶ Shamir, “From Passive Recipients to Active Co-Producers,” xviii.

⁶⁷ Shamir, “From Passive Recipients to Active Co-Producers,” xx.

⁶⁸ Parks, *Big Questions, Worthy Dreams*, 154.

⁶⁹ Parks, *Big Questions, Worthy Dreams*, 154.

⁷⁰ Peter Northouse advances a similar understanding of leadership; he defines leadership as “a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal.” Peter Northouse, *Leadership: Theory and Practice*, 8th ed. (Los Angeles: SAGE, 2019), 5.

⁷¹ Walter Brueggemann, “Mentoring in the Old Testament,” in *Mentoring: Biblical, Theological, and Practical Perspectives*, ed. Dean K. Thompson and D. Cameron Murchison (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2018), 7.

phenomenon as “an intentional and appropriately reciprocal relationship between two individuals, a younger adult and an older, wiser figure that assists the younger person in learning the ways of life.”⁷² Laurent Daloz views mentors as “guides” whereby older individuals who have gone before the mentee along the journey of life impart wisdom, provide support, and impart courage.⁷³ Daloz makes a distinction between an individual mentor in a one-on-one relationship with a mentee and “mentoring communities” or a “mentoring environment” (e.g., a school or university where the emphasis lies more on the overall developmental context and setting).⁷⁴ Mentoring in this project builds off the definitions provided by Brueggemann, Parks, and Daloz and is limited to one-on-one mentoring relationships (i.e., a mentor engaging with a mentee) rather than to mentoring communities or environments.

⁷² Parks, *Big Questions, Worthy Dreams*, 177.

⁷³ Laurent A. Daloz, *Mentor: Guiding the Journey of Adult Learners*, 2nd ed. (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2012), 18.

⁷⁴ Daloz, *Mentor*, XXV.

CHAPTER 2

PRECEDENT LITERATURE

In this study, I undertake an examination of the Pastoral Epistles for evidence of Christ-centered followership in order to affirm and then nuance it in light of the imitation motif present within those three New Testament letters. In addition, I consider the implications of a validated and adjusted Christ-centered followership construct for spiritual leadership development efforts among Christian emerging-adult males. Three research questions stand at the center of this project: (1) In what ways, if any, is Christ-centered followership as framed by Wilder and Jones evidenced in the Pastoral Epistles? (2) How does the phenomenon of imitation within the Pastoral Epistles nuance Christ-centered followership? (3) How might Christ-centered followership as demonstrated in and adjusted by the Pastoral Epistles be deployed in the development of Christian emerging-adult men as spiritual leaders?

As a first step in answering these questions, I examine in this chapter the relevant precedent literature related to followership. Furthermore, I review works pertinent to emerging adulthood and emerging-adult male spiritual leadership development. The subsequent material consists of five sections, beginning with a foundational analysis of followership-related literature, which pays special attention to its emergence from within leadership studies and evolving interest in the leader-follower relational dynamic. The second section provides an overview of followership as applied in Christian contexts and integrated into Christian frameworks. The third section presents a review and evaluation of Wilder and Jones's work *The God Who Goes Before You* as they posit Christ-centered followership as a biblical model for pastoral leadership. The fourth section appraises literature addressing emerging adulthood as well as works related

to emerging-adult male spiritual leadership development. This chapter closes by noting a void in the literature base concerning evidence for Christ-centered followership within the Pastoral Epistles and its application to the development of emerging-adult male spiritual leaders.

From Leader-Focused to Followership: A Review of Followership Literature

Followership as a contemporary field of research is most concerned with understanding organizational outcomes as the result of co-productive processes between followers and leaders.¹ Within this framework, leadership describes not what a single person, the leader, does but “a process that is co-created in social and relational interactions between people.”² Organizational and leadership related studies throughout the twentieth and into the twenty-first centuries only slowly and belatedly recognized the importance of the social dynamic between leaders and those they lead.³ In fact, the vast majority of works during that period reflect an axiomatic belief that the sole locus of leadership resided in an individual, the leader.⁴ Thus, the attention of leadership research

¹ Boas Shamir, “From Passive Recipients to Active Coproducers: Followers’ Role in the Leadership Process,” in *Follower-Centered Perspectives on Leadership: A Tribute to the Memory of James R. Meindl*, ed. Boas Shamir et al., ix-xxxix (Greenwich, CT: Information Age, 2007), xix-xi. See also Scott DeRue and Susan J. Ashford, “Who Will Lead and Who Will Follow? A Social Process of Leadership Identity Construction in Organizations,” *Academy of Management Review* 35, no. 4 (2010): 627-47; Gail T. Fairhurst and Mary Uhl-Bien, “Organizational Discourse Analysis (ODA): Examining Leadership as a Relational Process,” *Leadership Quarterly* 23, no. 6 (2012): 1043-62; Gail T. Fairhurst and David Grant, “The Social Construction of Leadership: A Sailing Guide,” *Management Communication Quarterly* 24, no. 2 (2010): 171-210.

² Mary Uhl-Bien et al., “Followership Theory: A Review and Research Agenda,” *Leadership Quarterly* 25, no. 1 (2014): 83.

³ Works by Peter Gronn and Wilfred Drath represent two early examples of efforts to reframe the discussion regarding leadership theory as social and relational in nature. Peter Gronn, “Distributed Properties: A New Architecture for Leadership,” *Educational Management and Administration* 28, no. 3 (2000): 317-38; Wilfred Drath, *The Deep Blue Sea: Rethinking the Source of Leadership* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2001).

⁴ See especially James R. Meindl, Sanford B. Ehrlich, and Janet M. Dukerich, “The Romance of Leadership,” *Administrative Science Quarterly* 30, no. 1 (1985): 78-102. Michael S. Wilder and Timothy Paul Jones note,

Early twentieth-century research in the field of leadership was strongly leader centered. In this era, studies of leadership focused on the leader’s capacity to shape opinions through written and oral

focused squarely upon leaders, their characteristics, and their conduct, while organizational members (i.e., followers or subordinates) were overlooked or viewed merely as passive recipients of a leader's actions.⁵

Contours of Followership Literature Base

Several contemporary researchers have sought to map the evolution from leader-dominated approaches in leadership studies to those emphasizing more and more the nature and roles of followers and ultimately followership. Gary Yukl notes three major perspectives within leadership theory and research: (1) characteristics of leaders, (2) characteristics of followers, and (3) characteristics of situations.⁶ Craig Johnson recognizes a continuum of theories ranging from leader-centric models to follower-centered constructs.⁷ Brian and Joanna Crossman find four conceptual, somewhat overlapping groupings within the leadership and followership literature: (1) individual and leader-centered, (2) leader-centered that recognize follower contributions, (3) multi-

communication as well as through persuasive behavior ("persuasion without coercion"). The "great man" theory of leadership, as well as early situational leadership theories, exemplifies this approach that defines leadership in terms of the acts and characteristics of the leader. (Michael S. Wilder and Timothy Paul Jones, *The God Who Goes Before You: Pastoral Leadership as Christ-Centered Followership* [Nashville: B & H, 2018], 13)

⁵ Shamir, "From Passive Recipients to Active Coproducers," x-iii. For example, as recently as 2014, Kimberley Breevaart et al. noted that the prevailing view continued to be that "followers are often considered passive recipients of transformational leadership." Kimberley Breevaart et al., "Uncovering the Underlying Relationship Between Transformational Leaders and Followers' Task Performance," *Journal of Personnel Psychology* 13, no. 4 (2014): 196. For a similar view, see Edwin Hollander and Lynn Offermann, "Power and Leadership in Organizations: Relationships in Transition," *American Psychologist* 45, no. 2 (1990): 180.

⁶ Gary Yukl, *Leadership in Organizations*, 8th ed. (New York: Pearson, 2013), 10-11.

⁷ Craig E. Johnson notes that leader-centric models typically have three characteristics: (1) they emphasize the traits and behaviors of the leader; (2) they are mainly concerned with the leader's influence upon followers; and (3) they assume that organizational performance and outcomes depend largely on the leader. Follower-centric frameworks place emphasis upon followers, their traits and actions, and how they influence leaders. As might be expected, follower-centered models maintain that organizational performance is largely contingent on followers. Johnson also arranges a number of leader and follower theories on a continuum moving from "Leader Centric" to "Follower Centric." He includes the following models within that paradigm: leader trait theory, transformational and charismatic leadership theory, contingency model, leader-member exchange (LMX) theory, information processing theory, and social identity theory. Craig E. Johnson, "Introducing Followership into the Leadership Classroom: An Integrative Approach," *Journal of Leadership Education* 8, no. 2 (2009): 23.

or share leadership, and (4) followership.⁸ Mary Uhl-Bien and her colleagues assembled to date the most comprehensive taxonomy of the related literature, recognizing five discrete categories: (1) leader-centric, (2) follower-centric, (3) relational view, (4) role-based followership, and (5) constructionist followership.⁹ Najla Alshenaifi acknowledges the outstanding work done by both Johnson and Uhl-Bien et al. and synthesizes their literature analyzes into a taxonomical continuum, with leader-centered and follower-centered models at opposing ends. A category entitled “Relational View” resides in the middle, with some models under that heading sharing more characteristics with either “Leader-Centric” or “Follower-Centric” frames.¹⁰ Michael Wilder and Timothy Jones note a chronological progression in the leadership literature from “leader-centered” to “leader-directed” to “leader-follower focused.”¹¹ For the purposes of this project, I will utilize Uhl-Bien et al.’s classifications as a means of surveying the related leadership and followership literature base.¹²

⁸ Crossman and Crossman summarize their findings as follows: “Leadership and followership literature can be divided into four broad overlapping categories within a fluid continuum: (i) individualized or leader-centric theories; (ii) leader-centered theories which rely on follower perspectives; (iii) multiple leadership which encompasses what is often referred to as shared, distributed or collective leadership, and (iv) the followership literature per se.” Brian Crossman and Joanna Crossman, “Conceptualising Followership—A Review of the Literature,” *Leadership* 7, no. 4 (2011): 484. They point out in a later work, “These clusters are largely based on conceptual rather than chronological distinctions, though they are arguably considered as loose markers of changing perspectives over time. However, the overlapping nature of theories about leadership and followership suggests that chronology, as a lens through which one might view these clusters, is less reliable and compelling than their conceptual distinctions.” Joanna Elizabeth Crossman and Brian Crossman, “Spiritual Followership: Emerging Conceptualizations,” in *The Palgrave Handbook of Workplace Spirituality and Fulfillment*, ed. Gary E. Roberts and Joanna Elizabeth Crossman, 449-71 (Cham, Switzerland: Springer International, 2018), 451.

⁹ Uhl-Bien et al., “Followership Theory,” 85. See especially “Table 1” for their comprehensive and excellent taxonomy of followership and leadership-related theories and concepts. Uhl-Bien et al. make an important distinction between leadership models that may address followers and actual followership theories: “Leader-centric, follower-centric, and relational views all discuss followers but not necessarily followership” (84).

¹⁰ Najla Ibrahim Alshenaifi, “Follower Upward Influence Tactics and Their Relationships with Job Performance Ratings: The Importance of Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) and Leader/Follower Gender Similarity” (PhD diss., University of Southampton, 2016), 17.

¹¹ Wilder and Jones, *The God Who Goes Before You*, 13-14.

¹² Uhl-Bien et al., “Followership Theory,” 85.

Leader-Centric Works

Leader-centric understandings of the leader-follower dynamic view the leader as the primary agent in the relationship and almost exclusively responsible for outcomes.¹³ Within that schema, researchers see followers, if they are considered at all, as receivers or moderators of the leader's initiative and influence.¹⁴ In leader-centric models, followers ("subordinates") have the responsibility of responding to the requests and directives of their leaders, who reside at the summit of the organizational structure and employ their power, utilize their particular set of traits, and act in ways to move subordinates to act in order to accomplish organizational objectives.¹⁵ Leader-centric frameworks have so dominated the field of leadership studies throughout the 1900s that Edwin Hollander quipped that the "frequent focus on the leader as the center of attention and power" is akin to "the sun in our solar system."¹⁶

¹³ Uhl-Bien et al., "Followership Theory," 85. Wilder and Jones state that leader-centered frameworks tended to see everything in the organization as "rising or falling based on the leader's character and competence." Wilder and Jones, *The God Who Goes Before You*, 13.

¹⁴ Shamir, "From Passive Recipients to Active Coproducers," x-iii; Uhl-Bien et al., "Followership Theory," 85. Melissa Carsten, Peter Harms, and Mary Uhl-Bien point out that for centuries, followers have been defined by "obedience, deference, and unthinking submission." Melissa K. Carsten, Peter Harms, and Mary Uhl-Bien, "Exploring Historical Perspectives of Followership: The Need for an Expanded View of Followers and the Follower Role," in *Followership: What Is It and Why Do People Follow?*, ed. Laurent M. Lapierre and Melissa K. Carsten, 3-26 (Bingley, UK: Emerald, 2014), 21.

¹⁵ Uhl-Bien et al., "Followership Theory," 84-5; Alshenaifi, "Follower Upward Influence Tactics," 15. Robert Kelley notes a prevailing stereotype of followers as passive "sheep" and as individuals who are "easily led and manipulated." Robert E. Kelley, *The Power of Followership: How to Create Leaders People Want to Follow, and Followers Who Lead Themselves* (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 27, 37.

Gary Yukl and David VanFleet seem to agree with those who contend that the emphasis on the individual or "heroic" leader results from "a common cultural bias toward explaining experience primarily in terms of the rational actions of people, as opposed to uncontrollable natural forces, actions by supernatural beings, or random events not susceptible to human comprehension." Gary Yukl and David D. VanFleet, "Theory and Research on Leadership in Organizations," in *Handbook of Industrial and Organizational Psychology*, vol. 3, 2nd ed., ed. Marvin D. Dunnette and Leaetta M. Hough, 147-97 (Palo Alto, CA: Consulting Psychologists, 1992): 181. They go on to state, "Research on attributional biases indicates that people tend to exaggerate the importance of leadership as a cause of organizational performance." Nonetheless, leaders do influence and shape their organizations. So, Yukl and Van Fleet conclude, "Thus, an accurate conception of leadership importance appears to lie between the two extremes of heroic leader and impotent figurehead" (182). Their essay provides an excellent summary and evaluation of the various models and schema within a leader-centric framework.

¹⁶ Edwin P. Hollander, "Relating Leadership to Active Followership," in *Reflections on Leadership: Essays Honoring James MacGregor Burns*, ed. Richard Couto, 57-84 (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2007), 58. Frederick Winslow Taylor is often cited as an influential purveyor of a leader-centric framework. Taylor clearly held that managers were more intellectually capable than, or

Trait and behavior approaches. Leader-centric assumptions drove significant interest in the “Great-Man Theory” as well as the exploration and consideration of a leader’s traits and behavior.¹⁷ Johnson observes that a traits approach to understanding leadership focuses “on the personal characteristics, such as personality, motivation, physical appearance and intelligence that qualify individuals for leadership positions.”¹⁸ Trait studies reached their zenith in the late 1940s, though Uhl-Bien et al. suggest a recent resurgence of interest on the part of researchers.¹⁹ Behavioral studies examine how leader actions influence and impact followers toward the realization of goals and tasks. As with traits-oriented research, the focus here remains on the leader undergirded by the assumption that group success largely depends on how the leader acts.²⁰

Contingency approaches. Uhl-Bien et al. and Alshenaifi include contingency as well as charismatic and transformational leadership approaches within the leader-centric category.²¹ Johnson describes contingency models as “based on the premise that a leader’s effectiveness is dependent on (contingent upon) elements of the situation, including followers.”²² While the locus of the model remained squarely on leaders,

even superior to, their employees who were in great need of leadership. For example, in *Shop Management*, Taylor differentiates between the “first class man” and “average” man. Frederick Winslow Taylor, *Shop Management* (New York: Harper, 1912), 183. In *The Principles of Scientific Management*, he notes that the “mentally alert and intelligent” man is ill-suited for working with pig iron, whereas the one best qualified to engage in such a vocation should be “stupid” and “more nearly resembles in his mental make-up the ox than any other type.” Taylor, *The Principles of Scientific Management* (New York: Harper, 1913), 59.

¹⁷ Zakeer Ahmed Khan, Allah Nawaz, and Irfanullah Khan, “Leadership Theories and Styles: A Literature Review,” *Journal of Resources Development and Management* 16 (2016): 1-2.

¹⁸ Johnson, “Introducing Followership into the Leadership Classroom,” 22.

¹⁹ Uhl-Bien et al., “Followership Theory,” 84. See also Lucia Crevani, Monica Lindgren, and Johann Pakendorff, “Shared Leadership: A Postheroic Perspective on Leadership as a Collective Construction,” *International Journal of Leadership Studies* 3, no. 1 (2007): 42-43.

²⁰ Crevani, Lindgren, Pakendorff, “Shared Leadership,” 41-44.

²¹ Uhl-Bien et al., “Followership Theory,” 86; Alshenaifi, “Follower Upward Influence Tactics,” 19-20.

²² Johnson, “Introducing Followership into the Leadership Classroom,” 24.

recognition emerged that a leader's success was reliant, in part at least, on followers. Thus, the leader-follower dynamic, and not just the leader alone, began to attract attention from researchers. As a result, Alshenaifi declares, "A major shift of leadership research occurred in the contingency models."²³

Charismatic approaches. Charismatic leadership theory maintains that leaders can exert significant affective influence upon followers by means of vision articulation, displays of knowledge and confidence, and addressing the needs and fears of followers.²⁴ Yukl notes that charismatic leadership theories have developed significantly since Max Weber used the term to describe interpersonal influence not rooted in tradition or authority but in the leader's unique qualities.²⁵ Today, charismatic leadership theory recognizes specific leader behaviors, the importance of follower perceptions, and the significance of contextual factors.²⁶

Transformational approaches. Bernard Bass and Ronald Riggio assert that transformational leadership has become one of the most studied and popular theories among researchers.²⁷ Within transformational leadership theory, the leader carries the

²³ Alshenaifi, "Follower Upward Influence Tactics," 19.

²⁴ Johnson, "Introducing Followership into the Leadership Classroom," 22. See also Uhl-Bien et al., "Followership Theory," 86; Alshenaifi, "Follower Upward Influence Tactics," 19-20.

²⁵ Yukl, *Leadership in Organizations*, 309-11. See pp. 309-21 for Yukl's overview of charismatic leadership theory and research. For Weber's foundation-laying discussion of charisma and charismatic authority, see Max Weber, *Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretive Sociology* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1968), 1111-57.

²⁶ According to Yukl, "Follower attributions of charisma depend on several types of leader behavior." The leader behaviors Yukl highlights are as follows: (1) novel and appealing vision, (2) emotional appeals to values, (3) unconventional behavior, (4) self-sacrifices, and (5) confidence and optimism. He goes on to note that follower approval as well as fear of disapproval or disappointing the charismatic leader are important motivational variables. Yukl, *Leadership in Organizations*, 308-12. See especially Jay A. Conger and Rabindra N. Kanungo, *Charismatic Leadership in Organizations* (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 1998). Conger and Kanungo provide an excellent presentation of charismatic leadership and discuss in great detail both charismatic leader behaviors and follower attribution of charismatic qualities to said leader. This project places a degree of focus upon followers and not solely leaders.

²⁷ Bernard Bass and Ronald Riggio note, "Transformational leadership has rapidly become the approach of choice for much of the research and application of leadership theory. In many ways, transformational leadership has captured the imagination of scholars, of noted practitioners, and of students

burden to help inspire, motivate, and catalyze positive change within a group such that it realizes its goals.²⁸ In both charismatic and transformational leadership models, the attention largely remains on leaders, their actions, and their initiative, and they also receive any credit or criticism that come as a result of group success or failure.²⁹ As a reaction to the long-standing, leader-centric approach to leadership studies, a number of scholars adopted a more follower-centric framework.

Follower-Centric Works

James Meindl, Sanford Ehrlich, and Janet Dukerich's research, as presented in "The Romance of Leadership" in 1985, directly challenged the leader-centric focus that dominated the literature for decades. They found that "highly romanticized, heroic views of leadership" had developed across society, resulting in the widely accepted view that "leadership is a central organizational process and the premier force in the scheme of organizational events and activities."³⁰ Meindl, Ehrlich, and Dukerich also introduced the concept of leadership as a social construct and laid the groundwork for subsequent works, placing for the first time the focus and emphasis upon followers.³¹ According to Uhl-Bien et al., these follower-centered approaches "arose in response to leader-centric views and

of leadership. Research on transformational leadership and related charismatic approaches has grown exponentially." Bernard M. Bass and Ronald E. Riggio, *Transformational Leadership*, 2nd ed. (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, 2006), xi.

²⁸ Yukl provides an excellent overview of transformational leadership theory and research; see Yukl, *Leadership in Organizations*, 321-28.

²⁹ Johnson, "Introducing Followership into the Leadership Classroom," 22. Uhl-Bien et al. make the following point concerning transformational leadership: "This theory, however, does not particularly recognize the characteristics or initiative of the followers. There is a focus on improving the quality of the leader-follower relationship, but it is still leader-centric in that it falls short of viewing followers in a broader manner." Uhl-Bien et al., "Followership Theory," 86.

³⁰ Meindl, Ehrlich, and Dukerich, "The Romance of Leadership," 75.

³¹ See also two other early and important works by James R. Meindl: "On Leadership: An Alternative to the Conventional Wisdom," *Research in Organizational Behavior* 12 (1990): 159-203, and "The Romance Of Leadership as a Follower-Centric Theory: A Social Constructionist Approach," *Leadership Quarterly* 6, no. 3 (1995): 329-41.

drew attention to the role of the follower in constructing leaders and leadership. They view leadership as a social construction, and leader emergence as generated in the cognitive, attributional, and social identity processes of followers.”³² Follower-centric models tend toward “reversing the lens” and examine the phenomenon of leadership as residing primarily in followers vis-à-vis leaders. Some argue for such an approach as a necessary corrective to the lengthy focus on leaders and the corresponding neglect of followers.³³

Uhl-Bien et al. and Alshenaifi both view implicit leadership and social identity theories as follower-centered models.³⁴ Johnson does as well but understands implicit leadership theory as a subset of information processing theory, which he describes as examining “the cognitive processes that determine the behavior of leaders and followers.”³⁵ Implicit leadership theory represents the initial theoretical move from leader-centric to follower-centric models and posits that followers judge the suitability and effectiveness of leaders on the basis of implicit schema they have developed from previous experiences.³⁶ Understanding these frames provides insight into whether followers will engage with leaders. Within an implicit leadership model, the follower possesses ultimate power in the leadership process.

Johnson notes that social identity theory places the focus of attention almost

³² Uhl-Bien, et al., “Followership Theory,” 86.

³³ Ronald E. Riggio, “Followership Research: Looking Back and Looking Forward,” *Journal of Leadership Education* 13, no. 14 (2014): 15-20.

³⁴ Uhl-Bien et al., “Followership Theory,” 87; Alshenaifi, “Follower Upward Influence Tactics,” 21.

³⁵ Johnson, “Introducing Followership into the Leadership Classroom,” 24.

³⁶ See especially Burak Oc and Michael R. Bashshur, “Followership, Leadership and Social Influence,” *Leadership Quarterly* 24, no. 6 (2013): 919-34; Alshenaifi, “Follower Upward Influence Tactics,” 21; Sara J. Shondrik and Robert G. Lord, “Implicit Leadership and Followership Theories: Dynamic Structures for Leadership Perceptions, Memory and Leader-Follower Processes,” *International Review of Industrial and Organizational Psychology* 25 (2010): 1-33.

completely on followers; thus, he describes this construct as the most follower-centric of the various models.³⁷ This approach is predicated upon the notion that individuals derive a significant degree of their self-identity from their social group.³⁸ In this model, leader effectiveness, therefore, becomes contingent on the degree to which they can modulate their communication and behavior to coincide with follower self-identity and leadership prototypes. If successful, leaders will be able to stimulate and motivate followers to engage in achieving group goals.³⁹

Relational-Oriented Works

An examination of the leadership literature corpus reveals an evolution from leader-centric to follower-centered models.⁴⁰ More recently, a growing number of researchers have produced works that reflect a relational understanding of leadership, though the antecedents of such a view have deep historical roots.⁴¹ Hollander observes that the vast majority of writers on leadership have tended to view leaders' traits as "possessions" instead of "interpersonal links to others involved in shared activities."⁴² Nonetheless, he, among others, recognizes a thread of works stretching back to the 1920s

³⁷ Johnson, "Introducing Followership into the Leadership Classroom," 24.

³⁸ For an excellent treatment of social identity theory, see Michael A. Hogg and Scott A. Reid, "Social Identity, Self-Categorization, and the Communication of Group Norms," *Communication Theory* 16 (2006): 7-30. For another treatment within the context of leadership and followership, see Daan van Knippenberg, Barbara van Knippenberg, and Steffen R. Giessner, "Extending the Follower-Centered Perspective: Leadership as an Outcome of Shared Social Identity," in Shamir et al., *Follower-Centered Perspectives on Leadership*, 51-70.

³⁹ Alshenaifi, "Follower Upward Influence Tactics," 21. Uhl-Bien et al. categorize social identity theory as a follower-centric approach because "prototypical behaviors acceptable to the group create the boundary conditions within which the leader has permission to operate and innovate." Uhl-Bien et al., "Followership Theory," 87. Nonetheless, they suggest that social identity theory shares much in common with relational view works. In that regard, Alshenaifi suggests that social identity theory "tries to bridge" follower-centric and relational views. Alshenaifi, "Follower Upward Influence Tactics," 21.

⁴⁰ Uhl-Bien et al., "Followership Theory," 88-89.

⁴¹ Uhl-Bien et al., "Followership Theory," 88-89. The authors observe, "What is most surprising in this [literature] review is the extent to which leadership scholars have long agreed that leadership is a process occurring in interactions between leaders and followers" (88).

⁴² Hollander, "Relating Leadership to Active Followership," 58.

advancing a relational understanding of leadership.⁴³ In retrospect, one can see how these nascent views gave rise to a growing interest in followers, the leader-follower dynamic, and, ultimately, followership as a field of study in its own right.

Early proponents. In the 1920s, Mary Parker Follett held that it was too simplistic to understand authority and influence in purely hierarchical terms and only flowing from managers down to subordinates.⁴⁴ “Demonstrating insight far ahead of her time,”⁴⁵ Follett recognized that influence could move in the opposite direction as well—from employees to leaders. Furthermore, she maintained that group success resulted much more from positive leader and follower relations than from the ability of leaders to control subordinates.⁴⁶

Chester Barnard, in his 1938 work *The Functions of the Executive*, held that human organizations are best conceptualized as “cooperative systems,” where social and psychological factors influence individual interactions.⁴⁷ In his view, employees maintain

⁴³ Hollander, “Relating Leadership to Active Followership,” 57-58; Hollander, “Organizational Leadership and Followership: The Role of Interpersonal Relations,” in *Social Psychology at Work: Essays in Honour of Michael Argyle*, ed. Peter Collett and Adrian Furnham, 69-87 (New York: Routledge, 1995), 70; Uhl-Bien et al., “Followership Theory,” 87-88; Alshenaifi, “Follower Upward Influence Tactics,” 22.

⁴⁴ Ralph Bathurst and Nanette Monin, “Shaping Leadership for Today: Mary Parker Follett’s Aesthetic,” *Leadership* 6, no. 2 (2010): 115-31. Bathurst and Monin suggest that it is far better to conceive of Follett’s understanding of the flow of power and influence in circular terms, for she conceptualized leadership as cooperative and interpersonal. They write,

For Follett, leadership power is expansive and collaborative, and locating the dynamic inherent in this approach depends on power being located in relationships. Follett’s focus is on the *process* of leadership rather than the ascendancy of a so-called leader who dominates and controls organizational life. She mocks psychological approaches that quantify, test for and train specific leader qualities, especially when those attributes are a cover for what she sees as the abuse of power. (122, emphasis original).

See also Uhl-Bien et al., “Followership Theory,” 88; Pauline Graham, *Mary Parker Follett, Prophet of Management: A Celebration of Writings from the 1920s* (Fredrick, MD: Beard Books, 2003); Mary Parker Follett, *Creative Experience* (New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1930).

⁴⁵ Uhl-Bien et al., “Followership Theory,” 88.

⁴⁶ Alshenaifi, “Follower Upward Influence Tactics,” 22. Uhl-Bien et al. summarize Follett’s argument as follows: “Instead of seeing leaders and followers as those who command and those who obey, we need to understand that authority is an ‘intermingling of forces’ between leaders and followers wherein a self-generating process of control is created.” Uhl-Bien et al., “Followership Theory,” 88.

⁴⁷ Chester I. Barnard, *The Functions of the Executive* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1968). See especially pp. 3-21.

a decisive position within the leader-follower dynamic as subordinates make the determination as to whether an order is authoritative. Followers make such judgments based on whether they understood the directive or whether the directive harmonizes with organizational or personal objectives.⁴⁸ Barnard, like Follett, held that followers play a critical role in organizational outcomes and stressed the relational-social component of the leader-follower dynamic.

Susan Baker, Christopher Mathis, and Susan Stities-Doe recognize Edwin Hollander as an early followership theorist with works on the subject beginning in 1955 and spanning over fifty years.⁴⁹ Significantly, Hollander understood the leader-follower dynamic as characterized by interdependence and reciprocal influence. Furthermore, he held that the leaders and followers ought to be studied together rather than individually.⁵⁰ According to Uhl-Bien et al., Hollander found it problematic when observers failed to differentiate “leadership as a process from the leader as a person who occupies a central role in that process.”⁵¹ Alshenaifi and Uhl-Bien et al. credit Hollander as being one of the first researchers to view the phenomenon of leadership in relational terms.⁵²

James Burns, in the late 1970s, rejected the notion that leadership could be

⁴⁸ Hollander, “Relating Leadership to Active Followership,” 58.

⁴⁹ Susan D. Baker, Christopher J. Mathis, and Susan Stities-Doe, “An Exploratory Study Investigating Leader and Follower Characteristics at U.S. Healthcare Organizations,” *Journal of Managerial Issues* 23, no. 1 (2011): 341-63. Uhl-Bien et al., as well as Alshenaifi, acknowledge Hollander in terms similar to Baker, Mathis, and Stities-Doe. Uhl-Bien et al., “Followership Theory,” 88; Alshenaifi, “Follower Upward Influence Tactics,” 22.

Some of Hollander’s works are as follows: Edwin P. Hollander and Wilse B. Webb, “Leadership, Followership, and Friendship: An Analysis of Peer Nominations,” *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology* 50, no. 2 (1955): 163-67; Hollander, “The Essential Interdependence of Leadership and Followership,” *Current Directions in Psychological Science* 1, no. 2 (1992): 71–5; Hollander, “Leadership, Followership, Self, and Others,” *Leadership Quarterly* 3, no. 1 (1992): 43-54.

⁵⁰ Baker, Mathis, and Stities-Doe, “Investigating Leader and Follower Characteristics,” 343.

⁵¹ Uhl-Bien et al., “Followership Theory,” 88.

⁵² Alshenaifi, “Follower Upward Influence Tactics,” 22; Uhl-Bien et al., “Followership Theory,” 88.

effectively understood apart from considering followers.⁵³ He declared, “One of the most serious failures in the study of leadership has been the bifurcation between the literature on leadership and the literature on followership.”⁵⁴ From his viewpoint, both leader-centered and follower-focused literature failed to appreciate the complex social interplay between leaders and followers. As he put it, “The essence of the leader-follower relation is the interaction of persons with different levels of motivations and power potential, including skill, in pursuit of a common or at least joint purpose.”⁵⁵

Information-processing models. A relational view of leadership recognizes the importance of the leader-member interpersonal relational dynamic and the influence therein to achieving mutual objectives.⁵⁶ Information-processing models seek to explain within those relational contexts the behavioral styles and cognitive frameworks leaders use to influence followers.⁵⁷ Robert Lord and Douglas Brown examined the means by which leaders engage and effect followers. Rejecting a leader-centric approach because it fails to appreciate the mechanisms integral to leadership, they found that leaders can influence follower internal regulatory processes by emphasizing specific values and activating particular dimensions of member self-identity.⁵⁸ Uhl-Bien et al. refer to Lord

⁵³ James MacGregor Burns, *Leadership* (New York: Harper & Row, 1978), 19.

⁵⁴ Burns, *Leadership*, 3.

⁵⁵ Burns, *Leadership*, 19. Other early voices include those of Trudy Heller and Jon Van Til. In their 1982 article, they articulate and consider eighteen leadership and followership propositions many of which are at the center of current research and discussions related to the leader-follower relational dynamic. Some of the propositions they propose and explore are as follows: (1) leadership and followership are linked concepts, neither of which can be comprehended without understanding the other; (2) leadership and followership are best seen as roles in relationship; (3) leadership and followership may be arts in which people can become more highly skilled. Trudy Heller and Jon Van Til, “Leadership and Followership: Some Summary Propositions,” *Journal of Applied Behavioral Science* 18, no. 3 (1982): 405-14.

⁵⁶ Fairhurst and Uhl-Bien, “Organizational Discourse Analysis,” 1043-44.

⁵⁷ Johnson, “Introducing Followership into the Leadership Classroom,” 24.

⁵⁸ Robert G. Lord and Douglas J. Brown, “Leadership, Values, and Subordinate Self-Concepts,” *Leadership Quarterly* 12, no. 2 (2001): 133-52.

and Brown's findings in terms of "connectionist information-processing."⁵⁹ Burak Oc and Michael Bashshur explored and modeled the ways that followers engage and influence leader behavior.⁶⁰

Charismatic models. Charismatic models within the relational view category seek to explain the ways in which charisma is expressed within and impacts the leader-follower dynamic.⁶¹ Katherine Klein and Robert House describe charisma as a "fire" that "ignites followers' energy, commitment, and performance."⁶² They posit that charisma is best viewed as a relational quality between leaders with charismatic qualities and followers attracted to charisma within certain environments. The extent that leaders enjoy charismatic relationships with one or a small number of followers or the entire group has bearing on group performance. Stuart Weierner outlines a theory of charismatic relationships rooted in self-concept theory. He explores follower qualities (e.g., self-

⁵⁹ Uhl-Bien et al., "Followership Theory," 87.

⁶⁰ Oc and Bashshur, "Followership, Leadership, and Social Influence," 919-34.

⁶¹ Charismatic models of leadership are to be differentiated from Christians who identify themselves, or are referred to, as "charismatic" or "charismatics." "Charismatic," when used within discussions of leadership, refers to ways in which a leader's personal charisma influences or impacts the leader-follower relational dynamic. Wayne Grudem provides a helpful description of both Pentecostal and charismatic branches of protestant Christianity, as the two are related:

Pentecostal refers to any denomination or group that traces its historical origin back to the Pentecostal revival that began in the United States in 1901 and that holds to the doctrinal positions (a) that baptism in the Holy Spirit is ordinarily an event subsequent to conversion, and (b) that baptism in the Holy Spirit is made evident by the sign of speaking in tongues, and (c) that all the spiritual gifts mentioned in the New Testament are to be sought and used today. Pentecostal groups usually have their own distinct denominational structures, the most prominent of which is the Assemblies of God. (Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Bible Doctrine* [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994], 763; emphasis original)

Grudem continues,

Charismatic refers to any groups (or people) that trace their historical origin to the charismatic renewal movement of the 1960s and 1970s, seek to practice all the spiritual gifts mentioned in the New Testament (including prophecy, healing, miracles, tongues, interpretation, and distinguishing between spirits), and allow differing viewpoints on whether baptism in the Holy Spirit is subsequent to conversion and whether tongues is a sign of baptism in the Holy Spirit.

Grudem cites the following as the definitive work on those movements: Stanley M. Burgess and Gary B. McGee, eds., *Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1988).

⁶² Katherine J. Klein and Robert J. House, "On Fire: Charismatic Leadership and Levels of Analysis," *Leadership Quarterly* 6, no. 2 (1995): 183-98.

monitoring, self-concept clarity, self-esteem, self-efficacy) as well as situational characteristics (e.g., self-awareness) and concludes that those factors impact the charismatic relationship and charismatic message routinization.⁶³

Alon Shalit, Micha Popper, and Dan Azkay studied, from a psychological perspective, unconscious follower preferences for different leader types.⁶⁴ They discovered that those followers with a secure attachment style prefer unselfish or “socialized” charismatic leaders, while followers with an avoidant style prefer charismatic leaders who tend to be more selfish or “personalized.” Mark Ehrhart and Katherine Klein conducted laboratory experiments in order to examine the ways that followers established charismatic relationships with their leaders (previous research had focused almost exclusively on the characteristics and actions of charismatic leaders and their impact on followers).⁶⁵ They determined that followers with particular values and personality traits were more likely to preference charismatic leaders.⁶⁶

Leader-member exchange theory. Alshenaifi identifies leader-member

⁶³ Stuart J. Weierter, “Who Wants to Play ‘Follow the Leader’? A Theory of Charismatic Relationships Based on Routinized Charisma and Follower Characteristics,” *Leadership Quarterly* 8, no. 2 (1997): 171-94.

⁶⁴ Alon Shalit, Micha Popper, and Dan Zakay, “Followers’ Attachment Styles and Their Preference for Social or for Personal Charismatic Leaders,” *Leadership and Organization Development Journal* 31, no. 5 (2010): 458-72.

⁶⁵ Mark G. Ehrhart and Katherine Klein, “Predicting Followers’ Preferences for Charismatic Leadership: The Influence of Follower Values and Personality,” *Leadership Quarterly* 12, no. 2 (2001): 153-79.

⁶⁶ Specifically, Ehrhart and Klein found that followers who possessed strong worker participation values, as well as those low in security work value, preferred charismatic leaders over other types. Furthermore, followers who value external work reward are more likely to prefer relationship-oriented leaders. Lastly, Ehrhart and Klein learned that those with high security values tended to be attracted to task-oriented leaders. They summarize their research results as follows:

Our findings suggest that followers differ in their preferences for charismatic leadership and that followers’ leadership preferences are predictable—to some extent—on the basis of follower characteristics and especially follower values. Similarity attraction and need fulfillment may both play a part in the relationship between follower characters and leader preference, although based on the predictors that had the strongest relationship with leader preference, need fulfillment appears to be the dominant mechanism of the two. (Ehrhart and Klein, “Followers’ Preferences for Charismatic Leadership,” 173-74).

exchange theory (LMX) as “the predominant approach to the study of relationship in leadership” and as demarcating a definitive shift away from a leader-centric understanding of leadership to a focus on relationship within the leader-follower dynamic.⁶⁷ He credits George Graen’s 1976 chapter in the *Handbook of Industrial and Organizational Psychology* with laying the foundation for LMX.⁶⁸ Graen and Uhl-Bien furthered leader-member exchange theories with two important publications in 1991 and 1995.⁶⁹ In his Ph.D. dissertation, Alshenaifi’s presents his analysis of LMX dimensions in mediating the relationship between followers’ upward influence tactics and job performance ratings.⁷⁰ In addition to Alshenaifi’s work, LMX continues to be utilized as a theoretical construct and research framework.⁷¹

LMX centers on the idea that leadership is a function of transactions or exchanges between leaders and members of the group.⁷² In particular, leader-member exchange modeling aims to explain the ways in which leaders and followers come together to create the types of relationships that contribute to positive organizational

⁶⁷ Alshenaifi, “Follower Upward Influence Tactics,” 23. See also Mary Uhl-Bien, “Relational Leadership Theory: Exploring the Social Processes of Leadership and Organizing,” *Leadership Quarterly* 17, no. 6 (2006): 654-76.

⁶⁸ Alshenaifi, “Follower Upward Influence Tactics,” 23. See also George Graen, “Role-Making Processes within Complex Organizations,” in *Handbook of Industrial and Organizational Psychology*, ed. Marvin D. Dunnette, 1201-45 (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1976).

⁶⁹ George B. Graen and Mary Uhl-Bien, “The Transformation of Professionals into Self-Managing and Partially Self-Designing Contributors: Toward a Theory of Leadership-Making,” *Journal of Management Systems* 3, no. 3 (1991): 25-39; Graen and Uhl-Bien, “Relationship-Based Approach to Leadership: Development of Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) Theory of Leadership over 25 Years: Applying a Multi-Level Multi-Domain Perspective,” *Leadership Quarterly* 6, no. 2 (1995): 219-47. Graen and Uhl-Bien present a summary of the evolution of LMX over a twenty-five-year period. They argue that LMX has moved through four stages of development with different foci and levels of analysis within the leader-follower relationship: (1) vertical dyad linkage, (2) leader-member exchange, (3) leadership-making, and (4) team-making. Graen and Uhl-Bien, “Relationship-Based Approach to Leadership.”

⁷⁰ Alshenaifi, “Follower Upward Influence Tactics,” iii.

⁷¹ See, e.g., Talya N. Bauer and Berrin Erdogan, eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Leader-Member Exchange* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016).

⁷² Uhl-Bien et al., “Followership Theory,” 88.

outcomes.⁷³ For example, Charlotte Gerstner and David Day found, through a meta-analysis of LMX literature, that members who enjoyed relationships with leaders characterized by trust, support, and mutual influence (i.e., high quality relationships or high LMX) tended to be more productive than those who did not.⁷⁴ Nonetheless, Uhl-Bien et al. do not consider LMX to be a true followership theory per se. They explain, “While LMX theory does acknowledge followers in the relational process, it is still more leadership – than followership – focused in that it privileges the leader as the driver of the relationship-building process.”⁷⁵

Relational leadership theory. In a 2006 article, Mary Uhl-Bien describes two important and distinct perspectives, entity and relational, that defined the contours of “relational leadership” and then presents relational leadership theory (RLT) as a means of understanding and advancing the concept.⁷⁶ The entity perspective seeks to identify the qualities, characteristics, perceptions, self-understandings, actions, motives, and expectations of leaders and followers in the context of their relationships with each other.⁷⁷ Leadership occurs when leaders and followers mutually influence each other in order to achieve collective aims. Uhl-Bien suggests that charismatic models, Hollander’s work, and LMX all approach leadership with an entity perspective.⁷⁸

A relational perspective “views leadership as a *process of social construction*

⁷³ Graen and Uhl-Bien state, “The centroid concept of the theory is that effective leadership processes occur when leaders and followers are able to develop mature leadership relationships (partnerships) and thus gain access to the many benefits these relationships bring.” Graen and Uhl-Bien, “Relationship-Based Approach to Leadership,” 225.

⁷⁴ Charlotte Gerstner and David Day, “Meta-Analytic Review of Leader-Member Exchange Theory: Correlates and Construct Issues,” *Journal of Applied Psychology* 82, no. 6 (1997): 827-44.

⁷⁵ Uhl-Bien et al., “Followership Theory,” 88.

⁷⁶ Mary Uhl-Bien, “Relational Leadership Theory: Exploring the Social Processes of Leadership and Organizing,” *Leadership Quarterly* 17, no. 6 (2006): 654-76.

⁷⁷ Uhl-Bien, “Relational Leadership Theory,” 661.

⁷⁸ Uhl-Bien, “Relational Leadership Theory,” 656-57.

through which certain understandings of leadership come about and are given privileged ontology.”⁷⁹ Furthermore, a relational approach shifts the focus away from the individual and onto the “combinations of interacting relations and context.”⁸⁰ While an entity perspective aims to discern the qualities, characteristics, or actions of leaders, the relational perspective aims to understand the communication processes that establish “relational realities.”⁸¹ These perspectives share much in common (e.g., emphasis on relationship, call to separate leadership and management) and complement each other in several ways. Nonetheless, Uhl-Bien points out that the manner in which one would study or practice the findings from each would be different.

Building upon entity and relational perspectives, Uhl-Bien proposes RLT as a model for studying leadership as a “social influence process” that constructs and produces an “evolving social order” and change at the levels of values, attitudes, and ideologies, as well as behaviors and approaches.⁸² As a theoretical construct, RLT seeks to guide researchers in answering the question “What are the relational dynamics by which leadership is developed throughout the workplace?”⁸³ RLT helps investigators look past previous hierarchical and individualistic models of leadership and explore the relational and social processes that result in leadership. In this regard, Uhl-Bien’s

⁷⁹ Uhl-Bien, “Relational Leadership Theory,” 654 (emphasis original). She goes on to further describe a relational perspective in the following terms:

Relational perspectives do not adopt traditional organizational and management language of “structures” and “entities”; instead, they view organizations as elaborate relational networks of changing persons, moving forward together through space and time, in a complex interplay of effects between individual organizational members and the system into which they enter. In this way, organizations change as a result of the “co-ordination” of people’s language and actions in relation to each other *at all levels* and to the ever-changing larger socioeconomic environment. Moreover, power is not a commodity, concentrated within certain individuals, but is distributed throughout the social field. (661-62; emphasis original).

⁸⁰ Uhl-Bien, “Relational Leadership Theory,” 662.

⁸¹ Uhl-Bien, “Relational Leadership Theory,” 664.

⁸² Uhl-Bien, “Relational Leadership Theory,” 654.

⁸³ Uhl-Bien, “Relational Leadership Theory,” 672.

presentation of the entity and relational perspectives, as well as RLT, both summarizes and synthesizes the essences of the relational view literature and provides an important theoretical stepping stone into the followership literature.

Thus, a relational view insists that leadership is not a quality, characteristic, or particular behavior. Instead, as Alshenaifi points out, leadership is “a phenomenon generated through interactions between people in context.”⁸⁴ Despite the dominant leader-centric paradigm within the leadership literature stretching back over a century, individuals such as Follett and Hollander advocated for a more robust appreciation of followers and of leadership that emphasized its relational nature. Information processing, charismatic, and leader-member exchange models have enhanced our insights into the relational dynamics between leaders and followers that result in leadership. Mary Uhl-Bien’s RLT provides an important conceptual bridge between relational-view works and those within the followership corpus. Up to this point, I have reviewed leader-centric, follower-centric, and relation-view works as they relate to the leader-follower dynamic, followership, and my ultimate interest, Christ-centered followership. Now, I will consider a number of key works within the followership corpus.

Followership Works

Researchers working within the emerging field of followership maintain, despite the historical bias toward leaders, that accurate insights into leading and leadership will elude us should we fail to consider followers and followership.⁸⁵ Uhl-Bien et al. provide a helpful summation of followership theory that will serve as this project’s working definition of the term: Followership is “the study of the nature and impact of followers and following in the leadership process.”⁸⁶ Building upon follower-centric

⁸⁴ Alshenaifi, “Follower Upward Influence Tactics,” 26.

⁸⁵ Uhl-Bien et al., “Followership Theory,” 89.

⁸⁶ Uhl-Bien et al., “Followership Theory,” 84. For example, Oc and Bashshur demonstrate the

works, followership researchers move beyond them.⁸⁷ In particular, the literature over the past thirty years demonstrates two streams of exploration: (1) consideration of followers and following behaviors within hierarchical structures (i.e. a role-based approach that is similar to yet expands upon follower-centric works) and (2) investigation into how followers relate to leaders to “co-construct” leadership and organizational outcomes (i.e., a constructionist approach that is largely unique to followership).⁸⁸ Therefore, I will review the followership literature according to role-based and constructionist approaches.

Robert Kelley’s 1988 article, “In Praise of Followers,” in *Harvard Business Review* drew attention to followers and followership unlike any antecedent work.⁸⁹ He argues that despite significant neglect, followers, just as much as leaders, contribute to organizational success. Kelley laments the historic focus upon leaders that continued to exclude consideration of followers and their roles in organizations. He distinguishes between “effective” and “ineffective followers” within a simple matrix indicating whether or not they are passive or active (the horizontal axis) and independent, critical thinkers or dependent, uncritical thinkers (the vertical axis). His five follower types are as follows: (1) sheep (dependent and passive); (2) yes-person (dependent and active); (3) alienated (independent and passive); (4) star followers (independence and active); and (5) pragmatics (the intersection of both axes).⁹⁰

significant ways that followers do in fact influence leaders and substantively contribute to the leader-follower dynamic. Oc and Bashshur, “Followership, Leadership and Social Influence.”

⁸⁷ Alshenaifi helpfully describes followership literature in relation to follower-centric works: “Followership is a relatively new stream of leadership research that employs a similar follower-centered view, but that also expands the focus to include follower decisions, behaviours and attitudes to actively influence leaders and organizational outcomes.” Alshenaifi, “Follower Upward Influence Tactics,” 31.

⁸⁸ Uhl-Bien et al., “Followership Theory,” 84.

⁸⁹ Robert Kelley, “In Praise of Followers,” *Harvard Business Review* 66, no. 6 (1988): 142-48. In his 1992 book, Kelley made a similar but expanded argument. Both works helped lay the foundation for what has become today followership and followership studies. Kelley, *The Power of Followership* (New York: Currency Doubleday, 1992). See also Kelley, “Rethinking Followership,” in *The Art of Followership: How Great Leaders Are Creating Great Followers*, ed. Ronald Riggio, Ira Chaleff, and Jean Lipman-Blumen (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2008), 5-16.

⁹⁰ Kelley’s work prompted Andrew Brown and W. T. Thornborrow to construct a research

Role-based approaches. While Kelley's work fits squarely within a role-based approach and made use of a follower typology, others prior to him sought to draw attention to followers as well and similarly employed typologies as a means to categorize their characteristics and styles.⁹¹ For example, Abraham Zaleznik's "The Dynamics of Subordinacy," published in 1965, utilized a simple matrix constructed with dominance-submission and activity-passivity axes describing followers as impulsive, compulsive, masochistic, and withdrawn.⁹² He aimed to help leaders better understand and lead their followers. In a subsequent book, *Power and the Corporate Mind*, Zaleznik, along with co-author Manfred F. R. Kets de Vries, argued that leaders who understood the make up and motivation of their followers would benefit their organizations.⁹³ Steger, Manners, and Zimmerer presented another early (i.e., pre-Kelley) follower typology in 1982.⁹⁴ They identified nine follower types: apathetic, bureaucrat, game player, donkey, kamikaze, deviant, artist, achiever and super follower.

Ira Chaleff's 1995 *The Courageous Follower* and Barbara Kellerman's 2008

instrument (i.e., a questionnaire) that they deployed in a study to determine what follower characteristics and behaviors were most sought after and those that were viewed most negatively. Through their survey of employees in three British companies, they found that the follower qualities of reliability, initiative, trustworthiness were rated as most desirable by respondents, while unreliability, untrustworthiness, uncooperativeness were rated as least desirable. They also found that a large majority of respondents believed that individuals can be taught to follow and to reject the assertion that followers are born, not made. Andrew D. Brown and W. T. Thornborrow, "Do Organizations Get the Followers They Deserve?," *Leadership and Organizational Development Journal* 17, no. 1 (1996): 5-11.

⁹¹ Alshenaifi synthesizes eleven follower typologies into an easily accessible and informative chart. See Alshenaifi, "Follower Upward Influence Tactics," 43 ("Table 1. Followership Typologies").

⁹² Abraham Zaleznik, "The Dynamics of Subordinacy," *Harvard Business Review* 43, no. 3 (1965): 119-31.

⁹³ Abraham Zaleznik and Manfred F. R. Kets de Vries, *Power and the Corporate Mind* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1975). See also Uhl-Bien et al., "Followership Theory," 90; Barbara Kellerman, "What Every Leader Needs to Know about Followers," *Harvard Business Review* 85, no. 12 (2007): 3.

⁹⁴ Joseph A. Steger, G. E. Manners, and Thomas W. Zimmerer, "How to Link Management Style to Subordinate Personalities," *Management Review* 71, no. 10 (1982): 22-31. Susan Baker contends that Steger, Manners, and Zimmerer were some of the first researchers to consider both follower traits and behaviors. Susan D. Baker, "Followership: Theoretical Foundation of a Contemporary Construct," *Journal of Leadership and Organizational Studies* 14, no. 1 (2007): 50-60.

Followership deserve mention as their volumes are often cited in the years after Kelly's initial work, and each present follower schemas from a role-based perspective.⁹⁵ Chaleff maintained that leaders require the intentional and energetic support of followers to aid them in realizing organizational goals and as a check on unwise or even abusive uses of their power.⁹⁶ Hence, followers need to be courageous. Courageous followers, he says, "stand up to and for leaders" by assuming responsibility for themselves and the organization, serving the leader, challenging the leader appropriately and when necessary, taking moral action, and speaking to hierarchy. Chaleff creates a four-quadrant typology that emphasizes the follower's level of support for and challenge of the leader: (1) resource (low support and low challenge); (2) individualist (low support and high challenge); (3) implementer (high support and low challenge); and (4) partner (high support and high challenge).

Kellerman posits a simple, single-axis typology that measures what for her amounts to the most important characteristic of followers—their level of engagement. Her scale moves from those with the lowest level of engagement, isolates, up through four other categories that often link the degree of individual emotional intensity to some sort of behavior or expression of engagement. For example, isolates feel and do "absolutely nothing."⁹⁷ However, diehards, those followers with the highest level of engagement, feel deep devotion to their leaders and causes such that they are willing to die should the need arise. Kellerman presents her five follower types as isolate, bystander, participant, activist, and diehard.

Angela Thody, Boas Shamir, and David Collinson also put forward their own

⁹⁵ Ira Chaleff, *The Courageous Follower: Standing up to and for Our Leaders* (San Francisco: Barrett-Koehler, 1995). A third edition was released in 2009. Kellerman, *Followership*.

⁹⁶ Chaleff, *The Courageous Follower*, 3-4.

⁹⁷ Kellerman, *Followership*, 85.

follower typologies. Thody, writing in 2003 and seeking to apply followership theory in an educational context, divides followers into two broad groups, positive and negative.⁹⁸ Within the positive category she identified several follower types: active-passives, entrepreneurs, independents, exemplary, loyalist, interdependent, and transactional. Negative followers types include alienates, isolates, dependents, passives, observers, reluctant-resistive, sheep, plateaued, Machiavellians, survivors, and yes-people. Shamir's entry in the 2004 *Encyclopedia of Leadership*, "Motivation of Followers," begins by posing the question, "Why do people follow leaders?"⁹⁹ He answers by placing followers into five different motivational categories: (1) position based, (2) calculated, (3) safety-based, (4) meaning based, and (5) identity based.¹⁰⁰ David Collinson in his 2006 article, "Rethinking Followership: A Post-Structuralist Analysis of Follower Identities," considered follower identity formation within organizational contexts.¹⁰¹ Drawing from a Foucauldian framework, he argues that different followership identities emerge as a response to particular environmental stimuli. For example, the resistant self emerges in higher control situations expressed in negative attitudes and actions toward the leader. He also discusses the conformist and dramaturgical selves and suggests other identities are possible.¹⁰²

⁹⁸ Angela Thody, "Followership in Educational Organizations: A Pilot Mapping of the Territory," *Leadership and Policy in Schools* 2, no. 2 (2003): 141-56.

⁹⁹ Boas Shamir, "Motivation of Followers," in *Encyclopedia of Leadership*, ed. George R. Goethals, Georgia Sorenson, and James M. Burns (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 2004), 499-504.

¹⁰⁰ Position based followers "are motivated to accept the leader's influence simply because of the leader's position in some social institution." Shamir, "Motivation of Followers." 499. Calculated followers follow leaders because they believe leaders will help them achieve their own goals, and safety-based persons follow to satiate their need for security. Meaning-based followership arises from a desire to bring meaning and order to a person's life, while identity-based followers follow a strong, magnetic individual in order to validate or enhance their own sense of self.

¹⁰¹ David Collinson, "Rethinking Followership: A Post-Structuralist Analysis of Follower Identities," *Leadership Quarterly* 17, no. 2 (2006): 179-89.

¹⁰² The conformist self expresses itself by means of self-discipline in light of corporate culture, performance assessments, and emerging technologies, and it is grounded in Michel Foucault's notion that surveillance gives rise to the disciplined identity. The dramaturgical self leverages employer monitoring and performance measuring pressures toward one's own benefit. As Collinson notes,

Lipman-Blumen, Howell and Mendez, and C. Clifford Defee and his colleagues produced other notable follower typologies in the first decade of the 2000s.¹⁰³ Jean Lipman-Blumen's 2005 study considers three dysfunctional follower types that actually support and even enable toxic leaders: (1) benign, (2) the leader's entourage, and (3) malevolent.¹⁰⁴ John Howell and Maria Mendez examine the ways various follower role orientations impact the leader-follower relational dynamic.¹⁰⁵ They present three follower role types and their affect (some positive and some negative) upon the leader-follower relationship: (1) interactive role, (2) independent role, and (3) shifting role.¹⁰⁶ Defee et al. considers followership within the study of logistics in their 2009 article, "The Role of Followers in Supply Chains."¹⁰⁷ They argue that the transformational-transactional paradigm commonly employed in leadership studies is easily utilized with respect to followers in order to discern different following styles. For the purposes of

In so far as monitoring tends to intensify individuals' self-consciousness, followers can become skilled choreographers of their own practices, learning over time to be more self consciously strategic in response to "the gaze." Dramaturgical selves may be conformist, resistant or, more typically, a mixture of both. As Kondo argues, employees often consent, cope, and resist, at different levels of consciousness at a single point in time. (Collinson, "Rethinking Followership," 185-86)

¹⁰³ Jean Lipman-Blumen, "Toxic Leadership: When Grand Illusions Masquerade as Noble Visions," *Leader to Leader* 2005, no. 36 (2005): 29-36.

¹⁰⁴ Benign followers, according to Lipman-Blumen, unquestioningly abide toxic leaders due to naivety and pragmatic reasons (e.g., a desire to maintain their employment). The leader's entourage are deeply devoted to the leader's agenda (Lipman-Blumen, "Toxic Leadership") and, as Uhl-Bien et al. put it, serve as the toxic leader's "alter ego." Malevolent followers resist or work against the leader out of greed or competitiveness, and in some cases, they actually desire to become the leader. Uhl-Bien et al., "Followership Theory," 91.

¹⁰⁵ John Howell and Maria Mendez, "Three Perspectives on Followership," in Riggio, Chaleff, and Lipman-Blumen, *The Art of Followership*, 25-40.

¹⁰⁶ Uhl-Bien et al. summarize Howell and Mendez's three-fold typology in the following terms: (1) The follower-interactive-role orientation is supportive and complementary with respect to the leadership role. (2) The independent role is often expressed in career fields such as medicine, higher education, and engineering and involves significant amounts of autonomy. In positive situations, this orientation, like the interactive one, can also enhance the leader-follower dynamic. However, in negative situations, the follower and leader can work cross-purposes. (3) The follower-shifting-role orientation involves the individuals' alternating between a follower and a leader orientation. Uhl-Bien et al., "Followership Theory," 91.

¹⁰⁷ C. Clifford Defee et al., "The Role of Followers in Supply Chains," *Journal of Business Logistics* 30, no. 2 (2009): 65-84.

their study they personified supply chain organizations and categorized them as supply chain leaders and follower organizations. They conclude that transformational supply chain followers tended toward critical analysis, to seek an expanded scope of responsibility, to support supply chain leaders, and to embrace change. On the other hand, Defee et al. found transactional followers tended toward directed thinking, sought to stay within their current scope of responsibility, were more likely to focus on their own goals rather than broader group goals, and self-oriented in decision-making.¹⁰⁸ Taken as a whole, the above taxonomies provide greater insight into followers and followership and make up a significant part of the role-based followership literature by categorizing follower characteristics and styles.

Constructionist approach. As noted earlier, role-based followership works focus upon follower orientations, styles, and behaviors usually within hierarchical organizations and social structures. A constructionist outlook shares an interest in follower characteristics and behaviors but as just one domain of three: follower, leader, and relationship.¹⁰⁹ Constructionist researchers operating from a followership framework explore how a leader with her characteristics and traits comes together with a follower and her characteristics and traits within a leadership relationship. They also recognize that those “relational interactions do not necessarily align with formal hierarchical roles.”¹¹⁰ As consequences and outcomes are produced from that relationship, followers and leaders can be said to be “co-constructors” or producers of leadership.¹¹¹ Thus, drawing

¹⁰⁸ Defee et al., “The Role of Followers in Supply Chains,” “Table 1. Transformational versus Transactional Supply Chain Followers.” The table follows the text of the article and precedes the bibliography; no pagination is provided.

¹⁰⁹ Shamir, “From Passive Recipients to Active Co-Producers,” xix. See also Graen and Uhl-Bien, “Relationship-Based Approach to Leadership,” 221.

¹¹⁰ Uhl-Bien et al., “Followership Theory,” 94.

¹¹¹ Shamir, “From Passive Recipients to Active Co-Producers,” xx. Uhl-Bien et al. utilize the terms “co-create” and “co-producing” synonymously. Uhl-Bien et al., “Followership Theory,” 94. However, Uhl-Bien et al. point out that Shamir (“From Passive Recipients to Active Co-Producers”) adopts

from Gail Fairhurst and David Grant, co-constructed leadership can be formally described as “a product of sociohistorical and collective meaning making, and negotiated on an ongoing basis through a complex interplay among leadership actors, be they designated or emergent leaders, managers, and/or followers.”¹¹²

Gail Fairhurst and Mary Uhl-Bien, recognizing the relational foundation of the leadership process, employ organizational discourse analysis (ODA) as a means to better appreciate the co-created outcomes of that relationship.¹¹³ Specifically, discourse analysis focuses on the communication dynamics within interpersonal interaction. In this case, Fairhurst and Uhl-Bien explore the ways in which leaders and followers employ and react to various relational and communicative “moves” and create or fail to create leadership. Utilizing discourse analysis as a means to study the communicative and relational dynamics of leadership co-creation offers the promise of further insights in the future.

A constructionist approach to followership also acknowledges that leaders influence followers and followers influence leaders within this relationship and that the nature and aspect of the influence dynamic is multifaceted.¹¹⁴ In an important contribution, D. Scott DeRue and Susan Ashford argue that this leadership relationship “is composed of reciprocal and mutually reinforcing identities as leaders and followers, is endorsed and reinforced within a broader organizational context, and is dynamic over

a relational constructionist approach grounded in leader-member exchange theory; they refer to his approach as “co-production.”

¹¹² Fairhurst and Grant, “The Social Construction of Leadership,” 172.

¹¹³ See Fairhurst and Uhl-Bien, “Organizational Discourse Analysis,” 1043-62. In addition, see Fairhurst’s earlier works on discursive leadership where attention is directed at the relational and linguistic processes that make up leadership: Gail T. Fairhurst, *Discursive Leadership: In Conversation with Leadership Psychology* (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 2008) and Fairhurst, “Discursive Leadership: A Communication Alternative to Leadership Psychology,” *Management Communication Quarterly* 21, no. 4 (2008): 510-21.

¹¹⁴ Shamir notes that relative to leader influence on followers, follower influence on leaders has been studied only minimally. Shamir, “From Passive Recipients to Active Co Producers,” xx, xxviii-ix.

time.”¹¹⁵ Through identity “claiming” and “granting” as well as “internalization” processes within their relationships, leaders and followers together construct leadership. In situations where identity claims and grants are not supported within the leader-follower relationship, then leadership and followership are not constructed. So, follower and leader identity is significantly influenced by the relational partner and in turn meaningfully shapes the leadership and followership outcomes.

Stefan Sveningsson and Mats Alvesson note that identity “is one of the most popular topics in contemporary organization studies.”¹¹⁶ Olga Epitropaki and her fellow researchers state, “Understanding how leaders and followers see and define themselves, as well as understanding the complex ways in which these self-definitions develop, change, and are influenced by leader follower interactions and contexts, is an important piece of the leadership puzzle that can offer us unique insights on the drivers of leader and follower behaviors and actions.”¹¹⁷ They, too, observe the growing interest in better appreciating the leader-follower identity formation dynamic and found over 219 related articles with one-hundred fifty published within the previous ten years.¹¹⁸ With the number of conceptual papers far outpacing empirical studies, Epitropaki et al. suggest that this field of investigation has potential to garner greater attention in the coming years.¹¹⁹

Followership Defined

Writing in 2011, Crossman and Crossman note that in a review of thirty

¹¹⁵ DeRue and Ashford, “Who Will Lead and Who Will Follow?” 627.

¹¹⁶ Stefan Sveningsson and Mats Alvesson, “Managing Managerial Identities: Organizational Fragmentation, Discourse and Identity Struggle,” *Human Relations* 56, no. 10 (2003): 1163.

¹¹⁷ Olga Epitropaki et al., “Leadership and Followership Identity Processes: A Multilevel Review,” *Leadership Quarterly* 28, no. 1 (2017): 104.

¹¹⁸ Epitropaki et al., “Leadership and Followership Identity Processes,” 105.

¹¹⁹ Epitropaki et al., “Leadership and Followership Identity Processes,” 124-25.

different works on followership only five advanced a specific definition and most had different conceptual starting points.¹²⁰ Early attempts to define followership tended to be leader-centered.¹²¹ More recent definitions take a more balanced approach equally emphasizing leaders, followers, and their relationship.¹²² Crossman and Crossman as well as Alshenaifi embrace Carsten et al.'s definition of followership: "Followership is a relational role in which followers have the ability to influence leaders and contribute to the improvement and attainment of group and organizational objectives. It is primarily a hierarchically upwards influence."¹²³

Uhl-Bien et al. after their extensive followership literature review suggest that a formal definition of followership must take into account the various variables related to follower and leader characteristics, followership and leadership behaviors, and followership outcomes.¹²⁴ They also point out that the development of a formal definition of followership should recognize the importance of context as well as start with followers rather than leaders given the "ambiguity" of the followership role and historic bias toward leaders in the literature.¹²⁵ They caution that followership theory "is *not* the study

¹²⁰ Crossman and Crossman, "Conceptualizing Followership," 482-83.

¹²¹ Crossman and Crossman, "Conceptualizing Followership," 482-83. The authors cite the following works as examples: Hollander and Webb, "Leadership, Followership, and Friendship," 155; Patrick Townsend and Joan E. Gebhart, *Five Star Leadership: The Art and Strategy of Creating Leaders at Every Level* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1997), 52; Kent Bjugstad et al., "A Fresh Look at Followership: A Model for Matching Followership and Leadership Style," *Journal of Behavioral and Applied Management* 7, no. 3 (2006), 304. For example, Bjugstan et al. provide the following definition that Crossman and Crossman also include in their article: "Followership may be defined as the ability to effectively follow the directives and support the efforts of a leader to maximize a structured organization." Bjugstan et al., "A Fresh Look at Followership," 304, quoted in Crossman and Crossman, "Conceptualizing Followership," 483.

¹²² Crossman and Crossman, "Conceptualizing Followership," 483-84.

¹²³ Melissa K. Carsten et al., "Exploring Social Constructions of Followership: A Qualitative Study," *Leadership Quarterly* 21, no. 3 (2010): 559. See also Crossman and Crossman, "Conceptualizing Followership," 484; Alshenaifi, "Follower Upward Influence Tactics," 36. Alshenaifi provides a helpful and concise description of followership: "an active role played by followers in shaping the interdependency of leader/follower interactions" (33).

¹²⁴ Uhl-Bien et al., "Followership Theory," 96-97.

¹²⁵ Uhl-Bien et al., "Followership Theory," 97-99.

of leadership from the follower perspective” but “is the study of how followers view and enact following behaviors in relation to leaders.”¹²⁶ Uhl-Bien and her colleagues avoid slipping into a follower-centric view of followership by emphasizing that followers and leaders are leadership co-creators by means of their relational interaction.¹²⁷ Thus, they define followership as “the study of the nature and impact of followers and following in the leadership process.”¹²⁸

Followership Applied in Different Vocational Contexts

As the discipline of followership matured over the past thirty years, researchers recently sought to bring its conceptual frameworks to bear upon specific vocational fields.¹²⁹ *Followership in Action* represents the most recent and comprehensive attempt at such an effort.¹³⁰ Within the book’s twenty-five chapters, one finds a case study approach whereby specific scenarios from various firms or industries (e.g., business, education, the arts, government, and military) are recounted and then analyzed by means of followership concepts and frameworks. The authors seek to engage the reader in actually applying

¹²⁶ Uhl-Bien et al., “Followership Theory,” 96.

¹²⁷ Shamir offers this helpful insight:

Therefore, to explain the phenomenon of leadership in a comprehensive manner, we need a balanced model of leadership that includes both leaders and followers as causal agents. On the one hand, such a model needs to correct the overemphasis on leaders in many current theories of leadership and include the many ways by which followers influence the leadership process. On the other hand, such a model cannot ignore the leader and be totally follower-centered, as thousands of studies have demonstrated the impact of leader characteristics and behaviors on followers’ motivation, attitudes, and performance. (Shamir, “From Passive Recipients to Active Co-Producers,” xx)

¹²⁸ Uhl-Bien et al., “Followership Theory,” 96.

¹²⁹ *The Art of Followership* (ed. Riggio, Chaleff, and Lipman-Blumen), published in 2008, exemplifies one such work in that among numerous conceptual chapters, a handful consider followership concepts within specific professions or industries (e.g., education and professional services). In addition, Tom Atchison’s *Followership: A Practical Guide to Aligning Leaders and Followers* (Chicago: Health Administration Press, 2004), attempts to consider leadership and followership at a conceptual level and draw out implications for the healthcare industry.

¹³⁰ Rob Koonce et al., eds., *Followership in Action: Cases and Commentaries* (Bingley, UK: Emerald, 2016).

followership schema and principles by means of discussion questions at each chapter's conclusion.¹³¹ In this way, *Followership in Action* aims to move from theory to practice across a number of specific industrial fields eschewing a solely descriptive approach.

Medicine and healthcare. Other efforts to relate followership concepts to different vocational contexts tend to be singularly focused and shorter in nature. For example, Andrew Gibbons and Danielle Bryant provide a brief article for British physicians introducing the basic concepts of followership while also advocating for each doctor to be a “good follower.” They utilize Kelly’s original typology in what amounts to a traits-based approach.¹³² Hester Mannion, Helen O’Sullivan, and Judy Mckimm consider how followership along with social identity and influence theories might enhance the ability of healthcare leaders, followers, and teams to provide the highest levels of care.¹³³ They approach their project from a constructionist framework and discuss unique aspects of British healthcare culture that could make adaptation of such an outlook difficult. Furthermore, Mannion and her colleagues conclude that “raising awareness of the relational nature of leadership and followership and the influence followers have on leaders can help leaders adapt and develop new ways of working in complex systems and organizations.”¹³⁴

¹³¹ In the introduction and first chapter, Rob Koonce, lead editor and contributing author, acknowledges that followership as a conceptual framework entails understanding how followers and following impacts the leader-follower relationship, generative processes, and organizational outcomes. Authors throughout the volume utilize such a construct. Rob Koonce et al., *Followership in Action*.

¹³² Andrew Gibbons and Danielle Bryant, “Followership: The Forgotten Part of Doctor’s Leadership,” *BMJ* 345, no. 6715 (2012), <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmj.e6715>.

¹³³ Hester Mannion, Helen O’Sullivan, and Judy Mckimm, “Followership, Clinical Leadership and Social Identity,” *British Journal of Hospital Medicine* 76, no. 5 (2015): 270-74.

¹³⁴ Mannion, O’Sullivan, and Mckimm, “Followership, Clinical Leadership and Social Identity,” 274. Other notable efforts to apply followership theory to the medical and health professions are as follows: Atchison, *Followership*; Joy Whitlock, “The Value of Active Followership,” *Nursing Management* 20, no. 2 (2013): 20-23; Lisi J. Gordon et al., “Dimensions, Discourses and Differences: Trainees Conceptualising Health Care Leadership and Followership,” *Medical Education* 49, no. 12 (2015): 1248-62.

Education. Within education, Krista Kleiner decries the almost singular emphasis upon individualistic leadership by colleges and universities throughout the admissions process and in their overall educational approach.¹³⁵ She contends that a greater focus on followership traits within the application process and follower development as part of a school's curricula would actually foster greater student collaboration and, as a result, enhanced learning and long-term development.¹³⁶ Carolyn Crippen utilizes Kelly's follower framework to inform an empirical study that explores how to enhance the leadership-followership relationships at all levels within schools.¹³⁷

Vaughan Cruickshank considers the leader-follower dynamic, in this case the principal-teacher relationship in primary school contexts, and utilizes both a traits and relational-based approach to make specific recommendations after consideration of two case studies.¹³⁸ Informed by Kelly's taxonomy as well as other followership research (e.g., Oc and Bashshur, Bjugstad, and Shamir), Cruickshank suggests that schools provide followership training, especially with respect to "followership styles, behaviors, and motivations," as part of their regular leadership development processes. He also calls upon schools to adopt "a balanced approach which views both leaders and followers as co-producers of leadership and its outcomes."¹³⁹

¹³⁵ Krista Kleiner, "Rethinking Leadership and Followership: A Student's Perspective," in Riggio, Chaleff, and Lipman-Blumen, *The Art of Followership*, 89-94.

¹³⁶ For example, as part of the admissions process, Kleiner advocates requiring essay responses to followership-related questions: (1) "How have you contributed to the learning experiences of your peers through your leadership-followership role in the classroom? (2) How did you grow as both a constructive leader and a constructive follower through these experiences?" She also suggests that colleges and universities develop followership-informed criteria for student classroom participation. Kleiner, "Rethinking Leadership and Followership," 91-92.

¹³⁷ Carolyn Crippen, "Enhancing Authentic Leadership-Followership: Strengthening School Relationships," *Management in Education* 26, no. 4 (2012): 192-98.

¹³⁸ Vaughan Cruickshank, "Followership in the School Context," *Open Journal of Leadership* 6, no. 3 (2017): 95-103.

¹³⁹ Cruickshank, "Followership in the School Context," 102.

The armed forces. A number of researchers have demonstrated interest in applying followership schema within branches of the U.S. military. For instance, Sharon Latour and Vicki Rast advance a follower development model informed by Kelly’s positive follower traits and competencies, Schein’s culture formation schema, and Goleman’s leader competencies.¹⁴⁰ They identify a number of “complementary” and “overlapping” follower and leader competencies and emphasize that deliberate leader attention to follower development and mentoring presents the potential for improving the ranks of the U.S. Air Force. Paul Berg draws from both Kelly’s follower typology as presented in *The Art of Followership* and Chaleff’s courageous follower framework to advocate for a new approach to subordinate follower development within the U.S. Army.¹⁴¹ He views enhanced followership training emphasizing specific follower traits (i.e., proactivity, critical thinking, and courage) as one component of a comprehensive effort to check ethical decline among senior ranks. According to Berg, lower ranking officers and enlisted personnel well-equipped in Kelly and Chaleff’s followership concepts will more likely “use professional dissent to challenge their leaders’ [unethical] decisions.”¹⁴²

Academics and practitioners equipped with followership models and a growing body of research data (albeit still relatively small) have employed in increasing numbers findings for the benefit of specific fields of study and positive impact within different industries and professions.¹⁴³ This subset of the literature base is dominated by the

¹⁴⁰ Sharon M. Latour and Vicki J. Rast, “Dynamic Followership: The Prerequisite for Effective Leadership,” *Air and Space Power Journal* 18, no. 4 (2004): 102-10.

¹⁴¹ Paul Berg, “The Importance of Teaching Followership in Professional Military Education,” *Aviation Digest* 3, no. 2 (2015): 28-31.

¹⁴² Berg, “Teaching Followership in Military Education,” 30. Another notable effort to apply followership-related concepts within military contexts is Richard L. Miller, Jeanne Butler, and Charles J. Cosentino, “Followership Effectiveness: An Extension of Fiedler’s Contingency Model,” *Leadership and Organizational Development Journal* 25, no. 4 (2004): 362-68.

¹⁴³ See, e.g., vis-à-vis political science, Niklas K. Steffens et al., “Our Followers Are Lions, Theirs Are Sheep,” *Political Psychology* 39, no. 1 (2016): 23-42 (vis-à-vis political science); vis-à-vis

employment of a follower trait-based approach with Robert Kelley's 1988 schema by far the most frequently referenced typology. Nonetheless, a small but growing number of works utilize a constructionist framework and seek to better understand the leader-follower dynamic and the co-production of leadership by followers and leaders within a given field. Now, I will survey the literature that aims to employ followership-related constructs and research in specifically Christian settings.

Followership Applied to Spiritual and Christian Contexts

Having reviewed the broader followership literature base, I consider those works that aim to bring followership constructs to bear in discussions related to spirituality and in Christian contexts. As indicated above, the maturation of followership's theoretical and empirical underpinnings has encouraged researchers to investigate various vocational fields and disciplines utilizing a followership framework. An increasing number of articles, dissertations, and books suggest a growing interest in examining spirituality, local church ministry, and Christian leadership utilizing the unique set of conceptual tools that undergird followership theories.

Followership Applied to Spirituality at Work

The phenomenon of spirituality at work has garnered attention from researchers including those interested in the intersection of spirituality and followership.¹⁴⁴ Joanna and Brian Crossman's chapter on spiritual followership in *The*

tourism, Cynthia S. Deale, Donald G. Schoffstall, and Eric Adam Brown, "What Does It Mean to Follow? An Exploration of a Followership Profile in Hospitality and Tourism," *Journal of Teaching in Travel and Tourism* 16, no. 4 (2016): 235-52 (vis-à-vis tourism); vis-à-vis corporate leadership (on a popular level), Jimmy Collins and Michael Cooley, *Creative Followership: In the Shadow of Greatness, My Journey to President of Chick-fil-A* (Decatur, GA: Looking Glass Books, 2013).

¹⁴⁴ See, e.g., Jacqui Chaston and Marjolein Lips-Wiersma, "When Spirituality Meets Hierarchy: Leader Spirituality as a Double-Edged Sword," *Journal of Management, Spirituality and Religion* 12, no. 2 (2015): 111-28; Joshua Frye, Lorraine G. Kisselburg, and David Butts, "Embracing Spiritual Followership," *Communication Studies* 58, no. 3 (2007): 243-60.

Palgrave Handbook of Workplace Spirituality and Fulfillment illustrates this trend and seeks to integrate understandings of followership and spiritual leadership in order to establish a definition and profile of spiritual followership.¹⁴⁵ They describe a spiritual follower as someone who “holds him or herself accountable to a higher power or force, defined and inspired through a personally, culturally and socially constructed spiritual paradigm that in turn influences and motivates responses, actions and decisions within an organizational context.”¹⁴⁶ Furthermore, they add, “The spiritual follower is empowered, confident in maintaining a balance between loyalty to a leader and an ethical approach to serving the common good.”¹⁴⁷ Pulling from a traits-approach to followership, Crossman and Crossman suggest that a spiritual follower is, among other things, empowered, emancipated, proactive, courageous, humble, a learner, and spiritually inspired.¹⁴⁸ Their work fills a distinct space between more secularly oriented efforts and those with a Christian orientation.

Followership and Christians in the Workplace

Rushton Ricketson’s chapter, “Jesus as Perfect Follower,” in the same volume adapts much of his 2009 work (see below) into a “Christ-centered followership” model for Christians in the workplace.¹⁴⁹ He argues that viewing Jesus as a perfect follower

¹⁴⁵ Crossman and Crossman, “Spiritual Followership,” 449-69.

¹⁴⁶ Crossman and Crossman, “Spiritual Followership,” 460.

¹⁴⁷ Crossman and Crossman, “Spiritual Followership,” 461.

¹⁴⁸ While Crossman and Crossman (“Spiritual Followership”) considered the implications of followership with respect to spirituality, Dennis Tourish and Naheed Tourish (“Spirituality at Work, and its Implications for Leadership and Followership: A Post-Structuralist Perspective,” *Leadership* 6, no. 2 (2010): 207-24) explored the implications of spirituality at work on leadership and followership. Tourish and Tourish suggest that whatever the content of spirituality in the workplace (e.g., Christian, nonsectarian, humanistic), it often minimizes the work-based and personal life distinctions of employees. Furthermore, workplace spirituality appears to increase leader influence over followers and promotes restrictive norms upon followers. Thus, Tourish and Tourish conclude that spirituality at work potentially threatens the leader-follower dynamic and vests the leader with greater power.

¹⁴⁹ Rushton S. Ricketson, “Jesus as Perfect Follower,” in Roberts and Crossman, *The Palgrave Handbook of Workplace Spirituality and Fulfillment*, 329-44. Ricketson’s “Christ-centered followership”

empowers the Christians to carry out their vocational responsibilities with integrity, credibility, and competence. Ricketson grounds his thesis in a brief overview of salvation history and Jesus's perfect submission to his Father within Trinitarian theology. In addition, he presents Christ's emphasis on following as a critical aspect of the Christian life and discipleship. While Jesus's life and teachings provide the foundation for his Christ-centered, workplace followership framework, Ricketson utilizes Kelley and Chaleff's follower orientations and behaviors to inform its specific expressions. He concludes his essay by stating, "With a work ethic based upon honoring God, followers of Christ are growing, learning, and accomplishing the common goal(s) of the organization with integrity, credibility, and honesty."¹⁵⁰

Following Language in the Gospels

Within a Christian context, the notions of following and being a follower figure prominently as the Gospel writers present numerous instances when Jesus directed individuals to "follow me." For example, in Matthew 4:19, Jesus, walking along the shore of the Sea of Galilee, says to Simon and Andrew, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men."¹⁵¹ Then, the text simply states, "Immediately they left their nets and followed him" (v. 20).¹⁵² Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John are replete with similar

model must be differentiated from Wilder and Jones's model. Though similar in title, they are distinct in overall content.

¹⁵⁰ Ricketson, "Jesus as Perfect Follower," 342.

¹⁵¹ Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture quotations come from the *English Standard Version* (ESV). Jesus calls Simon and Andrew to literally "Come after me" (δεῦτε ὀπίσω μου), or "Follow me" as rendered in the ESV. Concerning ὀπίσω as utilized in Matt 4:19 and in similar ways in other Gospel passages, Wolfgang Bauder notes that within Judaism, "following behind someone is a sign of subservient subordination to a person of respect." Wolfgang Bauder, "ὀπίσω," in *NIDNTT*, 1:492-93. He continues, "As a [rabbinical] expression, it refers to the state of being a pupil, largely with respect to the shared life with the teacher."

¹⁵² Matthew states that Simon and Andrew put aside their nets and "followed" (ἠκολούθησαν) Jesus. According to Christian Blending, in this and other similar instances, ἠκολούθησαν (lexical form ἀκολουθέω) connotes the idea of "following" and is associated with "the call to decisive and intimate discipleship of the earthly Jesus. It always points to the beginning of discipleship." Christian Blending, "ἀκολουθέω," in *NIDNTT*, 1:481-82.

encounters.¹⁵³ Furthermore, Jesus and the Gospel writers frequently used the term “disciple” to describe someone who was following Christ.¹⁵⁴ Even today, the rhetoric of “following Jesus” or “being a follower of Jesus” enjoys a level of familiarity and common usage. For example, self-identifying Christian emerging adults are just as likely to embrace the moniker, “a follower of Jesus,” as they are to apply the term “Christian” to themselves.¹⁵⁵

“Following” and Christian Works

The rich biblical vocabulary and imagery associated with follower and following as well as its contemporary usage likely explains why numerous Christian books today incorporate “follower” or some form of the verb “to follow” in their titles. Consider Dennis Gorton and Tom Allen’s *Leading the Followers by Following the Leader: A Radical Look at Radical Leadership* and David Platt’s *Counter Cultural: Following Christ in an Anti-Christian Age* as two examples.¹⁵⁶ Yet, these works do not acknowledge or explicitly draw upon the body of followership literature discussed above.

Other contributions by Christian authors demonstrate a degree of familiarity with aspects of the terminology and concepts associated with followership scholarship. In some cases they might utilize “followership” in the title, mention the importance of

¹⁵³ See, e.g., 4:1; 8:22; 9:9; 19:21; Mark 1:17; 2:14; 10:21; Luke 5:27; 9:59; 18:22; John 1:43.

¹⁵⁴ David W. Bennett, *Metaphors of Ministry: Biblical Images for Leaders and Followers* (Eugene, OR: Wipac & Stock, 1993), 37. See, e.g., Matt 10:24; 26:18; Mark 14:14; Luke 6:40; 22:11. Also, BDAG provides the following concerning μαθητής: “generally ‘learner, pupil, disciple.’” BDAG, 609-10 (emphasis original). Dietrich Müller’s gloss in *NIDNTT* for μαθητής is essentially identical to that in BDAG. Müller, “μαθητής,” in *NIDNTT*, 1:483.

¹⁵⁵ David Kinnaman and Mark Matlock, *Faith for Exiles: 5 Ways for a New Generation to Follow Jesus in Digital Babylon* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2019), 42.

¹⁵⁶ Dennis Gorton and Tom Allen, *Leading the Followers by Following the Leader: A Radical Look at Radical Leadership* (Camp Hill, PA: Christian Publications, 2000); David Platt, *Counter Cultural: Following Christ in an Anti-Christian Age*, rev. ed. (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House, 2017). For other examples, see Daren White, *DNA of a Christ Follower: The Eight Essential Traits* (British Columbia, Canada: Deep Wild Communications, 2016); Doug Nuenke, ed., *Five Traits of a Christ-Follower* (Colorado Springs: NavPress, 2016); Andi Andrew, *Fake or Follower: Refusing to Settle for a Shallow Faith* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2018).

followers vis-à-vis leaders, decry the overemphasis on leaders at the expense or neglect of followers, or highlight certain follower traits or characteristics within the leader-follower dynamic.¹⁵⁷ Nonetheless, these volumes do not advance the discussion, nor do they substantively contribute to a uniquely Christian understanding of followership.

A few titles reference the followership corpus in some fashion and seek to engage to it from a Christian framework or apply it in church or related contexts. Two examples, Allen Hamlin Jr.'s *Embracing Followership* and Todd Hahn's *Song of the Second Fiddle*, deserve mention as somewhat helpful and accessible introductory efforts.¹⁵⁸ In addition, Leonard Sweet's *I Am a Follower* made an admirable attempt at the time of its publication to bring some followership research to bear on the broader discussion of following within a biblical framework.¹⁵⁹

Early Christian Works Drawing from Followership Research

Ricketson's *Follower First*. Rusty Ricketson in his 2009 monograph, *Follower First*, applies a role-based followership approach to local church contexts as a means to correct erroneous leadership constructs and reorient leaders and followers to biblical patterns of followership. In fact, his work reflects one of the few serious attempts to integrate followership research with biblical instruction in order to present a distinctly

¹⁵⁷ See, e.g., Tracy Armstrong, *Followership: The Leadership Principle that No One Is Talking About* (Shippensburg, PA: Destiny Image, 2010); Omokhai Imoukhuede, *Discovering Followership: Learn The Secrets of Walking Behind and Still Staying Ahead* (Chicago: Summit House, 2011); Jeffrey A. Williams, *Leadership-Followership 360°: How to Create Accountable, Flexible and Dynamic Teams* (O'Fallon, IL: JefWilCo, 2011); Joshua L. McElhaney, *Followership* (Minneapolis: Coffee House Press, 2019); Ubong Ntewo, *A Biblical Vision of Followership: A Misplaced Priority* (New Providence, NJ: Bowker, 2019).

¹⁵⁸ Allen Hamlin Jr., *Embracing Followership: How to Thrive in a Leader-Centric Culture* (Bellingham, WA: Kirkwall Press, 2016); Todd Hahn, *Song of the Second Fiddle: The Challenge of Followership* (Chapel Hill, PA: Horizon Books, 2000).

¹⁵⁹ Leonard Sweet, *I Am a Follower: The Way, Truth, and Life of Following Jesus* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2011).

and more robust Christian leadership-followership paradigm. However, while I acknowledge the important contribution Ricketson's volume makes, I would be hard pressed to characterize it as a full-throttled scholarly treatment.

Follower First begins by asserting that the Bible is fundamentally about "following and becoming the very best follower of Christ a Christian can be."¹⁶⁰ Ricketson pointed out that Jesus, the incarnate Son, was in fact a follower as he was under his Father's authority. Furthermore, during his earthly ministry, Christ consistently called people to follow him above all else. Therefore, in Ricketson's presentation, Jesus becomes both prototypical follower and focal point for all Christian followership.

Therefore, Christian leaders never cease being followers as they are always (ideally) following Christ. Given the importance of following to the Christian life generally and leading in particular, he draws from Chaleff's courageous, Kelley's exemplary, and Rost's post-industrial follower traits to provide helpful insights into followers and following. He also references their works in order to dispel erroneous notions about following (i.e., that being a follower relegates a person to "sheerness," or subordination) and to counter an anti-follower bias and leadership infatuation.¹⁶¹ He concluded his volume by presenting his own Biblical Follower Profile with two dimensions of behaviors: relationship and responsibility oriented behaviors. Relationship oriented behaviors address a person's spiritual relationship with Christ and consist of commitment to and intimacy with the Savior. Responsibility oriented behaviors include obedience, faithfulness, and persistence. Ricketson did briefly address the importance of

¹⁶⁰ Rusty Ricketson, *Follower First: Rethinking Leading in the Church* (Cumming: GA: Heartworks, 2009), 7-8.

¹⁶¹ Ricketson lists Ira Chaleff's "courageous follower" traits: (1) assumes responsibility, (2) serves, (3) challenges, (4) participates in transformation, and (4) takes moral action. He also includes Robert Kelley's "exemplary follower" characteristics: (1) self-management, (2) commitment, (3) competence and focus, and (4) courage. Further, Ricketson incorporates Joseph Rost's "post-industrial followers" paradigm, which presents leaders as followers and followers as influencing leaders. Finally, he discusses follower "reciprocity," flexibility, and leading. Ricketson, *Follower First*, 80. See also Joseph Rost, *Leadership for the Twenty-First Century* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1991).

the leader-follower relational dynamic when he described leadership as “*a reciprocal, interdependent relationship between a leader and a follower.*”¹⁶² By and large, however, his project reflects an application of role-based followership to the subject of Christian leadership.¹⁶³

Chai’s “Leading as Followers.” David Hoonjin Chai’s 2010 doctoral dissertation research represents the first scholarly and quantitative study of followership within a North American church context.¹⁶⁴ Chai explored the followership styles of Korean American congregational leaders and pastors in predominantly Korean American Presbyterian U.S.A. churches. Given the cultural value placed upon leaders and leadership hierarchy within Korean culture, Chai wanted to understand the relationship between leaders’ formal leadership position and their followership styles. Utilizing Kelley’s followership styles taxonomy and followership questionnaire, he found that there is a “significant relationship between ministry responsibilities and followership.”¹⁶⁵ Furthermore, he concluded that followership functions as a core leadership development value within Korean American Presbyterian churches. Chai’s project reflects one of the first of its kind whereby followership was assessed and evaluated among local church leaders.¹⁶⁶ Having completed a review of both followership literature and projects that

¹⁶² Ricketson, *Follower First*, 78 (emphasis original).

¹⁶³ See Ricketson’s definition in *Follower First*, 79.

¹⁶⁴ David Hoonjin Chai, “Leading as Followers: A Followership Study of the Korean Congregational Leadership of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)” (EdD thesis, Spalding University, 2010).

¹⁶⁵ Chai, “Leading as Followers,” 76.

¹⁶⁶ Three recent U.S.-based PhD dissertations utilized followership constructs in studies involving an international and multicultural missions organization, a people group in Northern Uganda, and a number of Ethiopian churches. EunSun Hong utilized a grounded theory approach in order to explore what both leaders and followers within SIL International (a U.S.-based ministry with a multicultural staff operating in several different countries engaged in linguistic study, documentation, literacy, and Bible translation efforts) desire leadership and followership to look like in their unique transnational and multicultural settings. He found that SIL leaders and followers working together across international boundaries and utilizing computer-based communication platforms held a core of similarly desired leadership and followership qualities and behaviors. EunSun Sunny Hong, “A Grounded Theory of Leadership and Followership in Multicultural Teams in SIL” (PhD diss., Biola University, 2014). Hong’s

attempt to apply followership frameworks within Christian contexts, I will now review and evaluate Wilder and Jones’s Christ-centered followership model.

Christ-Centered Followership: A Review of *The God Who Goes Before You*

With works like *Lead like Jesus*, *The Management Methods of Jesus*, and *Jesus, CEO* proliferating and in the background, Wilder and Jones in *The God Who Goes Before You* contend that much of what is written on the topic of Christian leadership fails to adequately take into account the Christ-centered, kingdom-focused, Gospel-grounded metanarrative of Scripture. As a result, such volumes often present leadership principles akin to secular, leader-centric models though with perhaps greater appeal to the Bible. The Word of God is not a moralistic leadership sourcebook from which to pick and chose which principles fit particular personal preferences. Rather, the authors contend that the Scriptures are a grand story about God—a God who goes before and leads his people.

Given that view of Scripture, Wilder and Jones, observe three important themes across the Bible that inform their leadership outlook: (1) leaders are not sovereigns over but stewards of the community of God of which they, too, are members; (2) leaders are to exercise God’s delegated power and authority by His proscribed means

work was published as book in 2016: Hong, *A Grounded Theory of Leadership and Followership in Multicultural Teams in SIL* (Portland, OR: EMS Press, 2016).

David Wesley Ofumbi studied followership development among the Acholi people in Uganda. Using a grounded theory case study approach, he considered the ways in which followers formed and enacted followership identities, roles, and behaviors in their lives, particularly during the 1985-2012 period, a timeframe characterized by regional instability and conflict. He concluded that the concept of human dignity provided the foundation from which active followership grew by means of a unique set of interactions between fundamental factors and resultant actions and an iterative consensus-building process. David Wesley Ofumbi, “Followership Construction among the Acholi People in Uganda” (PhD diss., Biola University, 2017). Ofumbi’s dissertation was published as a book two years later: Ofumbi, *Followership Development and Enactment among the Acholi of Uganda: A Seamless Paradigm for Relational Leadership* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2019).

Habtamu Kedir Umer sought to explore and better understand Ethiopian Kale Heywet Church leaders’ “perception, role, function, construction, and nature” of the relational dynamics of the leadership-followership process. Utilizing grounded theory, Umer found that church leaders understand the leader-follower as a “dynamic-relational-influence process” that can bring both transformation and deeper community to their churches. Habtamu Kedir Umer, “The Relational Theory of the Leadership-Followership Process: Perceptions of Leaders and Followers in the Ethiopian Kale Heywet Church” (PhD diss., Biola University, 2019).

and for the sake of His community; and (3) leaders must declare God’s truth rather than their own vision.¹⁶⁷ The foundational premise that unifies these key suppositions and forms the thesis of this book is that “the leaders’ pursuit of God always takes precedence over the leaders’ positional authority. Before we are leaders, we must be followers—followers of a God who goes before us.”¹⁶⁸ Wilder and Jones aim for nothing less in *The God Who Goes Before You* than to advance a distinctly Christian framework of the leader-as-follower informed by a rigorously employed biblical theology.¹⁶⁹

The first section, chapters 1 and 2, establish their leader-as-follower paradigm that runs counter to prevailing notions and in light of God’s intent for leadership. Here they consider the opening pages of the Bible and expound upon the key concepts of vicegerency, sonship, rulership, stewardship, as well as God’s presence and power. Jones argues in the book’s second section that it is mistaken to view the Old Testament offices of prophet, priest, judge, and king as new covenant leadership typologies. Rather, he maintains God would have us see these offices as fully and magnificently fulfilled in Christ. Then, as one follows Jesus, the archetypal prophet, priest, judge, king, and Emanuel, in the context of the redeemed community, the leader’s entire life and approach to leading are transformed.

Wilder in part three of the volume traces the thread of the leader-as-shepherd through the entire canon.¹⁷⁰ He rightly contends that Jesus is the paradigmatic Shepherd to which all earlier shepherds point. Furthermore, he submits that all new covenant

¹⁶⁷ For their complete discussion, see Wilder and Jones, *The God Who Goes Before You*, 10-11.

¹⁶⁸ Wilder and Jones, *The God Who Goes Before You*, 10.

¹⁶⁹ As noted earlier, Wilder and Jones define Christian leadership in the following terms: “*The Christ-following leader—living as a bearer of God’s image in union with Christ and his people—develops a diverse community of fellow laborers who are equipped and empowered to pursue shared goals that fulfill the creation mandate and the Great Commission in submission to the Word of God.*” Wilder and Jones, *The God Who Goes Before You*, 16 (emphasis original).

¹⁷⁰ Sec. 3 of *The God Who Goes Before You* consists of chaps. 6-8.

leaders are first sheep needing to follow and be shepherded by the Chief Shepherd. Only as contemporary church leaders learn from and follow the One Shepherd will their lives and leadership mimic Christ's.

Seeking to subvert deficient leadership models, Jones and Wilder argue that the Bible reorients our contemporary understandings of what it means to lead. They state in their conclusion:

What Jesus modeled for us was not an office of leadership but a way of life that reshapes every aspect of leadership. This way pulls us away from striving to situate ourselves in particular offices of leadership. Where it leads instead is toward the habits of a shepherd, the heart of servant, and the humble disposition of a fellow participant in the sufferings of Christ.¹⁷¹

Thus, the core of a distinctly Christian approach to leadership rests in Christ and a leader's orientation toward and relationship with him.

Wilder and Jones have masterfully accomplished their goal of addressing the topic of pastoral leadership by studiously grounding their reflections in expertly applied biblical theology. They also demonstrate from careful analysis the Christ-centered nature of kingdom leadership and explicate the meaning and significance of that central motif. Furthermore, Wilder and Jones present a distinctly Christian followership construct reflecting familiarity with followership theory and judicious integration with the Scriptural data. In sum, they have produced a biblical, Christ-centered, and carefully nuanced model of pastoral leadership as followership.

Much of the Christian leadership literature has an individualistic bias and leader-centric orientation. Furthermore, such works often neglect the communal orientation of the Scriptures. Wilder and Jones avoid these mistakes. First, they recognize that the phenomenon of leadership should only be leader-centric in as much as Christ is recognized as the singular leader rather than any other person. Second, they emphasize

¹⁷¹ Wilder and Jones, *The God Who Goes Before You*, 195.

the pastoral leader's place within and as part of the broader community of Christians. Thus, congregational leaders are mindful of their status as followers of the one true leader, Jesus, and as a fellow follower among many.

Wilder and Jones avoid the "romance of leadership" error so prevalent in much of previous leadership literature by emphasizing followers and followership. Nonetheless, they also carefully evade "reversing the lens" and simply presenting a purely follower-centric model of followership as neither comports fully with Scripture. Rather, their Christ-centered leadership-as-followership model coincides with several core suppositions shaping much of contemporary followership theory: (1) followers are equally important as leaders in leadership; (2) the self-perceptions (identity markers), traits, and behaviors followers engage in their relations with leaders are just as important to outcome creation as those of leaders; (3) followers and leaders relationally engage with each other in the coproduction of outcomes.

Wilder and Jones stress the shared identity of pastoral leaders and followers as the basis for their interactions. As people created by God in his own image, leaders and followers possess a fundamental similarity that grounds any differences in individual characteristics, traits, or roles. In addition, both are united to and follow Christ who saved and leads them. The central identity markers common to both Christian leaders and followers establishes their ontological equality, orients their behavior toward each other, and establishes the basis of their relations.

Wilder and Jones also point out that kingdom leaders (i.e., followers who happen to lead other followers) are vested with God-given identities that define their role and ought to govern their actions. The key identity monikers and roles the Scriptures place upon leaders are vicegerent, son, ruler, slave, steward, and shepherd. Wilder and Jones also present that leader-followers are called to exercise their delegated power justly and proclaim and instruct the truth as given to them through the Scriptures in submission to Christ for the benefit of the community of fellow followers.

The God Who Goes Before You emphasizes the importance of the follower-leader relational dynamic in the production of God-glorifying outcomes. Wilder and Jones again and again stress the centrality of the relationship between the pastoral leader, in this case the follower, and Jesus, the leader. The nature and quality of that relationship directly affects the nature and quality of the leadership expressed as a result of that relational dynamic. Similarly, the pastor-member relational dynamic becomes critical to the realization of biblical imperatives and outcomes within the church and through its ministries. Wilder and Jones do not suggest abolishing authoritative leadership hierarchy in favor of some purely relational, distributed egalitarian model. Rather, their model of Christ-centered leadership as Christ-centered followership calls leaders and followers to approach leading, following, the exercise of authority, the use of power, and the execution of duties on the basis of God-granted and defined identity, motivational, and behavioral norms.

For all of its strengths and thoughtful integration of followership theory into a biblical leadership construct, this volume lacks an extensive study of the apostle Paul and his corpus. Tantalizing yet brief references are made of Paul and his embodiment of Jesus' instructions on humble service on behalf of God's people.¹⁷² Furthermore, only a few lines are devoted to Pauline imitation as an important part leaders play in their relationships with and responsibilities to followers in their contexts.

Thus far in chapter 2, I have provided a foundational overview of followership-related literature including both theoretical and applied works. Then, I surveyed material that brings followership principles and constructs to bear in Christian contexts. On the heels of that discussion, I reviewed and evaluated Wilder and Jones's, *The God Who Goes Before You*, as their model of Christ-centered followership reflects the most ambitious

¹⁷² Wilder and Jones, *The God Who Goes Before You*, 152-53.

effort to date to construct a biblical leadership framework informed by an awareness of followership research. In the next section, I consider those emerging adulthood related publications relevant to the development of Christian emerging-adult men as spiritual leaders. The following moves broadly from a review of foundational and important works to more specific material related to emerging-adult spiritual formation, general leadership development, and, finally, spiritual leadership. Within each of these subsections I also discuss works—to the extent they exist—that deal specifically with emerging-adult men.

The Phenomenon of Emerging Adulthood: A Review of Pertinent Literature

The notion of adolescence as a distinct stage in human development portended the conceptualization of emerging adulthood as a particular period between childhood and full-fledged adulthood. G. Stanley Hall's 1904 sweeping work, *Adolescence*, contributed to the establishment of a unique field of inquiry within developmental psychology and fixed the concept of adolescence within the popular consciousness.¹⁷³ Hall's nearly 1400-page two-volume work considered the physiological, psychological, relational, sexual, and behavioral dimensions of human development between the ages of fourteen and twenty-four. He characterized adolescence as a time of "storm and stress" in view of the dramatic changes taking place within individuals as part of their growth out of childhood into adulthood.¹⁷⁴

Jeffrey Jensen Arnett

Writing nearly a century after Hall, Jeffrey Jensen Arnett argues that in light of significant demographic and sociological changes within more economically developed

¹⁷³ G. Stanley Hall, *Adolescence: Its Psychology and Its Relations to Physiology, Anthropology, Sociology, Sex, Crime, Religion and Education*, 2 vols. (New York: D. Appleton, 1904, 1911). See also Jeffrey Jensen Arnett, "G. Stanley Hall's *Adolescence*: Brilliance and Nonsense," *History of Psychology* 9, no. 3 (2006): 186-97.

¹⁷⁴ Hall, *Adolescence*, 1:309.

societies, the demarcation between adolescence and full-fledged adulthood is no longer as clear as it had been. In a 2000 journal article and subsequent monograph, he contends that “emerging adulthood” best describes, for many young people, the extended transition from the pubescent period to adulthood.¹⁷⁵ For Arnett, the prevailing conceptualizations of “adolescent” and “adult” fail to adequately explain and account for the experiences, self-perceptions, and behaviors of vast numbers of eighteen-to-twenty-five-year-olds.

Arnett describes emerging adulthood in light of five characteristics: (1) identity exploration, particularly in the domains of romance and vocation; (2) instability; (3) self-focus; (4) perceptions of feeling “in-between” and in a consistent state of transition; and (5) optimism and hope regarding the future.¹⁷⁶ While not necessarily unique to young people in the late-twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, these features, according to Arnett, define an ever-lengthening span of time and contribute to a significant delay in achieving historic adult-indicative milestones. Specifically, he observes that traditional societal markers of adult achievement—marriage, child-rearing, home ownership, and long-term career establishment—are being pushed later and later in life by more and more younger adults.¹⁷⁷

¹⁷⁵ Jeffrey Jensen Arnett, “Emerging Adulthood: A Theory of Development from the Late Teens through the Twenties,” *American Psychologist* 55, no. 5 (2000): 469-80; Arnett, *Emerging Adulthood: The Winding Road from the Late Teens through the Twenties* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004). Christian Smith concurs with Arnett’s assessment: “Studies agree that the transition to adulthood is more complex, disjointed, and confusing than it was in past decades.” Christian Smith, *Lost in Transition: The Dark Side of Emerging Adulthood* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 15. Smith also embraces the conceptualization and language of emerging adulthood as presented by Arnett. Smith, *Souls in Transition: The Religious and Spiritual Lives of Emerging Adults* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 6. Richard Settersten and Barbara Ray’s project describes the same phenomenon as Arnett, though they do not adopt the terminology of emerging adulthood. Richard Settersten and Barbara E. Ray, *Not Quite Adults: Why 20-Somethings Are Choosing a Slower Path to Adulthood, and Why It’s Good for Everyone* (New York: Bantam, 2011). See also Robin Marantz Henig, “What Is It About 20-Somethings?” *New York Times*, August 18, 2010, <https://www.nytimes.com/2010/08/22/magazine/22Adulthood-t.html>, and her follow-up book Robin Marantz Henig and Samantha Henig, *Twentysomething: Why Do Young Adults Seem Stuck?* (New York: Hudson Street Press, 2012).

¹⁷⁶ Arnett, *Emerging Adulthood*, 8.

¹⁷⁷ Arnett, *Emerging Adulthood*, 3-6. For example, in 1950, the average age for men to marry was twenty-two; for women, it was twenty. In 2019, according to U.S. census data, that average had risen to almost age thirty for men and twenty-eight for women. U.S. Census Bureau, “Table MS-2. Estimated Median Age at First Marriage, by Sex: 1890 to the Present,” November 2019, <https://www.census.gov/data/tables/time-series/demo/families/marital.html>.

In the twenty years following Arnett's initial journal article, the language and conceptual framework of "emerging adulthood" is widely recognized and embraced inside and outside academia as a unique life stage within particular cultural contexts.¹⁷⁸ In fact, a plethora of academic books, journal articles, and even popular level volumes have been produced exploring the phenomenon of emerging adulthood.¹⁷⁹ Furthermore, scholars created the Society for the Study of Emerging Adulthood (SSEA), a professional guild for those in this burgeoning field of research, along with its attendant conferences, forums, resources, and peer-reviewed journal, *Emerging Adulthood*. Arnett himself went on to author and edit numerous volumes on the subject.¹⁸⁰ While Hall's two-volume 1904 work ensconced adolescence within developmental psychology, Oxford University Press's recently released sweeping six-volume series on emerging adulthood reflects the degree to which contemporary researchers have embraced Arnett's proposal as a basis for further study and exploration.¹⁸¹

¹⁷⁸ Since 2000, the year Arnett's initial article appeared in *American Psychologist*, a tremendous amount of research on emerging adults has taken place. Searches on EBSCOhost for peer reviewed journal articles written between 2000 and 2020 and containing the terms "emerging adulthood," "emerging adults," or "emerging adult" in either the title or subject lines produced over 3,000 results. A similar search on Google Scholar using only the term "emerging adulthood" and not restricted to journal articles produced nearly 900,000 results.

Some have resisted Arnett's initial presentation of emerging adulthood. See, e.g., Leo B. Hendry and Marion Kloep, "How Universal Is Emerging Adulthood? An Empirical Example," *Journal of Youth Studies* 13, no. 2 (2010): 169-79; Jeffrey Jensen Arnett et al., *Debating Emerging Adulthood: Stage or Process?* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011); J. E. Côte, "The Dangerous Myth of Emerging Adulthood: An Evidence-Based Critique of a Flawed Developmental Theory," *Applied Developmental Science* 18, no. 4 (2014): 17-88.

¹⁷⁹ See, e.g., Meg Jay, *The Defining Decade: Why Your Twenties Matter—and How to Make the Most of Them Now* (New York: Hachette, 2012); Tim Elmore, *Generation iY: Secrets to Connecting with Today's Teens and Young Adults in the Digital Age*, rev. ed. (Atlanta: Poet Gardener, 2015).

¹⁸⁰ Arnett has produced and edited a number of works on emerging adulthood since 2000. Two notable volumes are as follows: Jeffrey Jensen Arnett and Jennifer Lynn Tanner, *Emerging Adults in America: Coming of Age in the 21st Century* (Washington, DC: American Psychological Association, 2006). Jeffrey Jensen Arnett, ed., *The Oxford Handbook of Emerging Adulthood* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016).

¹⁸¹ Oxford University Press's six-volume set on emerging adulthood collects an impressive array of scholarship on the topic: (1) Varda R. Mann-Feder and Martin Goyette, eds., *Leaving Care and the Transition to Adulthood: International Contributions to Theory, Research, and Practice* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2019); (2) Varda Knostam, *The Romantic Lives of Emerging Adults* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2019); (3) Michael W. Pratt and M. Kyle Matsuba, eds., *The Life Story, Domains of Identity, and Personality Development in Emerging Adulthood: Integrating Narrative and Traditional Approaches* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018); (4) Brian J. Willoughby and Spencer L. James,

The Study of Emerging-Adult Men

Arnett's initial work spawned a new field of study that resulted in a growing body of knowledge pertaining to young adults. While significant overlap exists between emerging-adult men and women in terms of their experiences, outlooks, behaviors, and problems, a growing number of researchers have sought to establish the unique ways each gender traverses the late-teens and twentysomething years. Such considerations, as they relate to men, are particularly germane as this project is especially concerned with the process by which emerging-adult males become spiritual leaders.

Historical and sociological factors concerning notions of manhood and masculinity play an important role in shaping the outlooks and experiences of today's emerging-adult men. Michael Kimmel argues, in *Manhood in America*, that men throughout U.S. history have sought to establish or prove their manhood in light of whatever might have been the prevailing profile—or profiles—of masculinity at the time.¹⁸² The constant need to demonstrate one's masculinity has been stymied again and again by changing social and economic realities as well as shifting masculine ideals. According to Kimmel, those frustrations have become especially magnified in the last fifty years due to dramatic economic restructuring, greater political and economic equality for women, and a growing number of masculine paradigms.¹⁸³ Kimmel contends that just as in the past, today's men appear inclined to reassert their manhood in face of these challenges by means of self-control, exclusion, escape, and—increasingly—anger.¹⁸⁴ His historical work in *Manhood in America* details an important contextual

The Marriage Paradox: Why Emerging Adults Love Marriage yet Push It Aside (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017); (5) Laura M. Padilla-Walker and Larry J. Nelson, eds., *Flourishing in Emerging Adulthood: Positive Development during the Third Decade of Life* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017); and (6) Carolyn McNamara Barry and Mona M. Abo-Zena, eds., *Emerging Adult Religiousness and Spirituality: Meaning-Making in an Age of Transition* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014).

¹⁸² Michael Kimmel, *Manhood in America: A Cultural History*, 4th ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018), ix, 295.

¹⁸³ Kimmel, *Manhood in America*, 274-315.

¹⁸⁴ Kimmel, *Manhood in America*, 295-97. See also Michael Kimmel, *Angry White Men:*

backdrop for his 2008 volume *Guyland*, which analyzes the societal and cultural forces shaping the lives of a significant segment of the emerging-adult-male population.

Kimmel's *Guyland* provides an extensive sociological analysis of the period of time between adolescence and adulthood that characterizes the experiences of many white, middle and upper class, college-educated or educating young men.¹⁸⁵ He refers to this formative span of time as "Guyland" and describes it as both extended boyhood and delayed manhood.¹⁸⁶ Kimmel notes that the socially recognized markers of manhood in the early postwar period (i.e., marriage, employment, financial independence) have significantly faded in their acceptance.¹⁸⁷ Within that growing masculine-defining vacuum, young men, according to Kimmel, more and more look to their peers and the norms within Guyland for affirmation and guidance. By exploring various aspects of Guyland through hundreds of interviews with young men across the country, Kimmel maps the contours of an increasingly disturbing landscape where music, video games, electronic technology, substance use and abuse, pornography, sports, and "the guy code" dominate. In Guyland, men do not initiate boys into manhood; instead, "It is boys playing at initiating other boys into something they, themselves, do not even possess—that they *cannot* even possess."¹⁸⁸

Philip Zimbardo and Nikita Coulombe's 2016 *Man, Interrupted* posits that

American Masculinity at the End of an Era (New York: Bold Type Books, 2017).

¹⁸⁵ Though Kimmel mostly focuses on that particular demographic, he does include some data as they relate to black and gay men.

¹⁸⁶ Kimmel goes on to describe "Guyland" as "both a stage of life, a liminal undefined time span between adolescence and adulthood that can often stretch for a decade or more, and a place, or, rather a bunch of places where guys gather to be guys with each other, unhassled by the demands of parents, girlfriends, jobs, kids, and the other nuisances of adult life." Michael Kimmel, *Guyland: The Perilous World Where Boys Become Men* (New York: HarperCollins, 2008), 4. He continues, "Without fixed age boundaries, young men typically enter Guyland before they turn 16, and they begin to leave in the their mid to late 20s A kind of suspended animation between boyhood and manhood, Guyland lies between the dependency and lack of autonomy of boyhood and the sacrifice and responsibility of manhood" (6).

¹⁸⁷ Kimmel, *Guyland*, 24-43.

¹⁸⁸ Kimmel, *Guyland*, 101 (emphasis original).

contemporary young men are increasingly disengaging from the challenges of life, responsibilities, and relationships and unconsciously retreating into isolated worlds “where they have control over outcomes, where there is no fear of rejection and they are praised for their abilities.”¹⁸⁹ In the first of three sections, Zimbardo and Coulombe describe the symptoms of the dual problems of the young male retreat and purposeless drift.¹⁹⁰ In subsequent sections, they explore the potential causes of this phenomenon and suggest a multi-pronged approach to addressing the problems and their underlying causes.¹⁹¹

The challenges facing emerging-adult males fit within a broader set of problems confronting men in contemporary culture. Eric Anderson and Rory Magrath note that even though men (especially white men) largely enjoy structural privilege in U.S. society vis-à-vis women, men across ethnicities nonetheless face a number of difficulties or “disadvantages” in comparison to women.¹⁹² For example, men die in accidents at rates twice that of females.¹⁹³ Men also experience brain trauma, homelessness, criminal prosecution, and incarceration at higher rates than women and are more likely to commit suicide. C. J. Pascoe and Tristan Bridges’s edited volume, *Exploring Masculinities*, describes an ever-expanding array of masculine paradigms within American society that men must navigate.¹⁹⁴ After studying four groups of men

¹⁸⁹ Philip Zimbardo and Nikita D. Coulombe, *Man, Interrupted: Why Young Men Are Struggling and What We Can Do about It* (Newburyport, MA: Conari Press, 2016), xvii.

¹⁹⁰ These symptoms are as follows: (1) educational disenchantment, (2) workforce disengagement, (3) “excessive Maleness” and Social Intensity Syndrome, (4) high levels of video game use, (5) obesity, (6) excessive use of pornography, and (7) high substance use and abuse. Zimbardo and Coulombe, *Man, Interrupted*, 3-36.

¹⁹¹ Zimbardo and Coulombe list the causes to the underlying problems young men face as follows: (1) “rudderless families” and absent dads, (2) failing schools, (3) environmental factors, (4) technology and “arousal addiction,” (5) economics, (6) a sense of entitlement, and (7) the changing roles and expectations of women and men in society. Zimbardo and Coulombe, *Man, Interrupted*, 39-184.

¹⁹² Eric Anderson and Rory Magrath, *Men and Masculinities* (New York: Routledge, 2019).

¹⁹³ Anderson and Magrath, *Men and Masculinities*, 151.

¹⁹⁴ C. J. Pascoe and Tristan Bridges, eds., *Exploring Masculinities: Identity, Inequality,*

who wrestle with prevailing “body and breadwinning ideals” of manhood, Scott Melzer concludes that those masculine paradigms are often beyond their ability to achieve.¹⁹⁵ He finds that the resulting frustration associated with the failure to reach those perceived masculine paradigms “are destructive for everyone.”¹⁹⁶

Christina Hoff Sommers points out that fewer and fewer men are seeking and earning bachelor degrees in comparison to their female counterparts.¹⁹⁷ Helen Smith relates that not only are men increasingly foregoing a college education but also forestalling or even avoiding marriage all together.¹⁹⁸ Warren Farrell and John Gray present data that indicates that boys, young men, and adult males face a number of growing challenges across various life domains (e.g., mental health, employment, physical health, education).¹⁹⁹ Farrell and Gray are particularly concerned with what they describe as a diminishing sense of male purpose, “the purpose void,” and with disengaged or absent fathers’ contributing to what they (i.e., the authors) refer to as “dad-deprived boys.” These works demonstrate the contexts of and challenges to any effort to develop emerging-adult men as spiritual leaders.

Continuity, and Change (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016). In addition to an ever-growing number of masculinities, men generally and emerging-adult males in particular must also navigate a growing list of sexual preferences and identities. See, e.g., Michael Kimmel, ed., *Sexualities: Identities, Behaviors, and Society*, 2nd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015).

¹⁹⁵ Scott Melzer, *Manhood Impossible: Men’s Struggles to Control and Transform their Bodies and Work* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2018).

¹⁹⁶ Melzer, *Manhood Impossible*, 5.

¹⁹⁷ Christina Hoff Sommers, *The War against Boys: How Misguided Policies Are Harming Our Young Men*, rev. ed. (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2015), 17, 23.

¹⁹⁸ Helen Smith, *Men on Strike: Why Men Are Boycotting Marriage, Fatherhood, and the American Dream—and Why It Matters* (New York: Encounter Books, 2015), 1-3.

¹⁹⁹ Warren Farrell and John Gray, *The Boy Crisis: Why Our Boys Are Struggling and What We Can Do about It* (Dallas: BenBella Books, 2019). See also Leonard Sax, *Boys Adrift: The Five Factors Driving the Growing Epidemic of Unmotivated Boys and Underachieving Young Men* (New York: Basic Books, 2007).

Emerging-Adult Religious Beliefs and Behaviors

As demonstrated by the significant breadth and depth of the literature produced over the past two decades, various facets of emerging adulthood have garnered considerable attention. In particular, a number of researchers have been keen to explore the spiritual and religious beliefs and behaviors of eighteen-to-twenty-nine-year-olds. Even before Jeffrey Arnett advocated for emerging adulthood as a unique stage of human experience, Sharon Parks—in her ground-breaking 1986 book *The Critical Years*—considered the possibility of a distinct period of faith-development in young adults’ lives in the span bridging adolescence and adulthood.²⁰⁰ Drawing from both human- and faith-development theories, she argues that an important dynamic exists between cognitive development, faith, and community in the young adult period. While her conception of faith as “meaning-making” fails to fully comport with the biblical witness on the subject, Parks recognizes that a differentiated life stage among those moving from adolescence to adulthood has significant implications for how young adults understand and develop the spiritual dimension of their lives.

Since 2000, a number of researchers have undertaken various projects to measure, describe, and explain emerging-adult spiritual and religious beliefs, attitudes, and practices.²⁰¹ Christian Smith’s *Souls in Transition* merits particular attention as a seminal

²⁰⁰ Sharon Parks, *The Critical Years: The Young Adult Search for a Faith to Live By* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1986). Her follow up work *Big Questions, Worthy Dreams: Mentoring Young Adults in Their Search for Meaning, Purpose, and Faith* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2000) has been updated and revised twice since its initial release. Parks even changed the title in the second iteration to reflect the widespread embrace of emerging-adult terminology: Sharon Daloz Parks, *Big Questions, Worthy Dreams: Mentoring Emerging Adults in Their Search for Meaning, Purpose, and Faith*, rev. ed. (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2011); Parks, *Big Questions, Worthy Dreams: Mentoring Emerging Adults in Their Search for Meaning, Purpose, and Faith*, rev. ed. (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2019).

²⁰¹ The following reflects a sample of journal articles addressing the topic of emerging-adult religious beliefs and behaviors: Jeffrey Jensen Arnett and Lene Arnett Jensen, “A Congregation of One: Individualized Religious Beliefs among Emerging Adults.” *Journal of Adolescent Research* 17, no. 5 (2002): 451-67; Carolyn McNamra Barry and Larry J. Nelson, “The Role of Religion in the Transition to Adulthood for Young Emerging Adults.” *Journal of Youth and Adolescence* 34, no. 3 (2005): 245-55; Tara M. Stoppa and Eva S. Lefkowitz, “Longitudinal Changes in Religiosity among Emerging Adult College Students.” *Journal of Research on Adolescence* 20, no. 1 (2010): 23-38; Kathleen C. Leonard et al., “Parent-Child Dynamics and Emerging Adult Religiosity: Attachment, Parental Beliefs, and Faith Support,” *Psychology of Religion and Spirituality* 5, no. 1 (2013): 5-14; Paul K. McClure, “Faith and

sociological study within the field of emerging-adult research. *Souls in Transition* reflects a continuation of a project presented in his earlier volume *Soul Searching*, where thousands of teens were surveyed and several hundred subsequently interviewed and tracked over a few-year period.²⁰² *Souls in Transition* follows the religious and spiritual pathways of many of the initial study participants into their early emerging adulthood years in order to better understand their beliefs and behavior as well as the cultural milieu that shapes them. Smith acknowledges emerging adulthood as a “new phase in the American life course” and presents the religiosity of emerging adults in terms of six broad categories.²⁰³

While *Souls in Transition* presents an extraordinary amount of data and a plethora of conclusions, two research findings stand out for the purposes of this study. First, Smith finds that moralistic therapeutic deism, his moniker in *Soul Searching* for the amalgamized religious outlook of many teenagers, remains “alive and well among 18- to 23-year-old American youth.”²⁰⁴ Second, he identifies six teenage-era pathways most likely to result in higher levels of emerging-adult religious engagement and practice.²⁰⁵

Facebook in a Pluralistic Age: The Effects of Social Networking Sites on the Religious Beliefs of Emerging Adults,” *Sociological Perspectives* 59, no. 4 (2016): 818-34.

Notable books on the topic of emerging-adult religious beliefs and behaviors include the following: Robert Wuthnow, *After the Baby Boomers: How Twenty- and Thirty-Somethings Are Shaping the Future of American Religion* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007); Richard Flory and Donald E. Miller, *Finding Faith: The Spiritual Quest of the Post-Boomer Generation* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2008); Smith, *Souls in Transition*; Smith, *Lost in Transition*; David Kinnaman, *You Lost Me: Why Young Christians Are Leaving Church . . . and Rethinking Faith* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2011); Barry and Abo-Zena, *Emerging Adults’ Religiousness and Spirituality*; Tim Clydesdale and Kathleen Garces-Foley, *The Twentysomething Soul: Understanding the Religious and Secular Lives of American Young Adults* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2019); Melinda Lundquist Denton and Richard Flory, *Back-Pocket God: Religion and Spirituality in the Lives of Emerging Adults* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2020).

²⁰² Christian Smith, *Souls in Transition*; Smith, *Soul Searching: The Religious and Spiritual Lives of American Teenagers* (Oxford, University Press, 2005).

²⁰³ Smith, *Souls in Transition*, 5. Smith’s six major emerging-adult religious types are as follows: (1) committed traditionalists, (2) selective adherents, (3) spiritually open, (4) religiously indifferent, (5) religiously disconnected, and (6) irreligious emerging adults (167-80).

²⁰⁴ Smith, *Souls in Transition*, 155.

²⁰⁵ Smith, *Souls in Transition*, 226.

Significantly, all but one of the paths include strong parental religious commitment and practice; the path with low parent religious involvement nonetheless has a component that Smith deems significant and labels as follows: “teen has many adults in religious congregation to turn to for help and support.”²⁰⁶ *Souls in Transition* provides valuable information as to both the importance of religious belief in this period of life and the key influences on and shapers of it.²⁰⁷

Emerging-Adult Male Religiosity

Compared to the number of non-gender-differentiated studies of emerging-adult religiosity, relatively few projects solely focus upon emerging-adult-male religious beliefs and behaviors. In one of the few studies, W. Merle Longwood, William Schipper, and Philip Culbertson sought to determine “whether there is a connection between masculinity and spirituality” among collegiate males at seven small faith-based colleges.²⁰⁸ While Christianity in the United States has, at different times, been perceived as overly feminized or unattractive to men, Longwood, Shipper, and Culbertson conclude that many male collegians do deem “spirituality” as important and that male-specific institutional approaches to spiritual cultivation have the potential of producing positive outcomes.²⁰⁹

David Anderson, Paul Hill, and Roland Martinson’s quantitative study

²⁰⁶ Smith, *Souls in Transition*, 226. Smith also found that the three teenage-era pathways most likely to result in low emerging-adult religious engagement all have low parent religious involvement and practice (230).

²⁰⁷ In their book *Back-Pocket God*, Melinda Denton and Richard Flory conclude the study that Smith began in *Soul Searching* and continued in *Souls in Transition*. *Soul Searching* examined the spiritual lives of U.S. teenagers, and *Souls in Transition* presented findings from the early emerging-adulthood years. In *Back-Pocket God*, Denton and Flory present findings specific to the mid-to-late-twenties, the late-emerging-adult years. For another recent and important study, see Clydesdale and Garces-Foley, *The Twentysomething Soul*.

²⁰⁸ W. Merle Longwood, William C. Schipper, and Philip Culbertson, *Forging the Male Spirit: The Spiritual Lives of American College Men* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2012), ix.

²⁰⁹ Longwood, Schipper, and Culbertson, *Forging the Male Spirit*, 52-3, 80, 133.

involved interviews with 85 men ages eighteen to thirty-five from a variety of ethnic and religious backgrounds representing a number of different geographic regions across the U.S.²¹⁰ While young adult males may increasingly eschew regular church attendance, study participants expressed “spiritual longings” that, in particular, could contribute to a “meaningful life” and help them make a difference in the world.²¹¹ Anderson, Hill, and Martinson synthesize their findings into eleven categories or themes as well as provide theological reflections and practical ministerial suggestions throughout their work.²¹²

Emerging-Adult Christian Formation

With the works of Arnett, Smith, and others in place, a growing cadre of academics and practitioners have endeavored to build upon and apply their findings to the task of emerging-adult Christian formation. The efforts of those scholars, pastors, and ministry leaders have resulted in a small but growing corpus of articles, dissertations, and books given to the theoretical and practical aspects of emerging-adult Christian education and spiritual formation.²¹³ David Setran and Chris A. Kiesling’s *Spiritual Formation in Emerging Adulthood* stands out as the most comprehensive, integrative, and in-depth volume on the subject.²¹⁴

Setran and Kiesling interlace copious amounts of social science research to

²¹⁰ David W. Anderson, Paul G. Hill, and Roland D. Martinson, *Coming of Age: Exploring the Identity and Spirituality of Younger Men* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress Press, 2006).

²¹¹ Anderson, Hill, and Martinson, *Coming of Age*, 44.

²¹² Anderson, Hill, and Martinson, *Coming of Age*, 11-3.

²¹³ A few notable works on emerging-adult spiritual formation are as follows: Brian Simmons, *Wandering in the Wilderness: Changes and Challenges to Emerging Adult Christian Faith* (Abilene, TX: Abilene Christian University Press, 2011); Richard R. Dunn and Jana L. Sundene, *Shaping the Journey of Emerging Adults: Life-Giving Rhythms for Spiritual Transformation* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2012); Frederick R. Fav, “Emerging Young Adult Spiritual Formation: A Developmental Approach for an Intergenerational Church” (DMin project. George Fox University, 2015); Drew Moser and Jess Fankhauser, *Ready or Not: Leaning into Life in Our Twenties* (Colorado Springs: NavPress, 2018); Kinnaman and Matlock, *Faith for Exiles*.

²¹⁴ David P. Setran and Chris A. Kiesling, *Spiritual Formation in Emerging Adulthood: A Practical Theology for College and Young Adult Ministry* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2013).

provide a compelling presentation of the unique set of obstacles to emerging-adult Christian formation. Furthermore, they consistently apply a theological framework to interpret not only research findings but also emerging-adult behaviors, attitudes, and expressed longings. Their project integrates the best of empirical research and theological reflection to provide an incisive diagnosis of the emerging-adult spiritual condition and the starting point for any Christian formation effort. Given the critical and foundational nature of Christian maturity to spiritual leadership, emerging-adult Christian formation must precede and form an integral part of any emerging-adult spiritual leadership development effort.

Setran and Kiesling not only advance an integrated approach to Christian formation but do so in a manner that epistemologically prioritizes and incorporates the fruit of their own serious theological reflection as well as the works of various Christian thinkers and scholars. For example, they expertly leverage the research of Smith and others as a means to better understand and describe the unique and varied expressions of twenty-first-century emerging-adult heart-level idolatries.²¹⁵ In similar fashion, they extensively and critically interact with developmental theorists such as Erickson and Fowler in order to enhance comprehension of young adult identity, faith, and moral development for the sake of helping a new generation grow in personal sanctification. Such efforts result in theologically grounded and empirically informed paradigms and Christian formation models of the highest order.²¹⁶ Their endeavor provides an important foundation upon which to construct a Christ-centered model of spiritual leadership suitable for emerging adults.

²¹⁵ Setran and Kiesling, *Spiritual Formation in Emerging Adulthood*, 31-34.

²¹⁶ In their book in *Christian Formation*, James Estep and Jonathan Kim argue that spiritual formation models should reflect a careful synthesis of the social sciences and theology. While such integrative efforts ought to draw from both disciplines, theology must maintain epistemological primacy and be understood as an “indispensable and irreplaceable element.” James R. Estep and Jonathan H. Kim, eds., *Christian Formation: Integrating Theology and Human Development* (Nashville: B & H, 2010), 5. See especially pp. 45-51 for their complete discussion on this topic.

Emerging-Adult-Male Spiritual Formation

Franciscan priest Richard Rohr presents a pattern of male spiritual development differentiated between young (i.e., ages 1-32) and older men.²¹⁷ He posits that younger men need older men to “initiate” them into manhood and mentor them along the path of God’s wisdom.²¹⁸ Thomas Shaw draws upon Rohr for his model of emerging-adult-male vocational exploration and spiritual formation.²¹⁹

Emerging-Adult Leadership Development

When engaging works broadly related to emerging adults and leadership, one quickly observes that a wealth of resources on both scholarly and popular levels exist that addresses the development of those who manage and lead emerging adults, particularly, emerging adults part of the Millennial Generation.²²⁰ In other words, there appears to be greater interest and concern in assisting those who lead emerging adults rather than helping emerging adults become or grow as leaders themselves. Interestingly, while substantial resources have been devoted to adult leadership development efforts, Rebecca Reichard and Susan Paik found that those assets would be better invested in programs geared toward younger age groups, including emerging adults, given their low level of efficacy.²²¹ To the extent that emerging-adult leadership development has been given

²¹⁷ Richard Rohr, *From Wild Man to Wise Man: Reflections on Male Spirituality* (Cincinnati: St. Anthony Messenger, 2005).

²¹⁸ See the chart in Rohr, *From Wild Man to Wise Man*, 166-67, that presents his entire model and emphasizes his age-differentiated construct of male spirituality.

²¹⁹ Shaw, “Male Call.”

²²⁰ Consider, e.g., the following two journal articles devoted to the subject of leading Millennials that include emerging adults as an age group: Belal A. Kaifi et al., “A Multi-Generational Workforce: Managing and Understanding Millennials,” *International Journal of Business and Management* 7, no. 24 (2012): 88-93; Charles Thompson and Jane Brodie Gregory, “Managing Millennials: A Framework for Improving Attraction, Motivation, and Retention,” *Psychologist-Manager Journal* 15, no. 4 (2012): 237-46. On the popular level, Chris Tuff’s volume is illustrative of a category of works devoted to aiding the leaders and managers of young adults and not necessarily to developing emerging adults as leaders themselves. Chris Tuff, *The Millennial Whisperer: The Practical, Profit-Focused Playbook for Working with and Motivating the World’s Largest Generation* (New York: Morgan James, 2019).

²²¹ Reichard and Paik argue that “waiting until adulthood to attempt to develop leadership is

attention, a review of the literature clearly suggests that the vast majority takes place within university and collegiate settings.²²² Thus, in relative terms, little has been devoted to and written about emerging-adult leadership development, especially in the post-collegiate period of emerging adulthood (i.e., ages 23-29).

Emerging-Adult Spiritual Leadership Development

Similarly, few have taken on the task of emerging-adult spiritual leadership development, whether during or after the university years. Therefore, Sharon Daloz Parks stands out as she devotes an entire chapter in *Big Questions, Worthy Dreams* to the unique dimensions and possibilities of cultivating emerging-adult leaders informed by and deeply grounded in the spiritual domain of their lives (i.e., their faith).²²³ She writes, “Emerging adulthood is a distinctively vital time for the formation of the kind of critically aware faith that undergirds the trust, agency, sense of belonging, respect, resilience, compassion, intelligence, and confidence required for citizenship and leadership in today’s societies.”²²⁴ Parks advocates for the cultivation of learning and development communities specifically designed to help grow emerging adults whose faith significantly shapes their leadership and unlocks their potential for influence. She asserts,

too late. In fact researchers have shown that the impact of adult leadership development interventions is relatively small ($d = .65$), translating to a modest 16% increase over chance or no training.” Rebecca J. Reichard and Susan J. Paik, “Developing the Next Generation of Leaders: Research, Policy, and Practice,” in *Early Development and Leadership: Building the Next Generation of Leaders*, ed. Susan Elaine Murphy and Rebecca J. Reichard, 309-28 (New York: Routledge, 2011), 312.

²²² See especially Susan R. Komives, “College Student Leadership Identity Development,” in Murphy and Reichard, *Early Development and Leadership*, 273-92, and Robert J. Sternberg, “The Purpose of College Education: Producing a New Generation of Positive Leaders,” in Murphy and Reichard, *Early Development and Leadership*, 293-308.

²²³ Parks, *Big Questions* (2019), 146-76. For a specific approach to emerging-adult spiritual formation in particular setting, see Todd Dustin Clark, “Embracing Maturity: An Ignatian Christian Leadership Formation Model for Emerging Adults,” (DMin project, George Fox Evangelical Seminary, 2014).

²²⁴ Parks, *Big Questions* (2019), xvi.

The emerging adult has a unique capacity to receive and to create images that can lend themselves to the formation of worthy dreams and kindle the passion of a generation to heal and transform the world. By intention or default, the environments in which emerging adults dwell become communities of imagination—mentoring environments—with the power to shape or misshape the promise of emerging adulthood.²²⁵

Though her definition of faith as meaning making fails to fully comport with that of Scripture, her important contribution lies in the recognition that developing emerging adults as spiritual leaders (i.e., faith-formed influencers and agents of change) involves a learning, imagination-transforming, generative process rooted in a communal context and informed by the moral life.²²⁶ Parks does not differentiate on the basis of gender with respect to her understanding of or approach to emerging-adult spiritual leadership development.

Summary and Literature Gap

Thus far, I have reviewed the body of followership literature and related antecedent leadership works, surveyed the material that sought to apply followership frameworks within Christian contexts, and summarized and evaluated *The God Who Goes Before You*, with its presentation of Christ-centered followership. An analysis of said material demonstrates an expanding appreciation for followers and following as well as the leader-follower relational dynamic within the study of the phenomenon of leadership. Given the complex, multifaceted nature of leader-follower relations and their importance to organizational outcomes, researchers have sought to better understand and explain such interactions by employing a variety of analytical lens, models, and theories (e.g., organizational discourse analysis, theories of self-identification and identity,

²²⁵ Parks, *Big Questions* (2019), 176.

²²⁶ Parks understands leadership to be “*the ability to mobilize people to face their toughest challenges*, that is, leadership helps people move from the current pattern of organization through the swamp of the unknown to a more adequate pattern.” Parks, *Big Questions* (2019), 154 (emphasis original). Leadership, according to Parks, “enables a group, community, or society to reimagine what is and imagine into what can be.” In addition, she helpfully distinguishes leadership from the “practice of *authority*,” which “functions to maintain a steady state within the social group.”

follower types, role perceptions) within a followership conceptual framework. The findings from such analyses lend themselves to application across a growing variety of vocations and career fields. Wilder and Jones's work in *The God Who Goes Before You* clearly demonstrates the benefits of bringing followership-derived insights to bear in discussing Christian discipleship and leadership models.

In addition to the followership literature corpus, I reviewed emerging-adulthood publications relevant to the development of Christian emerging-adult men as spiritual leaders. As emerging-adult religious beliefs and behavior, as well as spiritual and leadership formation, directly relate to spiritual leadership development, I considered those works as part of my review. I was particularly interested in identifying material that considered emerging-adult men within each of those subcategories. My review of said literature suggests that Christian emerging-adult men face a distinct set of challenges on the path to becoming mature spiritual leaders. The emerging-adult literature base and the small number of works directly related to men demonstrates both the promise of and need for uniquely tailored approaches to Christian emerging-adult-male spiritual leadership development.

Finally, I note the gaps within the literature that this research project aims to address. I find that a void exists in the current literature with respect to supporting evidence of Christ-centered followership within the Pastoral Epistles since those New Testament books have not been examined in detail to make such a determination. Furthermore, no attempt has been made to ascertain to what extent and in what ways 1 Timothy, Titus, and 2 Timothy might enhance or further shape Wilder and Jones's model. Also, I have found no works that attempt to apply Wilder and Jones's Christ-centered followership model to the development of Christian emerging-adult-male spiritual leaders. Despite all that has been written on followership and emerging adulthood, no work as yet has validated and nuanced Christ-centered followership in light of the Pastoral Epistles and then applied Wilder and Jones's model to efforts to help Christian

emerging-adult men become spiritual leaders. Chapter 3, then, begins to address these gaps in the literature by analyzing the Pastoral Epistles for evidence supporting Christ-centered followership.

CHAPTER 3

CHRIST-CENTERED FOLLOWERSHIP EVIDENCED WITHIN THE PASTORAL EPISTLES

Having reviewed in the previous chapter the relevant Christ-centered followership and emerging-adulthood precedent literature, I now analyze the Pastoral Epistles for evidence of Michael Wilder and Timothy Jones's Christ-centered followership construct. Such an examination serves two immediate purposes: (1) to affirm said model by establishing the presence of its key conceptual components within the three New Testament letters addressed to Timothy and Titus and (2) to critique their framework in light of material within those three letters. In what follows, I demonstrate that the Pastoral Epistles validate Christ-centered followership and provide the basis by which their work can be nuanced. An affirmed and adjusted Christ-centered followership model provides a framework for the development of Christian emerging-adult male spiritual leaders, the subject matter of a subsequent chapter and another concern of this project.

The current chapter progresses through five sections. The initial section describes the methodological approach used to analyze 1 Timothy, Titus, and 2 Timothy as a means to determine whether or not those documents support Wilder and Jones's model. Section two establishes the salient Christ-centered followership concepts and subcategories at the heart of said exploration. Section three consists of summaries of the findings of an initial lexically based analysis designed to preliminarily identify those Christ-centered followership concepts present across the entirety of the Pastoral Epistles. Section four consists of a more detailed consideration of key Christ-centered followership verses and passages in order to more thoroughly validate Wilder and Jones's framework.

The chapter closes by affirming Wilder and Jones's Christ-centered followership model and then offering a critique of it based on the aforementioned analyses.

Analytical Methodology

I deploy an analytical approach to the Pastoral Epistles similar to those employed by Wilder and Jones, in *The God Who Goes Before You*, and George M. Wieland, in his publications on the soteriological content of the Pastoral Epistles. Wilder and Jones identify particular leadership and followership-related concepts, themes, and typologies and then trace them throughout the entirety of the Scriptures using the tools of biblical theology.¹ Next, they carefully synthesize their findings and make conclusions that they then apply to contemporary pastoral leadership settings.

For example, Wilder and Jones recognize the concept of the *imago Dei* and its corollaries of human ruling and judging as important biblical notions that directly and significantly relate to leadership through followership.² As such, they consider the image of God across the sweep of the Bible's salvation-historical epochs.³ In conjunction with the New Testament doctrine of union with Christ, Wilder and Jones make a number of important observations, draw conclusions, and then integrate them into their model. In view of their findings, they state, "The position to which the leader is called is not sovereignty above or separation from the community but stewardship within the

¹ See, e.g., Michael Wilder and Timothy P. Jones, *The God Who Goes Before You* (Nashville: B & H, 2018), 7-9, where the authors discuss their understanding of the nature of Scripture and their overall methodological approach to identifying and synthesizing leadership principles from biblical texts. They state their core interpretive suppositions as follows: (1) "Interpreting the Scriptures in their historical contexts means exploring each text in light of its grammar, genre, and original setting." (2) "Interpreting the Scriptures in their epochal context means recognizing that God did not reveal everything to his people at once." (3) "Interpreting the Scriptures in their canonical context calls us to seek God's intention for each text by reading the text as part of a single, unified, Spirit-inspired canon centered in the revelation of God's kingdom in Jesus Christ" (p. 9; emphasis original). I approach this study with the same set of commitments and suppositions.

² Wilder and Jones, *The God Who Goes Before You*, 28-31.

³ Wilder and Jones, *The God Who Goes Before You*, 16-20.

community in union with Christ.”⁴ While Wilder and Jones consider the breadth of Scripture to formulate their Christ-centered followership framework, I limit my source material to that of the Pastoral Epistles—though this study is grounded in similar hermeneutical and methodological frames and is in many respects an extension of their project.⁵

George M. Wieland’s monograph *The Significance of Salvation* and later chapter “The Function of Salvation in the Letters to Timothy and Titus” in *Entrusted with the Gospel* make use of a lexical-syntactical methodology.⁶ As the titles of his works suggest, Wieland is particularly concerned with understanding the concept of salvation as presented within the Pastoral Epistles. More to the point, he sets out to investigate the soteriological constitution of those letters by asking, “What is the content of the idea(s) of salvation expressed and what is the function of soteriological elements of these letters?”⁷ To answer those key questions, Wieland first identifies specific verses that contain soteriological terms (e.g., σωζω and its cognates).⁸ Then, with respect to each verse he

⁴ Wilder and Jones, *The God Who Goes Before You*, 20. Continuing the point, Wilder and Jones argue,

“The Christ-following leader”—according to our definition—lives “as a bearer of God’s image in union with Christ and his people.” Because Christian leadership is at its very core “followership,” Christ-following leaders must never pretend that they possess sovereignty above or separation from the people they serve. We are fellow bearers of God’s image with the people we lead, and Christ himself has united us with them.” (21)

In fact, the biblical notions of the *imago Dei* and union with Christ are so fundamental to their overall model that they are incorporated into the definition of Christ-centered followership: “*The Christ-following leader—living as a bearer of God’s image in union with Christ and his people—develops a diverse community of fellow laborers who are equipped and empowered to pursue shared goals that fulfill the creation mandate and the Great Commission in submission of the Word of God.*” (16; emphasis original)

⁵ In point of fact, I view this thesis as an effort to thoroughly ground Christ-centered followership in the Pastoral Epistles, mildly massage it in light of the content of those letters, and apply it to individuals outside local church pastoral leadership contexts—specifically, Christian emerging-adult males.

⁶ George M. Wieland, *The Significance of Salvation: A Study of Salvation Language in the Pastoral Epistles* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2006); Wieland, “The Function of Salvation in the Letters to Timothy and Titus,” in *Entrusted with the Gospel: Paul’s Theology in the Pastoral Epistles*, ed. Andreas J. Köstenberger and Terry L. Wilder, 153-72 (Nashville: B & H Academic, 2010). Wieland’s 2010 chapter reflects a distillation and summarization of his earlier monograph.

⁷ Wieland, *The Significance of Salvation*, 14.

⁸ Wieland, *The Significance of Salvation*, 16-20.

locates, he utilizes grammatical-historical exegesis and interacts with relevant secondary literature so as to formulate conclusions as to its meaning in light of the surrounding material and its significance in view of the letters' purposes.⁹ Finally, he correlates and synthesizes his findings in order to draw broader deductions and point out a number of implications.¹⁰ While the breadth and depth of Wieland's study goes beyond the purview of this current project, his work serves as a recognized and Pastoral Epistles-specific pattern for this current project to track.

Therefore, in section two, I locate and categorize the key concepts of Wilder and Jones's framework. As will be seen, these generally fall within the broader followership categories of leader identities, relationships, roles, and practices (i.e., behaviors).¹¹ Then, utilizing both the Greek New Testament and an English translation of the Pastoral Epistles, I identify words and phrases that correspond to the Christ-centered followership concepts of identities, relationships, roles, and practices.¹² For example, one of the Christ-centered followership practices Wilder and Jones present is that of "Word-proclamation" (i.e., Word of God or Scripture declaration and teaching).¹³ A study of the Greek and English texts of 2 Timothy in search of language related to "Word-proclamation" locates Paul's charge to Timothy to "preach the word" (κήρυξον τὸν λόγον) in 4:2. After finding a word or phrase of interest, I consult BDAG in order to initially establish whether or not the word(s) in question support(s) a key Christ-centered followership concept. In the case of the example from 2 Timothy 4:2, BDAG's entry for

⁹ Wieland, *The Significance of Salvation*, 14.

¹⁰ See, e.g., Wieland's summaries after his analysis of each letter (pp. 102-6, 175-80, and 234-38) as well as "Part 5: Conclusions" (pp. 239-66). Wieland, *The Significance of Salvation*.

¹¹ Mary Uhl-Bien et al., "Followership Theory: A Review and Research Agenda," *Leadership Quarterly* 25, no. 1 (2014): 99.

¹² Michael W. Holmes, *The Greek New Testament: Society of Biblical Literature Edition* (Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2010); *English Standard Version (ESV)*.

¹³ Wilder and Jones, *The God Who Goes Before You*, 10.

κηρύσσω (“to preach”; lexical form of κήρυξον) states that κηρύσσω means to make “public declarations” that are “divine in origin or relates to divinity.”¹⁴ Since BDAG’s gloss corresponds with Wilder and Jones’s description of the practice of Word-proclamation, I preliminarily categorize that verse according to the concept.

I provide two further examples demonstrating my methodological approach in sections two and three. First, Wilder and Jones present the biblical concept of steward as a central leadership identity within their construct.¹⁵ Furthermore, they note that the notion of steward within the Scriptures connotes receiving an important responsibility or being entrusted with something of value or import by another, higher ranking agent. As such, they incorporate that understanding into their model.¹⁶ In Titus 1:7, Paul states that “an overseer, as God’s steward [εἶναι ὡς θεοῦ οἰκονόμον], must be above reproach.” Since BDAG explains that οἰκονόμος in this occurrence conveys the notion of “one who is entrusted with management in connection with transcendent matters, *administrator*,” this reference would be placed into this study’s “Identity: Steward, Slave, or Servant” category as it corresponds to Wilder and Jones’s presentation of steward.¹⁷

Second, a review of the text of the Pastoral Epistles for related steward vocabulary or concepts identifies 1 Timothy 6:20, where Paul directs his protégé to “guard the deposit entrusted to you [τὴν παραθήκην φύλαξον].” BDAG notes that παραθήκη (“property entrusted to another, *deposit*”) has in view in this verse “the

¹⁴ BDAG, “κηρύσσω,” 543-44. Please note that any portion of a BDAG quotation within the text of this thesis or in a footnote rendered in italics reflects the emphasis of the original.

¹⁵ For a few examples, as well as Wilder and Jones’s description of a steward and its implications for leadership as followership, see Wilder and Jones, *The God Who Goes Before You*, 10-11, 20-21, 28-31, 44-5, 97-99.

¹⁶ See, e.g., Wilder and Jones, *The God Who Goes Before You*, 97. In that case, they describe leaders as entrusted with caring for and protecting God’s people, the church. They reference Heb 13:17 and 1 Pet 5:2-3.

¹⁷ BDAG, “οἰκονόμος,” 698.

spiritual heritage entrusted to the orthodox Christian.”¹⁸ In addition, φυλάσσω conveys the notion “to protect by taking careful measures,” with the emphasis in this instance on the idea that what is guarded (i.e., that which has been entrusted) “is not lost or damaged.”¹⁹ Thus, I place “guard the deposit entrusted to you” into the “Identity: Steward, Slave, or Servant” category. Then, I take the results from this analysis and populate a matrix that includes the specific “Identity,” “Relationship,” “Role,” or “Practice” categories as well as the biblical text in view and a brief summary analysis. See the following table (table 1) as an example of said matrix found in its entirety in the appendix.

Table 1. Pastoral Epistle Christ-centered followership matrix example

Category: Identity	Biblical Text	Summary Analysis
Steward, Slave, or Servant	1 Tim 6:20 “O Timothy, guard the deposit entrusted to you” Ὡς Τιμόθεε, τὴν παραθήκην φύλαξον	Paul charges Timothy to carefully protect that which has been given over to his care (παραθήκην φύλαξον). ²⁰ Thus, the concept of steward appears to be very much in view as stewards oversee another’s property, other valuables, etc.

Upon the completion of the initial lexically based analysis of each of the Pastoral Epistles and population of corresponding matrixes, I provide a summary of the research findings in section three. Then, in the interest of establishing the presence of material within the Pastoral Epistles supporting Wilder and Jones’s construct, I conduct a

¹⁸ BDAG, “παραθήκη,” 764.

¹⁹ BDAG, “παραθήκη,” 764; BDAG, “φυλάσσω,” 1068.

²⁰ BDAG, “παραθήκη,” 764; BDAG, “φυλάσσω,” 1068. BDAG states that παραθήκη refers to “property entrusted to another” and only appears in the Pastoral Epistles along with φυλάσσω. Thus, it conveys the idea of “the spiritual heritage entrusted to the orthodox Christian” (764).

more thorough analysis of key conceptually related verses. Therefore, section four of this chapter consists of exegetically grounded discussions of several passages that, on the basis of initial analysis, verify key pillars of Wilder and Jones's construct. For example, I identify material within 2 Timothy 3:10-11 relating to the Christ-centered followership practice of following and setting godly examples. Primary and secondary source-material analysis demonstrates the ways that 2 Timothy 3:10-11 exhibit the example setting and following practice that Wilder and Jones suggest characterizes Christ-centered followership. The cumulative result of these analyses across the various conceptual categories establish that Wilder and Jones's model is in fact supported quite well by the content of the letters to Timothy and Titus. Lastly, section five validates Wilder and Jones's model on the basis of the above analyses and offers a mild critique in light of the imitation motif present within Paul's correspondence to Timothy and Titus.

Primary source material in this chapter consists of the Pastoral Epistles both in its original language and English translation. Secondary works include lexicons, theological and exegetical resources, commentaries, and monographs. Thus far, I have presented an overview of the methodology adopted in this chapter. The following section establishes the salient Christ-centered followership concepts at the heart of this exploration.

Christ-Centered Followership Key Concepts

Boas Shamir, a prominent contributor in the field of followership studies, argues that in order “to explain the phenomenon of leadership in a comprehensive manner, we need a balanced model of leadership that includes both leaders and followers as causal agents.”²¹ Such a “balanced model” requires consideration of both leader

²¹ Boas Shamir, “From Passive Recipients to Active Co-Producers,” in *Follower-Centered Perspectives on Leadership: A Tribute to the Memory of James R. Meindl*, ed. Boas Shamir et al., ix-xxxix (Greenwich, CT: Information Age, 2009), xx.

characteristics and behaviors along with follower qualities and actions. Within such a framework, leaders and followers influence each other in the context of relationships, resulting in leadership outcomes. Thus, according to Shamir, leadership can best be characterized as a social relationship “co-produced” by both leaders and followers. Any reflection on leadership, therefore, ought to equally consider leaders, followers, and their relationship.²²

Wilder and Jones’s followership construct coincides with much of Shamir’s. For instance, both frameworks emphasize leaders and followers, the distinction between them, and the importance of leadership (i.e., leaders engaging in distinctly leadership behaviors).²³ Whereas Shamir makes reference to leader and follower “roles” and “behaviors,” Wilder and Jones speak of “roles” and “practices.”²⁴ Furthermore, both stress the importance of leader-follower relationships (referred to simply as “relationships”) and the ways leaders and followers influence one another in the context of those relationships.²⁵ Finally, Shamir as well as Wilder and Jones note that leader and follower identity and identity formation are foundational considerations to the leader-follower dynamic and leadership phenomenon.²⁶

²² Shamir, “From Passive Recipients to Active Co-Producers,” xx-xxi. See also George B. Graen and Mary Uhl-Bien, “Relationship-Based Approach to Leadership: Development of Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) Theory of Leadership over 25 Years: Applying a Multi-Level Multi-Domain Perspective,” *Leadership Quarterly* 6, no. 2 (1995): 219-47.

²³ Shamir asserts that it is important to differentiate between leaders and followers and recognize that leaders and followers assume distinct roles and responsibilities within various groups. In fact, he rejects the notion of shared leadership, referring to it as “an oxymoron.” Shamir, “From Passive Recipients to Active Co-Producers,” xviii-xix. Wilder and Jones clearly recognize that leaders and followers have differentiated roles and correspondent behaviors or “practices.” See, e.g., Wilder and Jones, *The God Who Goes Before You*, 16.

²⁴ Shamir, “From Passive Recipients to Active Co-Producers,” xx; Wilder and Jones, *The God Who Goes Before You*, 8, 14. For the purposes of this study, “roles” refer to those formal or informal offices and clearly delineated responsibilities associated with leading or following in particular contexts.

²⁵ Shamir, “From Passive Recipients to Active Co-Producers,” xx-xxi; Wilder and Jones, *The God Who Goes Before You*, 203n31.

²⁶ Shamir as well as Wilder and Jones recognize the significance of leader and follower identity, though Shamir utilizes the terminology of “self-concept.” Shamir, “From Passive Recipients to Active Co-Producers,” xxiv-xxvi. Wilder and Jones adopt the term “identity” throughout their work to describe a person’s foundational self-perception and understanding. Wilder and Jones, *The God Who Goes*

However, a few significant differences exist between Shamir’s conception of followership and that of Wilder and Jones. Wilder and Jones acknowledge that their framework is not a pure followership (or “leader-follower directed” as they refer to it) model as they include an important leader-centric component.²⁷ Reflecting the clear teaching of Scripture, they place Christ at the top of their model as the singular leader within a hierarchical structure.²⁸ Christ’s supreme position of leadership and authority over his church informs another significant and distinguishing emphasis within their Christ-centered followership model—all leaders, regardless of their station on an organizational chart, are first and foremost followers, followers of Christ.²⁹ Thus, individuals within this model function both in leadership and follower roles, shifting between the two from one moment to the next, and, ontologically speaking, exist as both leader and follower simultaneously. For example, looking to the Pastoral Epistles, an individual such as Timothy functions in his leadership role as apostolic representative in Ephesus while also perceiving of himself and acting as a follower of Paul and ultimately Christ.³⁰

Before You, 16-17. Both acknowledge the critical role identity plays in terms of informing and driving individual behavior across the domains of relationships and roles. Shamir, xxv-xxvi; Wilder and Jones, 101. Shamir, however, in keeping with social identity theory, places the emphasis upon the social development of individual identity. Shamir, xvi, xxiv-xxvi. While Wilder and Jones do not explicitly discount the reality or importance of socially shaped individual identity, they emphasize the divinely established and revealed identity of leaders and followers. For a helpful presentation of social identity theory as it relates to leadership, see Michael A. Hogg, “A Social Identity Theory of Leadership,” *Personality and Social Psychology Review* 5, no. 3 (2001): 184-200. Shamir cites Hogg’s work in his bibliography (xxxvii).

²⁷ “Leader-follower directed” reflects terminology Wilder and Jones utilize for a followership-grounded model. Wilder and Jones, *The God Who Goes Before You*, 14.

²⁸ Wilder and Jones, *The God Who Goes Before You*, 16.

²⁹ Wilder and Jones emphasize this point in the following manner: “The single proposition that ties these threads together is the recognition that the leader’s pursuit of God always takes precedence over the leader’s positional authority. Before we are leaders, we must be followers—followers of a God who goes before us.” Wilder and Jones, *The God Who Goes Before You*, 10.

³⁰ Another such example would be that of a Cretan man serving as an elder in a local congregation on the island. In such a scenario, he would ideally embrace both son and slave identities; relate to God, Titus, his fellow elders, and congregants, accordingly; understand his overseer role and its responsibilities; and adopt practices commensurate to that role.

Comparing and contrasting Shamir's framework with the Wilder-Jones model not only provides a means of highlighting the ways in which Christ-centered followership reflects much of followership theory but also brings into clearer view the key conceptual categories of Wilder and Jones's project that make it distinct. The concepts of identity, relationships, roles, and practices form the chief theoretical components of Christ-centered followership and, as such, dictate the categories for this study's analysis of the Pastoral Epistles. Thus, I begin by examining the letters to Timothy and Titus generally for identity-related vocabulary and especially for the key identity indicators Wilder and Jones present: the *imago Dei*-related concepts of sonship, steward, and union with Christ, as well as slave and shepherd.³¹ As far as relationships, I consider verses in the Pastoral Epistles addressing the ways in which a leader relates to God and God to the leader, how leaders interact with other leaders, and leader-follower relations. Formal leader roles (e.g., apostle, elders, deacons) as well as informal ones (e.g., teacher and preacher) also garner attention in this analysis.³² Finally, I examine verses that describe or mandate leader-as-follower practices such as proclaiming God's Word, following and setting proper examples, enduring suffering, caring for and equipping God's people, empowering fellow laborers, and defending and promoting justice.³³

³¹ Wilder and Jones, *The God Who Goes Before You*. For specific topics, see the following: (1) *imago Dei* (p. 16); (2) union with Christ (pp. 17-18); (3) sonship (p. 101); (4) slave and servant (pp. 146-47); (5) steward (pp. 10-11, 21); and (6) shepherd (p. 156).

³² Wilder and Jones acknowledge the reality and need for different leadership roles under the new covenant though they reject the widespread adoption of Old Testament prophet, priest, king, and judge roles as types applicable to contemporary pastoral leadership. Wilder and Jones, *The God Who Goes Before You*, 51-52, 99-101. The Pastoral Epistles address the matter of leadership roles and devote material to describe both formal (e.g., apostle, elder, deacon) and informal (e.g., teacher, preacher, evangelist, etc.) roles.

³³ Wilder and Jones, *The God Who Goes Before You*. For specific topics, see the following: (1) submission to and dependence upon God (pp. 65-69); (2) proclaim God's truth (p. 45); (3) follow and provide godly examples (pp. 152-53, 183-84); (4) endure suffering (pp. 125-26, 157-59); (5) develop, equip, and empower God's people for God's purposes (pp. 179, 184); and (6) defend and promote God's justice (p. 10).

Identification of Christ-Centered Followership Key Concepts within the Pastoral Epistles

On the basis of careful reading of the Pastoral Epistles and lexical analysis, I locate those words and phrases that correspond to the Christ-centered followership categories of identity, relationships, roles, and practices. Those words and phrases and their chapter and verse references populate tables consisting of both major categories as well as subcategories that make up Wilder and Jones's construct.³⁴ I do not place a word or phrase into the matrixes in the appendix if they are not supported by BDAG's entry. Categorical cells within the matrix that lack any corresponding textual support remain blank. In most cases, attentive reading and lexical review of individual verses provide sufficient evidence to warrant placement in a particular category.³⁵ To the extent that there is question as to a verse's meaning, I assign the verse to its respective category and note the fact in the "Summary Analysis" cell. Appendix 1 contains all twelve matrices demarked as tables A1-A12. These tables and their associated research data inform the following summaries.

Christ-Centered Followership in 1 Timothy

First Timothy evidences the vast majority of Christ-centered followership elements discussed above.³⁶ A close analysis of 1 Timothy locates words, phrases, and concepts that correspond to the Christ-centered followership categories of identity, relationships, roles, and practices. In what follows, I present my findings with respect to each of those groups.

Identity. 1 Timothy possesses several examples of the followership notion of

³⁴ For an example, see table 1. For the entire array of tables, see appendix 1.

³⁵ As this aspect of my analysis is preliminary in nature, I utilize tentative language (e.g., "seems" and "appears") to describe my findings.

³⁶ See appendix 1, tables A1-A4.

identity. Paul's mention to Timothy in 3:15 of one's inclusion within God's household suggests that Christians (leaders and followers) are actually part of God's family and, therefore, sons and daughters of God (i.e., the sonship identity). Furthermore, Paul's personal reference to having been entrusted with the gospel (1:11), and his reminder to Timothy that he, too, has been given a "deposit" for safe keeping (6:20), coincide with the steward identity.³⁷ Paul's steward identity appears equally present when he notes his appointment by Christ "to his service" (1:12).

Not only does the apostle to the gentiles seem to function from a steward identity, but he also, in a handful of instances, operates as if Timothy is grounded in such an identity as well. For instance, in 1:18 and 6:13, Paul authoritatively issues instructions to Timothy, entrusting him with specific and significant responsibilities, much like a person in higher authority granting important tasks to a steward.³⁸ Paul also directly refers to his protégé as a "good servant of Christ Jesus" conditioned on Timothy's instructional emphasis among certain men (4:6-7). Finally, the overseer's steward identity seems to be in view when Paul inquires, "If someone [an overseer] does not know how to manage his own household, how will he care for God's church?" (3:5).

Relationships. In 1 Timothy 6:11, Paul refers to Timothy as "man of God" and, among other directives, instructs him to "pursue . . . godliness" (εὐσέβειαν). BDAG indicates that εὐσέβεια in this context connotes an "awesome respect accorded to God."³⁹ In terms of relating to God, then, Paul appears to exhort Timothy to diligently cultivate his personal sense of reverence toward the Lord. As far as relating to a fellow leader as well as a follower, in this case Timothy, Paul's reference to his apprentice as "my true

³⁷ Wilder and Jones, *The God Who Goes Before You*, 29-31.

³⁸ This is further illustrated in 5:21 where Paul, by means of serious exhortation [διαμαρτύρομαι], directs Timothy to discharge significant responsibilities.

³⁹ BDAG, "εὐσέβεια," 412. See Wilder and Jones, *The God Who Goes Before You*, 137-39.

child in the faith” (1:2) and later as simply “my child” (τέκνον; 1:18) conveys the sense of “close friendship” and “spiritual parentage” rather any reference to biological relationship.⁴⁰ Such a close personal relationship grounded the way that Paul related to Timothy and, undoubtedly, their leader-follower dynamic. The letter of 1 Timothy also highlights another important dimension of Christ-centered followership: the relational dynamic of pastoral leaders with fellow followers. In 5:1-3, Paul directs Timothy to relate to different gender and age groups within the church in familial terms. Timothy ought to “encourage” older men as he would “a father,” and engage “younger men” as “brothers,” treat “older women” as “mothers,” and respect “younger women” as “sisters,” and “honor” widows. First Timothy addresses various dimensions of the leader-follower relational dynamic as would be expected within a Christ-centered followership framework.

Roles. First Timothy devotes considerable space to addressing the various roles of a Christ-centered follower-leader. Paul himself mentions his roles as apostle, preacher, and teacher (1:1; 2:7), all of which share the common element of transmitting to others information about God and the things of God.⁴¹ First Timothy also has much to say about the more formal local church roles of elders (3:1-7, also 5:17-20) and deacons (3:8-13), and Wilder and Jones address the elder and deacon roles within their Christ-centered follower framework.

Practices. The practices category concerns those specific leader and follower behaviors that have been demonstrated through Wilder and Jones’s project to be

⁴⁰ BDAG, “τέκνον,” 994.

⁴¹ For example, ἀπόστολος means “messenger” and predominately within the New Testament refers to “a group of highly honored believers with a special function as God’s envoys.” BDAG, “ἀπόστολος,” 122. A preacher (κῆρυξ) can be understood as “one who makes public declarations, especially of a transcendent nature.” BDAG, “κῆρυξ,” 543. Of the teaching role, Paul, in 1 Tim 2:7, says that he is “a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth.”

hallmarks of Christ-centered followership. God-submissive and dependent actions on the part of follower-leaders form the centerpiece of their model of leadership:

The Gospels portray Jesus as a God-fearing, God-following leader who demonstrated submission to the Father, dependence on the Spirit, and willingness to serve. As he pursued these patterns, he instructed his disciples how to live and how to lead. Jesus then called his disciples to imitate his life of submission, dependence, and service. These patterns should characterize the life of every believer in Jesus Christ, and leaders in particular.⁴²

In that vein and near the close to his correspondence, Paul exhorts Timothy to “flee” (φεῦγε⁴³) the love of money and instead “run after” (δίωκε⁴⁴) “righteousness” (δικαιοσύνην⁴⁵) and “godliness” (εὐσέβειαν⁴⁶), among other virtues. Such directives suggest tangible ways of submitting to, and exercising dependence upon, God.

Of the various Christ-centered followership practices advocated and evident within the first of the Pastoral Epistles, Word-proclamation imperatives number the highest. Throughout chapter 4 especially, Timothy is directed to instruct the brothers concerning matters grounded in “the words of the faith and of good doctrine” (4:6), to “command and teach these things” (i.e., matters related to godliness and hoping in God; 4:11), to “devote” himself “to the public reading of Scripture” (4:13), and to be especially attentive of his own teaching (4:16).⁴⁷

Wilder and Jones also emphasize the practices of following and setting godly examples as part of their leader-as-follower construct, and material related to those behaviors are present within the pages of 1 Timothy.⁴⁸ Paul understands his life to be “an

⁴² Wilder and Jones, *The God Who Goes Before You*, 156.

⁴³ BDAG, “φεύγω,” 1052.

⁴⁴ BDAG, “δίωκω,” 254.

⁴⁵ BDAG, “δικαιοσύνη,” 248.

⁴⁶ BDAG, “εὐσέβεια,” 412.

⁴⁷ See also 3:2, where one of the qualifications of an overseer is stated as “able to teach.”

⁴⁸ Wilder and Jones, *The God Who Goes Before You*, 127, 152-53.

example” (ὑποτύπωσιν) of the readiness of God to generously pour out mercy upon those who believe.⁴⁹ Then, in 4:12 and 15, Paul commends the practice to Timothy by directing him to “set the believers an example in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity” as well as to accord his life in such a fashion that his “progress” will be “evident so as to be readily known.”⁵⁰

In addition, the Christ-centered followership practice of feeding, protecting, and equipping God’s people is readily apparent in 1:3-5, where Paul exhorts Timothy to command certain persons to cease teaching erroneous doctrine. Furthermore, in the case of the Ephesian church, Timothy is to protect the brethren from those who would presume to be “teachers of the law” though they lack necessary “understanding” (1:6-7).

Finally, Wilder and Jones observe from Scripture that the defense and promotion of justice constitute another category of Christ-centered followership practices. Paul directs Timothy very specifically in terms of dealing with accusations of sinful conduct against an elder and confirmed cases of sinful transgression. Furthermore, the apostle exhorts Timothy to act justly without “prejudging” (προκρίματος⁵¹) and “partiality” (πρόσκλησιν⁵²). These admonitions, along with Paul’s instructions concerning the care and treatment of widows, appear to reflect practices that coincide with Wilder and Jones’s notion of promoting and defending justice. Only the practice of enduring suffering within Wilder and Jones’s construct is not discerned within 1 Timothy.

⁴⁹ Literally, ὑποτύπωσις means “a pattern.” In 1 Tim 1:16, the notions of “model” and “prototype” are in view. Concerning 1 Tim 1:16, the entry reads, “as prime recipient of extraordinary mercy in view of his infamous past, Paul serves as a model for the certainty of availability of mercy to others.” BDAG, “ὑποτύπωσις,” 1042.

⁵⁰ BDAG, “φανερός,” 1047-48.

⁵¹ BDAG notes that the meaning of πρόκριμα in 1 Tim 5:21 is that of “a judgment that involves taking a side beforehand.” BDAG, “πρόκριμα,” 871.

⁵² BDAG, “πρόσκλησις,” 881.

Christ-Centered Followership in Titus

A study of the correspondence to Titus finds the elements of many Christ-centered followership model components. Again, these can be grouped into the following categories: identity, relationships, roles, and practices. In what follows, I present my findings as they relate to each of those groupings.

Identity. A careful reading and lexical analysis of key words throughout the letter to Titus demonstrates the presence of several Christ-centered followership model components. With respect to leader-follower identity, a number of verses within Titus emphasize the leader as steward, slave, or servant. For example, in 1:1, Paul greets Titus by referring to himself as “a servant of God” (δοῦλος θεοῦ⁵³). In view of Murray Harris’s work, a preferable English rendering of δοῦλος would be that of “slave,” and Paul appears to embrace that identity at the outset of his correspondence.⁵⁴ Furthermore, he acknowledges his standing as a steward in God’s service by noting in 1:3 that he was “entrusted” with the Word of God and its proclamation by the authority of the Lord himself.

Similarly, Paul directs Titus to conduct his ministerial responsibilities with “all authority” (2:15). Since a steward possesses “delegated authority,” as Wilder and Jones note, Titus’s authority in this instance appears to be not his own but that delegated by Paul and ultimately the Lord.⁵⁵ Simple lexical analysis fails to satisfactorily establish to what extent—if any—Paul’s statement concerning Christ’s actions to secure “a people for his own possession” (2:14) relates to union with Christ or sonship. The letter to Titus lacks reference to the shepherd identity.

⁵³ Also, in 1:7, Paul refers to overseers as “God’s steward.”

⁵⁴ Murray Harris, *Slave of Christ: A New Testament Metaphor for Total Devotion to Christ*, New Studies in Biblical Theology 8 (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2001).

⁵⁵ Wilder and Jones, *The God Who Goes Before You*, 24.

Relationships. The primary leader-follower relationship reference occurs in Titus 1:4, where Paul calls Titus his “true child in a common faith.” As in 1 Timothy, Paul’s use of child (τέκνον) in Titus conveys the notion of a close friendship and spiritual biography. Undoubtedly, Paul’s affection for Titus, not unlike that of a father for a son, significantly shaped the leader-follower relational dynamic in that instance as well. The letter to Titus contains no specific material addressing the leader’s relationship with God or the leader-and-fellow-follower relationship.

Roles. Material related to the various categories of Christ-centered followership roles emerge from an analysis of Paul’s correspondence to Titus. In the letter’s greeting, Paul identifies himself with reference to his apostolic role (1:1).⁵⁶ In addition, he addresses the role of overseer by directing Titus to “appoint elders in every town” (1:5) and explaining their qualifications (1:6-9). The author, however, makes no mention of the role of deacons. In contrast, the informal roles of preaching and teaching receive relatively significant attention. For example, Paul understands his preaching role as having been entrusted to him by God (1:3). In addition, he directs Titus concerning his public instruction to “teach” (λάλει⁵⁷) what accords with sound doctrine” (2:1). Titus is to select and appoint overseers who “hold firm to the trustworthy word as taught” in order to provide “instruction in sound doctrine” (1:9) to those in the churches. Older women also have a teaching role as they are “to teach what is good” (καλοδιδασκάλους;⁵⁸ 2:3-4) to young married female congregants.

⁵⁶ As noted earlier concerning Paul’s self-designation of ἀπόστολος, the term can either be a more formal reference to Paul’s apostolic office or less formal role as gospel envoy. BDAG, “ἀπόστολος,” 122.

⁵⁷ In view of the semantic domain of λαλέω as presented in BDAG, the meaning of “speaking” or “uttering words . . . with reference to what is expressed” seems most likely given the emphasis in 2:1 on “sound doctrine.” BDAG, “λαλέω,” 582-83.

⁵⁸ BDAG, “καλοδιδάσκαλος,” 504.

Practices. Similar to 1 Timothy and consistent with Christ-centered followership, Paul’s correspondence to Titus emphasizes the practice of proclaiming the Word of God (2:1,15; 3:8). For example, the very “things” Titus is to “declare” (λάλει) in 2:15 are those items listed in 2:11-14 (i.e., God’s saving and sanctifying work through Christ). In addition, another reiteration of God’s saving plan in Jesus (3:4-7) informs the directive to Titus to “insist on these things” (διαβεβαιούσθαι; 3:8), or “speak confidently” about them.⁵⁹ Titus, then, as a Christ-centered follower, was to regularly declare the Word of God.⁶⁰

In addition, Paul directs his protégé in Crete to view his (i.e., Titus’s) life as a “pattern” or “model” (τύπον) with respect to his good works or “moral life” for those around him.⁶¹ Thus, Paul includes the practice of setting a godly example within his letter to Titus. No reference, however, is made to the practice of enduring suffering as present within the Wilder and Jones’s model.

The practices of feeding, protecting, equipping, and empowering saints overlap in many respects with the teaching and preaching roles and Word-proclamation practices. Protecting God’s people also involves the exercise of Word-informed rebukes. In 1:9, overseers are directed to “hold firm to the trustworthy word” so they can “rebuke” those who affirm something different than it and sound doctrine. Even more to the point, Timothy must rebuke (ἐλεγχε)⁶² those in error (1:12) such that they “may be sound” (ὕγιαίνωσιν⁶³) in the faith (πίστει⁶⁴). Through the use of proper rebuke, Titus may

⁵⁹ BDAG, “διαβεβαιόομαι,” 226

⁶⁰ Paul personally valued and engaged in the practice of Word-proclamation (see, for example, 1:3) and viewed it as an important practice associated with the role of overseer (1:9) with instruction in sound doctrine being grounded in God’s Word.

⁶¹ BDAG, “τύπος,” 1020.

⁶² The ESV renders ἐλεγχε, which conveys the meaning “to bring a person to the point of recognizing wrongdoing,” as “rebuke.” BDAG, “ἐλέγγω,” 315.

⁶³ BDAG, “ὕγιαίνω,” 1023.

correct—and thus protect—individual believers and the community of faith from error, both doctrinal and ethical. Furthermore, the appointment of elders, so as to “put what remained into order” (λείποντα ἐπιδιορθώσει⁶⁵), would contribute both to feeding and to protecting God’s people in view of the elder-role description and needs of the Cretan churches. In addition, by appointing qualified elders across the island and acknowledging their authority and responsibilities, Titus would empower a new generation of follower-leaders to feed, lead, protect, and empower God’s people. Similarly, Paul’s directive concerning older women and their instructional role vis-à-vis young women (3:3) could well be considered an empowering practice.

By reminding the Cretan congregants to submit to the governing authorities, to be obedient, and to engage in good works (3:1-2), Titus would be promoting justice consistent with a Christ-centered follower-as-leader paradigm. Such practices aid the political authorities in executing their primary duties of promoting justice and retraining evil. Paul’s letter to Titus lacks explicit references to the practices of submission to and dependence upon God as well as those directly related a leader looking to or following godly examples.

Christ-centered Followership in 2 Timothy

The second epistle addressed to Timothy contains several Christ-centered followership identity-related concepts, particularly union with Christ as well as steward and slave. The other categories of relationships, role, and practices are evidenced—especially leader-as-follower practices. Below, I consider the material from 2 Timothy that falls within each of these groupings.

⁶⁴ That is, the aim of the rebuke is to ensure the purity of the person’s devotion. BDAG, “πίστις,” 819.

⁶⁵ BDAG, “ἐπιδιορθώω,” 371.

Identity. The leader-as-follower’s identity figures prominently in 2 Timothy. In 2:11-13, Paul draws from a familiar literary source in order to remind Timothy of ways in which believers are united with Christ. He begins by stating that if “we have died with him” (συναπεθάνομεν⁶⁶), then as believers in Jesus Christ, “we will live with him” (συνζήσομεν⁶⁷). This verse reminds Timothy of the incredible reality that “Christians die and live with their Lord.”⁶⁸ Another dimension of the believer’s union with Christ is reflected in 2:13, where Christ’s faithfulness to even the faithless is assured because he “cannot deny” (οὐ δύναται ἀρνήσασθαι⁶⁹) himself. A few verses later, Paul gives what appears to be another reminder to Timothy of one’s union with Christ: “The Lord knows those who are his” (2:19). In their totality, these verses appear to be the most robust statements regarding the concept of union with Christ in the Pastoral Epistles, and they emphasize the degree to which a Christian is joined with Christ. Paul’s words in this passage most likely served as an important reminder to Timothy of a significant aspect of the leader-as-follower’s identity.

Second Timothy also makes a number of references to the leader’s steward and slave identities. Paul remarks in 1:3 that he, like his forebears, serves (λατρεύω⁷⁰) God, and in 1:11 notes that he was “appointed” (ετέθη⁷¹) as preacher, apostle, and teacher for Christ and the gospel. God’s authoritative assignment of Paul to these roles parallels

⁶⁶ According to BDAG, συναποθνήσκω means to “die with.” With respect to 2 Tim 2:11, the entry notes that “dying and living with Christ” is in view. BDAG, “συναποθνήσκω,” 965.

⁶⁷ Here, the meaning is to “live with.” BDAG, “συνζάω,” 954. See also BDAG, “δύναμαι,” 261-62.

⁶⁸ BDAG, “συνζάω,” 954; see also BDAG, “συναποθνήσκω,” 965.

⁶⁹ The gloss in BDAG for ἀρνέομαι is “deny, repudiate, disown.” BDAG, “ἀρνέομαι,” 132.

⁷⁰ Of λατρεύω, BDAG notes, “serve, in our literature only of the carrying out of religious duties, especially of a cultic nature, by human beings.” BDAG, “λατρεύω,” 587.

⁷¹ BDAG, “τίθημι,” 1004.

Wilder and Jones’s notion of steward.⁷² Turning his attention to Timothy, Paul employs a metaphor of a vessel made ready for honorable use by the master of the house to urge him to pursue holiness. God is the master of the house in the metaphor and, therefore, the “owner” of the vessel.⁷³ Thus, God “owns” Timothy, the vessel. The master-vessel metaphor reflects the realities of the slave identity—God as master of the house and “owner” of the slave. A few verses later (2:24), Paul, addressing Timothy, says that the “the Lord’s servant” (δοῦλον δὲ κυρίου), or “slave of the Lord,” must not be quarrelsome. Paul understands Timothy to be the slave and connects his identity (δοῦλον δὲ κυρίου) to his conduct, that is, not being combative or quarrelsome. Second Timothy contains no references addressing the leader’s shepherd identity that would support Wilder and Jones’s model.

Relationships. A careful reading and analysis of 2 Timothy finds material related to a follower-leader’s relationships with God, other leaders, and fellow followers. Near the end of the letter, Paul recalls that when opposed and charged as part of Roman legal proceedings, he was left completely alone, humanly speaking. Yet, he says that the Lord was not only present with him (παρέστη⁷⁴) but also enabled or “strengthened” (ἐνεδυνάμωσέν⁷⁵) him. Paul testifies to the faithful presence and empowerment of God at a critical time in his life and ministry. As in 1 Timothy and Titus, Paul addresses Timothy here as “my beloved son” (2 Tim 1:2) and “my child” (τέκνον; 2:1). As in the earlier correspondence, Paul’s deep affection for Timothy undoubtedly shaped in significant

⁷² The notion of leader as steward can be found in 1:14 (“By the Holy Spirit who dwells within us, guard the good deposit entrusted to you”) as well as 2:2 (“what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men”).

⁷³ BDAG, “δεσπότης,” 220.

⁷⁴ According to BDAG, *παρίστημι* means “to be present in any way” and, in the case of 2 Tim 4:17, conveys the idea of “*come to the aid of, help, stand by.*” BDAG, “παρίστημι,” 778.

⁷⁵ BDAG, “ἐνδυναμώω,” 333.

ways the leader-follower dynamic between them. Finally, Paul’s instructions in 2:24 concern the way the leader ought to relate to his co-followers. Specifically, Timothy—in the discharge of his duties—must not be combative or “quarrelsome” (μάχεσθαι⁷⁶) but “kind toward” all (ἡπιον⁷⁷). To the extent that Timothy adhered to Paul’s directive, the leader-follower relational dynamic within the Cretan churches would have been positively shaped.

Roles. Whereas 1 Timothy and Titus devote considerable space to different formal and informal roles, Paul in 2 Timothy only makes brief references to the roles of apostle (1:1, 11) as well as preacher and teacher (1:11). He excludes any mention of elders and deacons. Instead, Paul devotes much more attention in 2 Timothy to specific Christ-centered follower-leader practices.

Practices. Second Timothy appears to evidence virtually the entire array of practices consistent with those found in Wilder and Jones’s Christ-centered followership model. Immediately on the heels of reminding Timothy that “God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power” (1:7), Paul directs his protégé to depend upon God’s power as a means of joining him (i.e., Paul) in suffering for the sake of the gospel (1:8). In addition, he commands Timothy to “guard the good deposit entrusted to you” by means of the Holy Spirit who “dwells within us” (1:14). Paul seems to assume that Timothy cannot protect that which has been given to him for safekeeping without exercising dependence upon the Spirit.

The practice of Word-proclamation figures prominently within Christ-centered followership as the leader is to declare God’s truth and vision and not his own.⁷⁸ Paul

⁷⁶ BDAG, “μάχομαι,” 622.

⁷⁷ BDAG, “ἡπιος,” 439.

⁷⁸ Wilder and Jones, *The God Who Goes Before You*, 3.

instructs Timothy three times to engage in such a practice: (1) “Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling [ὀρθοτομοῦντα⁷⁹] the word of truth” (2:15); (2) “Preach [κήρυξον⁸⁰] the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching” (4:2); and (3) “Do the work of an evangelist [εὐαγγελιστοῦ⁸¹]” (4:5). Not only does Paul direct Timothy to proclaim the Word, but he also instructs him to use the Word of God in the practice of feeding, protecting, and equipping the saints. The Scriptures play the indispensable and irreplaceable role of making someone “complete” (ἄρτιος⁸²) and “equipped” (ἐξηρτισμένος;⁸³ 3:16-17).⁸⁴ Paul’s understanding of Scripture explains why he emphasized the practice of proclamation to the extent he did and why God’s Word figured so prominently in his practices of feeding, protecting, equipping, and empower God’s people.⁸⁵

An analysis of 2 Timothy finds considerable mention of the Christ-centered follower practice of imitation. Paul appears to have engaged in the habit of consciously setting an example for others as observed by his comments to Timothy in 3:10-11. He remarks that Timothy has “followed” (παρηκολούθησάς) his teaching, conduct, purpose,

⁷⁹ With respect to 2 Tim 2:15, ὀρθοτομέω “would probably mean *guide the word of truth along a straight path* (like a road that goes straight to its goal), without being turned aside by worldly debates or impious talk.” BDAG, “ὀρθοτομέω,” 722.

⁸⁰ “Preach” [κήρυξον] in 2 Tim 4:2 entails “public declarations” that are “divine in origin or relates to divinity.” BDAG, “κηρύσσω,” 543-44.

⁸¹ An εὐαγγελιστοῦ is, according to BDAG, a “*proclaimer of the gospel.*” BDAG, “εὐαγγελιστής,” 403.

⁸² BDAG, “ἄρτιος,” 136.

⁸³ BDAG, “ἐξαρτίζω,” 346.

⁸⁴ Only by means of the God-breathed-out “writings” can “teaching” [διδασκαλίαν], “reproof” [ἐλεγκμόν], correction” [ἐπανόρθωσιν], and “training in righteousness” [παιδείαν and δικαιοσύνη] take place in a meaningfully and transformative way.

⁸⁵ By equipping “faithful men” (2:2) with Paul’s words (in as much as they reflect the Scriptures), as well as others in the church with the God breathed-out Scriptures, they would be equipped for service for God. Such equipping equates empowerment.

faith, patience, love, etc. Paul’s use of παρακολουθήσας strongly suggests that he understood that his teaching and life served as a pattern and, correspondingly, that he recognizes Timothy’s imitation.⁸⁶ Paul also directs Timothy to emulate or “follow” (ἔχε⁸⁷) the standard or “pattern” (ὑποτύπωσιν⁸⁸) of the “correct” or “sound” (ὑγιαίνοντων⁸⁹) words he has spoken. Paul seems to have understood that his teaching served as an example and, thus, calls Timothy to imitate it as well.

Second Timothy also contains several references to the practice of embracing and enduring suffering as a Christ-centered follower-leader. Repeatedly, Paul demonstrates his embrace of the practice of suffering in light of his identity as a servant and follower of Christ (1:12; 2:8-9). The apostle also implores Timothy to share in the practice of suffering with him (1:8; 2:3).⁹⁰ In addition, Paul reminds Timothy (3:10-11) of his “persecutions” (διωγμοῖς⁹¹) and “sufferings” (παθήμασιν⁹²) and goes on to tell his apprentice that all who pursue a life of godliness will be “persecuted” (διωχθήσονται⁹³). Near the close of the letter, Paul tells Timothy simply to “endure suffering” (κακοπάθησον⁹⁴). The witness of 2 Timothy supports Wilder and Jones’s contention that

⁸⁶ The BDAG entry for παρακολουθέω in 2 Tim 3:10 reads as follows: “to conform to someone’s belief or practice by paying special attention, *follow faithfully, follow as a rule.*” BDAG, “παρακολουθέω,” 767.

⁸⁷ Concerning ἔχε in 2 Tim 1:13, BDAG states, “to take a hold on something, *have, hold (to), grip*” and then provides the following: “of hold fast to matters of transcendent importance . . . an example of sound teaching 2 Tim 1:13.” BDAG, “ἔχω,” 420-21.

⁸⁸ BDAG, “ὑποτύπωσις,” 1042.

⁸⁹ BDAG, “ὑγιαίνω,” 1023.

⁹⁰ 2 Tim 2:8-9 states, “Remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, the offspring of David, as preached in my gospel, for which I am suffering, bound with chains as a criminal. But the word of God is not bound!” 2 Tim 1:8 reads, “Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord, nor of me his prisoner, but share in suffering for the gospel by the power of God.”

⁹¹ BDAG, “διωγμός,” 253.

⁹² BDAG, “πάθημα,” 747.

⁹³ “Persecuted” (διωχθήσονται) means “to harass someone, especially because of beliefs.” BDAG, “διώκω,” 254.

⁹⁴ BDAG notes a slightly nuanced meaning of κακοπάθησον in 2 Tim 4:5 compared to 2:9. In

Christ-centered followership includes the practice of suffering. Paul's second letter to Timothy, however, lacks material related to the practice of defending and promoting justice.

Thus far, I have outlined this research project's analytical methodology, fixed the key concepts within Wilder and Jones's Christ-centered followership model, and initially analyzed the three Pastoral Epistles for said concepts. In the following section, I examine in greater detail passages within the Pastoral Epistles that correspond to each of the categories within Wilder and Jones's framework as a means of further validation.

Analysis of Key Christ-Centered Followership Passages in Pastoral Epistles

In the previous section, I sought to identify by means of lexical analysis the various verses within the Pastoral Epistles that support Christ-centered followership's key conceptual categories of identity, relationships, roles, and practices. Given my aim to affirm and critique Wilder and Jones's model, such an examination provides an important preliminary step as it overviews the wealth of material within the Pastoral Epistles that, at first blush, supports Christ-centered followership. A more thorough exegetical study of crucial verses remains necessary if I am to accomplish the immediate goal of validating Christ-centered followership.⁹⁵ Of course, a more in-depth look at particular verses within the Pastoral Epistles serves the ultimate concern of this project—deploying a validated and nuanced Christ-centered followership framework useful in the development of Christian emerging-adult spiritual leaders.

In what follows, then, I select specific verses from the Pastoral Epistles for further exegesis in order to affirm the various components of Christ-centered

this instance, the meaning is that of to “bear hardship patiently.” BDAG, “κακοπαθῶ,” 500.

⁹⁵ The following exegetical analysis will make use of both Greek and English New Testament texts, lexical aids, commentaries, and monographs.

followership. I use three criteria: First, a verse or passage must strongly evidence lexical support for one of the subcategories (e.g., union with Christ, relationship with fellow followers, teacher, endure suffering) within Wilder and Jones's model.⁹⁶ Second, a verse or passage must possess sufficient material to warrant grammatical-historical-exegetical analysis. Third, the verse, when compared to others within the Pastoral Epistles that substantiate the same sub-categorical component, must evidence the most supportive material in both a qualitative and quantitative sense.

Identity:

Within Wilder and Jones construct, the notion of a leader's identity, or self-concept, plays a critical and foundational role upon which the other components build. Similarly, the Pastoral Epistles place considerable emphasis on the notion of identity and support Wilder and Jones's model by evidencing their identity categories of union with Christ, sonship, and slave-servant-steward. Only the shepherd identity category lacks attestation within the Pastoral Epistles.

Union with Christ: 2 Timothy 2:11-13. Wilder and Jones define union with Christ as "identification with God's Son that leads to participation in God's life and to incorporation into the communion of God's people" and stress its import as a foundational concept within Christ-centered followership.⁹⁷ Across the Pastoral Epistles, 2 Timothy 2:11-13 most clearly and substantively affirms this doctrine and, thus, supports this central feature of Wilder and Jones's framework. Paul declares in those three verses, "The saying is trustworthy, for: If we have died with him, we will also live with him; if

⁹⁶ As a reminder, the four major conceptual categories and related subcategories within Christ-centered followership are as follows: (1) identity (union with Christ, sonship, slave, and shepherd), (2) relationships (with God, with other leaders, and with fellow followers), (3) roles (formal [in the Pastoral Epistles, these are apostles, elders, and deacons] and informal [in the Pastoral Epistles, these are teachers and preachers]), and (4) practices (submission to and dependency upon God; follow and set godly examples; proclaim the Word; feed, protect, equip, and empower saints; and defend and promote justice).

⁹⁷ Wilder and Jones, *The God Who Goes Before You*, 18.

we endure, we will also reign with him; if we deny him, he also will deny us; if we are faithless, he remains faithful—for he cannot deny himself.”

In his final extant correspondence to his protégé and “beloved child” (2 Tim 1:2), the apostle Paul aims to call Timothy to unashamedly identify with him and the gospel, prepare for the hardships that come as a gospel steward, and carry on in ministry after his death in the pattern the apostle provided.⁹⁸ To that end, Paul employs in 2 Timothy 2 an apparently familiar hymn or poetic saying as a means of engendering embrace of and endurance through suffering for the sake of Christ and the gospel.⁹⁹ According to Donald Guthrie, verses 11-13 illustrate the “worthwhileness of enduring *everything for the sake of the elect* (verse 10).”¹⁰⁰

For the purposes of this study, I only examine the aspects of this passage that relate to the matter of union with Christ. Paul curates a series of “If . . . then” statements from the recognizable material to both encourage and warn Timothy with respect to suffering.¹⁰¹ The “died with him . . . live with him” formula of verse 11 parallels that of Romans 6 and is of particular interest to this effort.¹⁰² The numerous commentators

⁹⁸ Of 2 Timothy’s purpose, Fee writes that the “basic thrust of the letter is an appeal for Timothy to carry the ministry of the gospel after Paul’s death, but even facing death he is confident that God will see it through (1:5, 8, 14).” Gordon Fee, *1 and 2 Timothy, Titus*, New International Biblical Commentary (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1988), 4-5.

⁹⁹ George W. Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1992), 402; Robert W. Yarbrough, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2018), 380; Thomas G. Long, *1 & 2 Timothy and Titus: A Theological Commentary on the Bible*, Belief: A Theological Commentary on the Bible (Louisville, KY: John Knox Press, 2016), 206.

¹⁰⁰ Donald Guthrie, *The Pastoral Epistles*, rev ed., Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990), 157 (emphasis original).

¹⁰¹ William B. Barclay, *A Study Commentary on 1 and 2 Timothy* (Webster, NY: Evangelical Press, 2005), 250; I. Howard Marshall, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles*, International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1999), 739; Yarbrough, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 380.

¹⁰² See, e.g., Benjamin Fiore, *The Pastoral Epistles: First Timothy, Second Timothy, Titus*, Sacra Pagina 12 (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2009), 150; Guthrie, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 157; Philip H. Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, New International Commentary of the New Testament (Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 2006), 509; Yarbrough, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 380.

consulted for this project consistently affirm that the Christian's union with Christ is in view in this text. As Robert Yarbrough notes, the language "calls to mind Paul's conviction that Christ's crucifixion was at the same time also that of each person who trust in him."¹⁰³ Similarly, George Knight remarks, "The first two lines encouragingly state the glorious results that accrue from one's identification with Christ, first in dying to oneself in union with Christ's death and second in enduring and suffering for Christ throughout one's life."¹⁰⁴ While "we will also live with him" refers to an eschatological reality grounded in Christ's own bodily resurrection, the future reality provides a "solid foundation" for Timothy's present fortitude.¹⁰⁵

Verse 12 holds out two promises, one encouraging and the other sobering: the reward of reigning with Christ awaits those who persevere, while denial of him begets mutual denial. Yet, the Lord remains faithful even in the face of faithlessness. While there is some dispute as to what is meant by faithlessness and to what or whom is Christ faithful,¹⁰⁶ the point remains that Christ's faithfulness is far greater than any faithlessness on the part of human beings.¹⁰⁷ The reality of Timothy's union with Christ, coupled with the promise of God's faithfulness, was intended to have a practical effect upon his life, ministry, and leadership—the embrace of and endurance through hardship that inevitably comes with gospel service and is a necessary component of a Christ-centered follower-

¹⁰³ Yarbrough, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 380.

¹⁰⁴ Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 407-8. Thomas Oden helpfully summarizes Paul's point: "If we have died with him, we shall also live with him"—a most concise way of talking about our union with Christ, our participation in Christ's death and resurrection. The assumption is that we already died with Christ to the old life and are now sharing in his resurrected life (Rom. 6:2-11)." Thomas Oden, *First and Second Timothy and Titus*, Interpretation (Louisville, KY: John Knox Press, 1989), 51.

¹⁰⁵ Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 509.

¹⁰⁶ Marshall, *Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles*, 741-42.

¹⁰⁷ Andreas J. Köstenberger, *Commentary on 1-2 Timothy and Titus*, Biblical Theology for Christian Proclamation (Nashville: B & H, 2017), "Exposition of 2 Timothy," "2:11-13," para. 4, Kindle.

leader's identity.¹⁰⁸

Sonship: Titus 2:14. The leader's identity as a child of God also figures prominently in Wilder and Jones's model.¹⁰⁹ While no explicit expression of a leader's standing as God's child exists within the three Pastoral Epistles, Paul's language in Titus 2:14 intimates Christian identity that, at the very least, reaches a level close to that of sonship.¹¹⁰ Concerning "our great God and Savior Jesus Christ," Paul writes to Titus that the Lord "gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works."¹¹¹ The notion of being a God-owned people establishes a significant identity concept approximate to that of sonship even if not explicitly so.

Verse 14 concludes a sentence in the original language that begins in verse 11, "is governed and controlled by the motif of the saving and enabling grace of God in Christ," and provides the doctrinal grounding for the preceding imperatives in 2:1-10.¹¹²

¹⁰⁸ Andreas Köstenberger concludes, "The faithful saying in vv. 11–13 underscores our union with the crucified and risen Christ in our mission, except that our unfaithfulness in no way nullifies his faithfulness. This, of course, would have been of supreme comfort and encouragement for Paul and also Timothy as they faced the unfaithfulness of many of their coworkers (cf. 1:15–18)." Köstenberger, *1-2 Timothy and Titus*, "Exposition of 2 Timothy," "2:11-13," para. 4.

¹⁰⁹ Wilder and Jones, *The God Who Goes Before You*, 29.

¹¹⁰ Rom 8:14-17 directly speaks to the notions of adoption and sonship under the new covenant:

For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, 'Abba! Father!' The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him.

As this text makes clear, and as Wilder and Jones would affirm, Christ makes all persons who look to him in faith for salvation children of God. Thus, Christian leaders do not uniquely assume the status of sons of God vis-à-vis other believers. Instead, it is the universal reality of believers as children of God that provides the identity bedrock for a Christian leader's role and set of practices.

¹¹¹ Paul had left Titus on the isle of Crete following their joint ministry efforts on the island in order to establish newly formed churches. In particular, Titus was to select qualified leaders and remind congregants of the importance of living rightly in light of the truths of the gospel of Christ over and against the teaching and practices of false teachers.

¹¹² Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 327. Aldred Genade notes of 2:11-15, "The dominant rhetorical objective in this section is to emphasize the divine basis of obedience to sound doctrine." Aldred A. Genade, *Persuading the Cretans: A Text-Generated Persuasion Analysis of the Letter to Titus* (Eugene,

“Our great God and Savior Jesus Christ” in verse 13 serves as the antecedent for “who” in verse 14, and Paul emphasizes that Jesus’s accomplishments listed throughout verse 14 flow from the fact that Christ “gave himself” (ἔδωκεν ἑαυτὸν; i.e., he freely surrendered his life on the cross).¹¹³ Then, the apostle points out that the intent of Jesus’s “self-giving” was twofold: (1) to redeem (λυτρώσηται) a people out of lawlessness and (2) to purify (καθαρίση) them.¹¹⁴

The redemption and purification vocabulary of verse 14 draws heavily from the Old Testament concerning God’s saving work among the Israelites.¹¹⁵ John Stott notes that the language of Christ giving up his life is reminiscent of the Passover sacrifice, while redemption terminology harkens back to the exodus.¹¹⁶ According to Gordon Fee, Paul in this instance “appropriated” the vocabulary associated with God’s people in the Old Testament and applied it to the “new people of God.”¹¹⁷ Thus, the freed and purified people become God’s very own possession, the elect, which also parallels other Old Testament language (e.g., Deut 7:6).¹¹⁸

Christ’s sacrificial work constitutes formally lawless persons into a “chosen”

OR: Wipf & Stock, 2011), 55.

¹¹³ See Matt 20:28. See also Yarbrough, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 531. Also, regarding the connection between Titus 2:1-10 and 2:11-14, see Jerome D. Quinn, *The Letter to Titus: A New Translation with Notes and Commentary and an Introduction to Titus, I and II Timothy, the Pastoral Epistles*, Anchor Bible 35 (New York: Doubleday, 1990), 162.

¹¹⁴ Marshall uses the terminology of Christ’s “self-giving” in order to redeem a people and create a new people through purification. Marshall, *Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles*, 286. See also Walter L. Liefeld, *1 & 2 Timothy, Titus*, NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1999), 341.

¹¹⁵ For example, both Montague and Towner see a reference to Ezekiel 37. George T. Montague, *First and Second Timothy, Titus*, Catholic Commentary on Sacred Scripture (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2008), 240; Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 760-61.

¹¹⁶ John Stott, *Guard the Truth: The Message of 1 Timothy and Titus* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1996), 195. See also J. N. D. Kelly, *A Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles* (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1963), 247.

¹¹⁷ Fee, *1 and 2 Timothy, Titus*, 197.

¹¹⁸ Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 328; Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 761.

and “especial” people.¹¹⁹ As Jerome Quinn notes, the “cleansing blood of Christ marks out for his own possession ‘a people’ as a special treasure.”¹²⁰ Further, Hulitt Gloer and Perry Stepp see the slavery motif behind Paul’s wording in 2:14 as the Lord’s having redeemed them from slavery to render service to him, and such a view certainly comports with the wording in the text and in the Old Testament (e.g., Lev 25:55).¹²¹ Yet, the notion of the redeemed and purified people of becoming God’s own possession (περιούσιον) suggests that something in addition to slavery is in view.¹²²

Ray Van Neste sees in the particular phrase “a people for his own possession” “intentional echoes from the Old Testament” and directs readers to see especially Exodus 19:5 and Malachi 3:17.¹²³ While both verses emphasize Israel as Yahweh’s “treasured possession,” Malachi declares, “They [Israel] shall be mine, says the Lord of hosts, in the day when I make up my treasured possession, and I will spare them as a man spares his son who serves him.” Malachi’s prophecy links Israel as God’s treasured possession with Israel as a son who serves his father.¹²⁴ Such Old Testament “echoes” suggest at least the

¹¹⁹ BDAG, “περιούσιος,” 802-3.

¹²⁰ Quinn, *The Letter to Titus*, 173. Quinn goes on to say, the confession here in Titus focuses on one phrase of the Exodus promise [articulated in 19:5-6], which designates a quite personal treasure that belongs in an especially intimate fashion to the person who picked it, so that it will be with him in a way that other goods are not. Yahweh is the ruler of all nations, administering them as a public trust; but Israel is his private property, his privy purse. The special relationship, like marriage, is one of special freedom and intimacy but, for that reason, one that is more demanding and even more threatening. (173-74)

¹²¹ Hulitt W. Gloer and Perry L. Stepp, *Reading Paul’s Letters to Individuals: A Literary and Theological Commentary on Paul’s Letters to Philemon, Titus, and Timothy* (Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys, 2008), 108. Gloer and Stepp go on to further explain, “Freed slaves in the Hellenistic world entered the service of the god for whom they were manumitted; the chosen people of Israel entered the service of their redeemer, Yahweh. Likewise, those who have been redeemed by Jesus Christ enter his service. They are to live in a state of readiness to serve and obey” (108).

¹²² Johannes Eichler and Colin Brown, “θησαυρός,” in *NIDNTT*, 2:389.

¹²³ Ray Van Neste, “Titus,” in *ESV Study Bible* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2008), 2350.

¹²⁴ Pieter A. Verhoef, *The Books of Haggai and Malachi*, New International Commentary of the Old Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987), 322. Verhoef observes that the father-son and God-Israel parallels are also reflected in Mal 1:6, which states, “A son honors his father, and a servant his master. If then I am a father, where is my honor? And if I am a master, where is my fear? says the LORD of hosts to you.”

possibility of the inclusion of sonship within the notion of being God’s possession as presented in Titus 2:14.¹²⁵

Whether or not “a people for his own possession” incorporates the notion of slave, son, or perhaps some combination of the two, the point remains that God’s redeemed people are “special” to him, the new Israel, and, as such, a “rich possession” and the “crown jewel.”¹²⁶ In language that reverberates with Ezekiel 37:23 (i.e., “they will be my people and I will be their God”), Paul reminds Titus and those in Crete that their identity—if not explicitly stated in terms of sonship—is nonetheless one of high standing before God and a focus of his deep affection, for Christ, “our Great God and Savior,” freely surrendered his life in order to secure “a people for his own possession.” Such a God-established standing—if not equivalent to the key Christ-centered followership identity of sonship—shares a significant amount of overlap and equal level of import with it.

Slave: Titus 1:1. Wilder and Jones emphasize the slave-of-God identity of the Christ-centered follower-leader and contend that it constitutes a significant leadership motif across the whole of Scripture.¹²⁷ They point out that Jesus himself assumed the role of a slave when he washed his disciples’ feet at the last supper (John 13:1-17). In fact, following his act of humble servitude, Jesus charged them to serve others as he had them: “If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet. For I have given you an example, that you also should do just as I have

¹²⁵ Daniel Akin appears to hold that “God’s own possession” connotes the idea of adoption and, therefore, sonship. In his commentary on Titus, he declares, “What security is ours! Once we were Satan’s, now we are the Son’s. Once we were sin’s, now we are the Savior’s. *Once we were foreigners, now we are family.* Now I belong to Jesus.” Daniel L. Akin, *Titus*, in *1 & 2 Timothy and Titus*, by David Platt, Daniel L. Akin, and Tony Merida, Christ-Centered Exposition Commentary (Nashville: B & H, 2013), 283 (emphasis mine).

¹²⁶ William D. Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 46 (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2000), 431-32.

¹²⁷ Wilder and Jones, *The God Who Goes Before You*, 145-52.

done to you” (vv. 15-17). In light of Jesus’s model and instruction, Wilder and Jones assert, “Servanthood is part of the identity that we share as the people of God, and leaders are not exempt from this calling.”¹²⁸

Given the prominence of the slave identity to Christ-centered followership, one would anticipate locating reference to it within the pages of the Pastoral Epistles. In fact, in the opening line of his correspondence to Titus, Paul introduces himself as a slave (1:1).¹²⁹ While elsewhere Paul adopts the more frequent moniker “slave of Christ” (see Rom 1:1 and Phil 1:1), in this instance, he presents himself as “slave of God” (δοῦλος θεοῦ; Titus 1:1). Knight notes that the title “servant, or slave, of the Lord” is used at times of Moses, Joshua, Abraham, and David, and Philip Towner suggests that Paul might have been attempting to establish a degree of authoritative equivalency with those Old Testament saints.¹³⁰

Whether or not Towner’s view is accurate, the cultural significance of the term slave (δοῦλος) would nonetheless hold pregnant meaning for those who heard the letter of Titus read in first century Crete.¹³¹ In fact, Knight points out that Paul “connects the secular usage of δοῦλος” to the theological realities of Christians and their leaders as “slaves of Christ.”¹³² Both Thomas Long and I. Howard Marshall emphasize the slave’s

¹²⁸ Wilder and Jones, *The God Who Goes Before You*, 146.

¹²⁹ Titus 1:1 reads, “Paul, a servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, for the sake of the faith of God’s elect and their knowledge of the truth, which accords with godliness.”

¹³⁰ Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 282; Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 665. Liefeld says the following concerning Paul’s introduction of himself as both slave and apostle in Titus’s opening verse: “Paul does not use *doulos* in a self-deprecating way. A slave was owned by another person to whom obedience was required. If slavery meant obligation, apostleship meant authority, but both meant responsibility.” Liefeld, *1 & 2 Timothy, Titus*, 309.

¹³¹ Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 665. Towner himself acknowledges this fact. In *The God Who Goes Before You*, Wilder and Jones list seven characteristics of Greco-Roman slavery that would have informed Pauline usage of slave language and appeal to slave identity. These qualities are as follows: (1) a slave was owned by the master; (2) a slave’s identity was derived from the master; (3) a slave exercised representative authority; (4) a slave was subject to the will of his master; (5) a slave was called to a life of unconditional obedience; (6) a slave lived in complete dependence on the master; and (7) a slave was vulnerable to mistreatment. Wilder and Jones, *The God Who Goes Before You*, 147.

¹³² Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 282. See also Frances Young’s helpful discussion on the

lack of freedom and rights and the master's ownership of and complete authority over the slave.¹³³ Paul's willingness to embrace this title and identity illustrates an important Christ-centered followership characteristic. In fact, Yarbrough remarks that Paul's embrace of the title "slave of God" reflects the "ultimate endorsement of Jesus's leadership philosophy."¹³⁴

Shepherd. In addition to the slave-of-God motif that informs leader identity within Wilder and Jones's construct, the shepherd metaphor holds equal prominence. However, careful analysis of the Pastoral Epistles failed to locate any reference or allusions to the shepherding motif and shepherd identity. My findings on this matter coincide with Timothy Laniak's conclusions in his biblical theology of shepherd leadership where he states that "pastoral imagery is not a central, organizing rubric in the Pauline corpus."¹³⁵

Relationships

Wilder and Jones point out that union with Christ fundamentally alters the Christian leader's relationship with God. Instead of a relationship defined by hostility and enmity, the Christian (and Christian leader) now enjoys, because of Christ's salvific work, "the same relationship with the Father that Jesus does."¹³⁶ As a result, the leader

cultural-historical background of Greco-Roman slavery and its import with respect to the theology of the Pastoral Epistles. Frances Young, *The Theology of the Pastoral Letters* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 93-94.

¹³³ Long, *1 & 2 Timothy and Titus*, 251; Marshall, *Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles*, 116-18. See also Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 665.

¹³⁴ Yarbrough, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 530.

¹³⁵ Timothy S. Laniak, *Shepherds after My Own Heart: Pastoral Traditions and Leadership in the Bible*, New Studies in Biblical Theology 20 (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006), 25.

¹³⁶ Wilder and Jones, *The God Who Goes Before You*, 18. I would qualify Wilder and Jones's statement by noting that Christians, as children of God, enjoy a relationship with God the Father that is in many respects similar to that of Jesus's, the Son of God, with the Father. Nonetheless, the statement, "the same relationship with the Father that Jesus does," should not be understood as suggesting that Christians have a relationship with the Father that is in every aspect like that of the Son and Father. A portion of the Nicene Creed concerning Jesus emphasizes the unique dimensions of their Trinitarian relationship: "And in

must completely reorient his relationships with other leaders as well as fellow followers of Christ.¹³⁷ The Scriptures confirm and followership theory emphasizes the importance of leader-follower relationships to the realization of organizational outcomes and the phenomenon of leadership itself. Given the nature of Wilder and Jones's model, one would anticipate finding references within the Pastoral Epistles to these relational domains.

With God: 2 Timothy 4:17. In the closing verses of Paul's second letter to Timothy, the apostle relates an account of human abandonment but the Lord's supernatural presence and empowerment that affords a glimpse into his relationship with Christ. Following the letter's crescendo as reflected in his final charge to Timothy (4:1-8), Paul offers a number of personal reflections and final remarks (4:9-18). He recounts how he was completely forsaken at his "first defense" (v. 16). Scholars remain somewhat uncertain as to the specific circumstances concerning Paul's legal proceedings.¹³⁸ Yet, his declaration makes clear that he faced those judicial hearings alone: "no one came to my support, but everyone deserted me."

Then, in verse 17, Paul affirms that in contrast to the lack of human presence and help, "the Lord stood by [παρέστη] me and strengthened [ἐνεδυνάμωσέν] me." Here, "the Lord" (ὁ κύριος) refers to Christ himself,¹³⁹ and his faithfulness appears to be the

one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father; by whom all things were made." *The Nicene Creed* (A.D. 325; revised at Constantinople A.D. 381) as found and referenced in Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Bible Doctrine* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994), 1169. I am grateful to my editor, Torey Teer, who not only suggested that I provide this point of clarification but also inspired much of its content and wording.

¹³⁷ Wilder and Jones, *The God Who Goes Before You*, 10.

¹³⁸ Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 594-95; Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 635-38.

¹³⁹ Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 470; Marshall, *Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles*, 824; Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 596.

central theme of Paul’s remarks.¹⁴⁰ Paul expresses Jesus’s personal faithfulness to him in terms of his presence: “the Lord stood by me.” BDAG notes that *παρίστημι* means “to be present in any way,” and in the case of 2 Timothy 4:17, the term conveys the idea of “*come to the aid of, help, stand by.*”¹⁴¹ Paul’s words echo Jesus’s promise in Matthew 28:20: “Behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.” Furthermore, God’s presence in the Old Testament was a distinguishing quality of Israel and, according to Towner, was associated with the Lord’s deliverance and help.¹⁴² God’s presence also often meant empowerment, and Paul’s testimony confirms that as well.¹⁴³ He affirms that the Lord also “strengthened me,” and the idea seems to be that God “empowered” or “fortified” Paul in order to sustain and enable him for gospel witness.¹⁴⁴

Paul’s experience provides important insights into the ways in which God relates to his people in general and leaders in particular. Jesus faithfully related to Paul in a personal way. Though alone and abandoned by others, the apostle knew he was not alone or deserted by his Lord. As N.T. Wright observes, “Instead of human support, Paul

¹⁴⁰ Oden states,

The reason for reporting this to Timothy is not to show how faithless were his friends, but rather to show the faithfulness of the Lord—namely that his defense had offered an unparalleled opportunity to proclaim the good news. He had been put in this undefended position to teach him that the Lord would stand by him and give him strength to proclaim the word fully (v. 17; cf. Acts 23:11; Phil. 4:13). Note the counterpoint: No one else stood by me—the Lord stood by my side. No one visited me—the Lord attended me. No one encouraged me—the Lord gave me strength. (Oden, *First and Second Timothy and Titus*, 182; see also Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 635; Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 596)

¹⁴¹ BDAG, “*παρίστημι*,” 778. Towner also notes the equivalency between “stand by” and “be present” in this instance. Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 641.

¹⁴² Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 641.

¹⁴³ Jouette M. Bassler, *1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus*, Abingdon New Testament Commentaries (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1996), 177. See also Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 596; Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 641.

¹⁴⁴ Concerning “empowerment,” see Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 596. Yarbrough uses “fortified” to describe Paul’s experience of Christ’s supernatural strengthening. Yarbrough, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 453-54. See also BDAG, “*ἐνδυναμῶω*,” 333.

was powerfully aware that the Lord himself had been with him, giving him strength.”¹⁴⁵

So, not only did Paul recognize the Lord’s presence, but he also experienced God’s enabling power in that moment through his relationship with Christ. As John Calvin avers, “He acknowledges that God’s hand has supported him, and it is enough for him that the inward grace of the Spirit was a shield against attacks.”¹⁴⁶ In fact, Paul’s experience of the Lord and his faithfulness in his legal proceedings kindled certainty in Christ’s faithfulness to ultimately deliver him safely into his kingdom. In the Words of Andreas Köstenberger, “Despite great adversity, Paul ends this section with an expression of confidence in God (v. 18).”¹⁴⁷ Thus, Paul finishes his letter to his protégé with this personal account of God’s relational closeness and faithfulness in the midst of hardship as a means to encourage Timothy in his relationship with and service for the present and empowering Lord.

With fellow leaders: Titus 1:4. While contemporary followership research primarily focuses upon the leader-follower relational dynamic, Wilder and Jones affirm another important dimension of Christ-centered followership—the leader-leader relational dynamic. Drawing from observations of 1 Peter 5, Wilder discusses the leader-leader relationship by emphasizing Peter’s self-reference as a “fellow elder,” the collegiality the apostle sought to cultivate with the elders in the churches to which he writes, and the importance of leaders sharing power for the sake of those under their charge.¹⁴⁸ Even though the Pastoral Epistles lack substantial material setting out the

¹⁴⁵ N. T. Wright, *Paul for Everyone: The Pastoral Letters, 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus*, New Testament for Everyone (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2003), 133.

¹⁴⁶ John Calvin, *1 & 2 Timothy and Titus*, Crossway Classic Commentaries (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 1998), 168.

¹⁴⁷ Köstenberger, *Commentary on 1-2 Timothy and Titus*, “Exposition of 2 Timothy,” “V. Letter Closing (4:9-22),” “structure,” para. 1.

¹⁴⁸ Wilder and Jones, *The God Who Goes Before You*, 179.

nature of the leader-leader dynamic, they do provide a glimpse into a unique leader-to-leader relationship—that of Paul and Titus.

In the salutation to his letter to Titus, Paul acknowledges Titus as “my true child in a common faith.”¹⁴⁹ Rather than biological parentage, such language suggests that Paul played an instrumental role in helping the younger Titus come to faith and grow in Christ.¹⁵⁰ Paul’s reference to Titus as “child” (τέκνον) also conveys the notion of a close friendship and intimacy.¹⁵¹ Such language, according to Thomas Oden, shows that “Paul did not hesitate to express tender affection toward those with whom his life was bound.”¹⁵²

Though Paul was Titus’s elder and authority figure, he nonetheless related to the younger man as a co-laborer and fellow-leader. On the one hand, in Long’s analysis, Paul viewed their relationship in father-son terms.¹⁵³ Yet, on the other, he clearly related to Titus as a brother in Christ. From the basis of those familial paradigms, Paul interacted with Titus toward their shared goals of strengthening the believers and building the churches in Crete.¹⁵⁴ While the historical background of Paul and Titus’s relationship adds a unique element to the discussion, their affection, mutual regard, and shared goals undoubtedly shaped their relational dynamic. Thus, the reference in Titus 1:4 provides a

¹⁴⁹ The opening phrase of Titus 1:4 reads as follows in the original language: “Τίτῳ γνησίῳ τέκνῳ κατὰ κοινήν πίστιν.”

¹⁵⁰ BDAG, “τέκνον,” 994. Paul’s use of “child” speaks to both a close friendship as well as spiritual parentage. The BDAG entry for τέκνον also states, “one who is dear to another without genetic relationship and without distinction in age.” See also Montague, *First and Second Timothy, Titus*, 216.

¹⁵¹ Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 382,

¹⁵² Oden, *First and Second Timothy and Titus*, 19.

¹⁵³ Long, *1 & 2 Timothy and Titus*, 257.

¹⁵⁴ Quinn, speaking to the nature of Paul and Titus’s relationship and their shared leadership goals, writes, “So now the relation between him [Paul] and his ‘real child’ exists to serve the community of believers in the minister [*sic*] established for them (Titus 1:5-16) as well as in their formation of God’s people (Titus 2:1-3:11).” Quinn, *The Letter to Titus*, 73.

point of insight into Paul and Titus’s leader-to-leader relationship and, thus, affirms this conceptual piece of Christ-centered followership.¹⁵⁵

With fellow followers: 1 Timothy 5:1-3. In 1 Timothy 5, Paul issues a series of practical directives aimed at guiding his protégé in relating and ministering to those within various congregational demographic groups.¹⁵⁶ Verses 1-3 in particular contain material concerning the leader-follower relational dynamic. Paul instructs Timothy, “Do not rebuke an older man but encourage him as you would a father, younger men as brothers, older women as mothers, younger women as sisters, in all purity. Honor widows who are truly widows.”

In three verses, Paul provides specific instructions as to how the young, single Timothy—in a position of authority—ought to relate to those who are older than him, those more likely to be his peers in terms of age, and those women whose husbands had died.¹⁵⁷ Marshall finds that Paul’s directives reflect principles found in contemporaneous popular moral philosophy emphasizing that those of different ages should be engaged as if personal family members.¹⁵⁸ Mounce, too, recognizes the presence of prevalent Greek social norms, though he adds that “the motivation and ultimate truth of the teaching is based not on social custom or etiquette but on the reality of the corporate nature of

¹⁵⁵ In addition, Paul refers to Timothy using identical vocabulary. See 1 Tim 1:2, 18 as well as 2 Tim 1:2; 2:1.

¹⁵⁶ In this section, Paul addresses the topics of differing age and gender groups (5:1-2), widows (5:3-16), elders (5:17-25), and believing slaves (6:1-2). Fee views 5:1-2 as a conceptual bridge, linking 4:11-16 with 5:3-6:2 but aligning more closely with the former section instead of the latter. I disagree and see these verses as fitting better with 5:3-6:2, similar to Marshall and Towner. Fee, *1 and 2 Timothy, Titus*, 112-13; Marshall, *Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles*, 572; Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 329.

¹⁵⁷ Stott, *Guard the Truth*, 125; Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 329.

¹⁵⁸ Marshall, *Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles*, 572. See also Robert J. Karris, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Biblical-Theological Commentary*, New Testament Message 17 (Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, 1979), 88-89; Ilaria L. E. Ramelli, “The Pastoral Epistles and Hellenistic Philosophy: 1 Timothy 5:1-2, Hierocles, and the ‘Contraction of Circles,’” *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 73, no. 3 (2011): 562-81.

Christian salvation, that all who are in Christ are part of the same body.”¹⁵⁹

Timothy must not “rebuke” (ἐπιπλήξῃς¹⁶⁰) an older man but instead “encourage” (παρακάλει¹⁶¹) him as he would a father—the former approach contrasting significantly with that of the latter. Rather than confront an older man in need of correction in a rough, severe, or harsh manner, Timothy ought to engage in “exhortation, admonition, and comfort.”¹⁶² Such an approach befits a father and should be viewed, according to Marshall, as an implicit directive concerning all of the groups that Paul mentions and not solely older men.¹⁶³ Thus, Paul commands Timothy to engage with older women as he would a mother and with younger women as siblings.¹⁶⁴ With respect to younger women, Paul adds, “in all purity,” which suggests that Timothy ought to give special heed to his ethical and moral conduct in his relations with the young women under his charge.¹⁶⁵ Finally, the imperative to “honor” (τίμα) widows (5:3) moves the discussion along to the next topic while emphasizing that this group within the church

¹⁵⁹ Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 269. Bassler concurs, “The author of this letter, though, applies conventional advice concerning relationships among household members to the church as the household of God. To ensure respect and cohesion within this community, ‘Timothy’—and by extension any church member—is to relate to other church members as he would to members of his own family.” Bassler, *1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus*, 91-92.

¹⁶⁰ BDAG, “ἐπιπλήσσω,” 377. Guthrie notes the term is a “strong word” and connotes “censure severely.” Guthrie, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 112. See also Marshall, *Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles*, 573.

¹⁶¹ BDAG, “παρακαλέω,” 765. BDAG provides the following concerning παρακαλέω in this instance: “to urge strongly, appeal to, urge, exhort, encourage.”

¹⁶² Kelly, *A Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles*, 110. See also Guthrie, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 112.

¹⁶³ Marshall, *Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles*, 573-74.

¹⁶⁴ Long, who rejects Pauline authorship and refers to the author of 2 Tim as the ‘Pastor,’ helpfully characterizes the directives in this section: “But the Pastor articulates a different standard of leadership: treat everyone, young and old, male and female, as family.” He continues by noting, “The use of familial language underscores the Pastor’s image of the church as the household of God.” Long, *1 & 2 Timothy and Titus*, 140-41.

¹⁶⁵ For a full discussion on this matter, see Yarbrough, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 260-62.

deserves to be shown significant regard.¹⁶⁶

Paul's instructions in 1 Timothy 5:1-3 aim to shape the ways in which Timothy relates to and exercises authority over different congregants within the Ephesian church.¹⁶⁷ Furthermore, the apostle's words in this passage support Wilder and Jones's assertions that leaders must be ever-mindful that they are fellow followers and exercise their authority in a manner prescribed by that reality.¹⁶⁸ In this case, the emphasis rests upon the familial ties Christ establishes among all the members of the household, including the leader, as the entire family submits to the one over the house.

Roles

Roles within Wilder and Jones's model entail both formal offices and less formal ones (but no less important) with more generally defined duties and responsibilities.¹⁶⁹ Based upon an analysis of their model, formal New Testament roles or offices (e.g., elders, deacons, apostles) tend to possess recognized titles, requisite and ongoing qualifications, and delineated responsibilities. Informal roles, such as teachers and preachers, tend to lack the responsibility and qualification specificity of church offices. Furthermore, a variety of different individuals, including but not limited to those in formal offices, can exercise the less formal roles. For example, applying such a formal-informal schema to the Pastoral Epistles, I observe that Paul required that local church

¹⁶⁶ BDAG, “τιμάω,” 1004-5. Gloer and Stepp suggest that the term rendered “honor” entails both “respect” as well as “financial support.” Gloer and Stepp, *Reading Paul's Letters to Individuals*, 187. Montague notes that perhaps forty percent of women in the ancient world between 40 and 50 years of age were widows. Given those figures, widows and their care must have been a matter of significant pastoral concern for Paul and Timothy. Montague, *First and Second Timothy, Titus*, 105-6.

¹⁶⁷ Yarbrough, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 259. See also J. L. Houlden, *The Pastoral Epistles: I and II Timothy Titus*, Pelican New Testament Commentaries (New York: Penguin Books, 1976), 92.

¹⁶⁸ Wilder and Jones, *The God Who Goes Before You*, 10, 21.

¹⁶⁹ For examples, see Wilder and Jones, *The God Who Goes Before You*, 71-72, 87, 90, 97, 122, 179.

elders must be able to assume the teaching role (1 Tim 3:2). In addition, he instructed that older women should teach younger woman (Titus 2:3-5) in what would represent an informal assumption of that role. Given these observations, I conclude that a number of different passages within the Pastoral Epistles evidence Christ-centered followership formal and informal roles.

Formal roles. No single verse or passage within the Pastoral Epistles describes all of the various formal New Testament roles. However, the offices of apostle, elder, and deacon receive specific treatment. Paul describes himself as an apostle in several places, particularly in the opening lines of all three of his letters to Timothy and Titus (1 Tim 1:1; 2:7; Titus 1:1; 2 Tim 1:1, 11). Mounce describes an apostle as “someone sent as an official representative, bearing the authority of the one who sent the apostle.”¹⁷⁰ In 1 Timothy 3:1, Paul affirms those who desire to assume the office of elder (ἐπίσκοπος; i.e., overseer) given its importance.¹⁷¹ He then describes the requirements and duties commensurate to the elder role (1 Tim 3:2-7).¹⁷² Concerning the material found in the Pastoral Epistles regarding the elder role, Young concludes, “He is God’s household manager, and the reputation of the household depends upon his proper leadership and example.”¹⁷³ Following his discussion of elders, Paul addresses the role of deacon (διάκονος) in 1 Timothy 3:8-13. David Platt describes deacons as those who lead the

¹⁷⁰ Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 5.

¹⁷¹ The office of overseer entails, according to BDAG, “engagement in oversight, supervision,” and is related to or “of leaders of Christian communities.” BDAG, “ἐπίσκοπος,” 379.

¹⁷² BDAG, “ἐπίσκοπος,” 379-80. The entry for ἐπίσκοπος includes some of the following socio-historical context and lexical information: “In the Greco-Roman world ἐπίσκοπος frequently refers to one who has a definite function or fixed office of guardianship and related activity within a group . . . , including a religious group The term was taken over in Christian communities in reference to one who served as *overseer* or *supervisor*, with special interest in guarding the apostolic tradition.” In 1 Tim 5:17, Paul has the same office in view though he uses a different term, “elder” (πρεσβύτεροι). In his letter to Titus, Paul describes the role of elder in similar terms (Titus 1:5-9).

¹⁷³ Young, *The Theology of the Pastoral Letters*, 104.

local congregation in service.¹⁷⁴ The presence of substantive material related to apostles, elders, and deacons within the Pastoral Epistles affirms Christ-centered followership with respect to its presentation of formal roles.

Informal roles. First Timothy 2:7 highlights the informal roles of teacher and preacher (as well as the more formal role of apostle). On the heels of his initial warnings and directives concerning false teachers in the opening chapter of 1 Timothy, Paul turns his attention to related practical matters in chapter 2. Stott understands this section (2:1-15) as presenting directives and reflections concerning ways the local congregation in Ephesus ought to pray and conduct its public worship within the context of the surrounding world and its mission in it.¹⁷⁵ Following a series of commands regarding intercession for various people and rulers (1:1-2), Paul makes a number of remarks concerning God’s saving work through Christ. He also expresses the Lord’s universal concern for those outside salvation and unfamiliar with “the knowledge of the truth” (1:4-6).¹⁷⁶ In verse 6, he emphasizes that Christ “gave himself as a ransom for all, which is the testimony given at the proper time.”

Then, in verse 7, Paul says of himself, “For this I was appointed a preacher and an apostle (I am telling the truth, I am not lying), a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth.” “For this” links Paul’s appointment as a preacher and teacher (and apostle) with the “testimony” concerning Christ in verse 6. Knight aptly explains the meaning here as

¹⁷⁴ David Platt, *1 Timothy*, in Platt, Akin, and Merida, *1 & 2 Timothy and Titus*, 59. For more thorough discussions of elders and deacons, see the following works: Andreas J. Köstenberger, “The New Testament Pattern of Church Government,” *Midwestern Journal of Theology* 4, no. 2 (2006): 43-56; John Goodrich, “Overseers as Stewards and the Qualifications for Leadership in the Pastoral Epistles,” *Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft* 104, no. 1 (2013): 77-97; Alexander Strauch, *Biblical Eldership: Restoring the Eldership to Its Rightful Place in the Church* (Littleton, CO: Lewis and Roth, 1997); Strauch, *Paul’s Vision for the Deacons: Assisting the Elders with the Care of God’s Church* (Littleton, CO: Lewis and Roth, 2017).

¹⁷⁵ Stott, *Guard the Truth*, 59-60.

¹⁷⁶ Fee, *1 and 2 Timothy, Titus*, 64-66.

“Christ bears the testimony, and it is for that task that Paul is appointed, i.e., to proclaim that same testimony.”¹⁷⁷ Paul’s use of the verb “to appoint” (τίθημι) conveys the sense that he was “assigned” these tasks with Christ as the one appointing him.¹⁷⁸

Concerning these responsibilities, Köstenberger comments, “‘Herald’ (NASB, ‘preacher’), ‘apostle,’ and ‘teacher’ describe distinct but partially overlapping roles.”¹⁷⁹ Furthermore, Köstenberger suggests Paul may actually be presenting himself as a pattern for Timothy to follow with respect to “preacher” and “teacher,” but not “apostle” as he reserved that for himself.¹⁸⁰ Köstenberger’s view seems plausible given that Paul in other places calls Timothy to “preaching” (2 Tim 4:2, κηρύσσω) and “teaching” (1 Tim 4:11; 6:2; 2 Tim 2:2). Consistent with the Lord’s universal concern for all people, Paul affirms his appointment to minister on behalf of the gentiles by serving Christ in different roles. First Timothy 2:7 affirms Wilder and Jones’s model with respect to the importance of the preaching and teaching role to the Christ-centered leader, especially with the Great commission in view.¹⁸¹

¹⁷⁷ Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 125.

¹⁷⁸ BDAG, “τίθημι,” 1003-4. As Guthrie puts it, “The opening words may be paraphrased, ‘To spread the testimony I was appointed a *herald* and an *apostle*’. Paul had not appointed himself to so great and hazardous a task; it was laid upon him by God.” Guthrie, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 83.

¹⁷⁹ Köstenberger, *Commentary on 1-2 Timothy and Titus*, “Exposition on 1 Timothy,” “On Prayer (2:1-8),” “2:7,” para. 2. See also Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 125. Regarding ἀπόστολος, BDAG states, “of messengers with extraordinary status, especially of God’s *messenger, envoy*” and “predominately in the NT of a group of highly honored believers with a special function as God’s envoys.” With respect to 1 Tim 2:7, the entry continues, “In Christian circles, at first ἀπόστολος denoted one who proclaimed the gospel, and was not strictly limited.” BDAG, “ἀπόστολος,” 122. A preacher is described as “one who makes public declarations, especially of a transcendent nature, *herald, proclaimer*.” BDAG, “κηρύξ,” 543 (emphasis original). See BDAG, “διδάσκαλος,” 241 regarding “teacher.” Stott differentiates the three different roles mentioned in 1 Tim 2:7 as follows: “It was the task of the apostles to formulate, defend and commend the gospel. It is the task of heralds to proclaim it, and of teachers to give systematic instruction in its doctrines and ethics.” Stott, *Guard the Truth*, 72. See also Barclay, *A Study Commentary on 1 and 2 Timothy*, 83; Montague, *First and Second Timothy, Titus*, 57-58.

¹⁸⁰ Köstenberger, *Commentary on 1-2 Timothy and Titus*, “Exposition on 1 Timothy,” “On Prayer (2:1-8),” “2:7,” para. 2.

¹⁸¹ Wilder and Jones, *The God Who Goes Before You*, 16.

Practices

Having considered in detail those verses within the Pastoral Epistles that confirm Wilder and Jones's core Christ-centered followership as pastoral leadership conceptual categories of identity, relationships, and roles, I now present and discuss those elements that support their understanding of leader-as-follower practices (i.e., behaviors, activities, actions). These practices, flowing from and building upon the preceding categories, consist of (1) submission to and dependence upon God; (2) follow and set godly examples; (3) endure suffering, proclaim the Word, (4) feed, protect, and equip saints, and (5) defend and promote justice.

Submission to and dependence upon God: 2 Timothy 1:8. Wilder and Jones maintain that a primary component of Christ-centered followership entails “fearing and following” God.¹⁸² Fearing and following the Lord in their construct involves internal dispositions and acts or practices of submission and dependence, especially dependence upon the Holy Spirit.¹⁸³ Again, given the biblically derived nature of their model, one would anticipate reference within the Pastoral Epistles regarding these matters.

In 2 Timothy 1:8, Paul articulates the need for Timothy to submit to and depend upon God in order to fulfill a central requirement of gospel ministry—suffering. At the conclusion of verse 8, the apostle directs Timothy to “share in suffering for the gospel by the power of God.” Paul mentioned in the previous verse that “God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power” and then returned to the topic by emphasizing that only by means of “power supplied by God” would Timothy be able to participate with Paul in gospel-related hardship.¹⁸⁴ Towner maintains that Paul had the Holy Spirit in view in verses 7-8 and states, “The presence of the Spirit of power provides a guarantee of the

¹⁸² Wilder and Jones, *The God Who Goes Before You*, 138.

¹⁸³ See especially Wilder and Jones, *The God Who Goes Before You*, 141-44.

¹⁸⁴ Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 466.

strength, endurance, and courage needed to face the situation.”¹⁸⁵ Paul exhorts Timothy to put aside shame, join with him in gospel-related suffering, and draw upon God’s enablement to do so.

Follow and set godly examples: 2 Timothy 3:10. Second Timothy 3:1-4:8 represents the letter’s crescendo to climax. In eschatological language, Paul issues a lengthy warning about the spread of unethical behavior and opposition to the truth (3:1-9). In contrast, he instructs his protégé to hew to the pattern he, as his mentor, set out.¹⁸⁶ In 3:10, Paul says, “You, however, have followed my teaching, my conduct, my aim in life, my faith, my patience, my love, my steadfastness.” He continues into verse 11 by reminding Timothy of the sufferings and persecutions he experienced, as well as the Lord’s deliverance.

Paul recounts how Timothy had “followed” (παρηκολουθέω) aspects of his ministry and life. While παρηκολουθέω can simply mean “to accompany,” Paul uses it in its more technical sense here: a disciple observing at close quarters his mentor, learning from him, and then emulating the example he provided.¹⁸⁷ Second Timothy 3:10, then, suggests that not only did Paul intend to be an example for Timothy but that he also expected the younger man to imitate him with respect to these matters. Towner writes that in verses 10-11, “Paul implies that his own life and conduct provides an observable template for Christian living[,] and the items that follow [i.e., those that come after ‘way

¹⁸⁵ Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 466.

¹⁸⁶ Guthrie, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 172-73.

¹⁸⁷ Fee, *1 and 2 Timothy, Titus*, 275-76. Concerning this matter, Fiore notes, “The objects of the verb, ‘you followed’ (*parekolouthesas*) indicate that Timothy has not only been faithful to Paul’s teaching but has also taken Paul as a model for his own way of life.” Fiore, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 168. See also Kelly, *A Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles*, 198; Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 439; Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 556. Risto Saarinen notes, “The verb *parakoloutheo* (“to follow, observe”) echoes *akoloutheo*, the verb employed in the Gospels (Mark 1:18) of following Jesus.” Risto Saarinen, *Pastoral Epistles with Philemon & Jude*, Brazos Theological Commentary on the Bible (Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2008), 153.

of life'] belong to that template."¹⁸⁸ De Boer makes a similar point when he concludes his comments on 2 Timothy 3:10: "We learn from this text that the pattern of Christianity as Paul manifested it had been successfully formed in Timothy through Timothy's thoroughgoing following of Paul. 'Following' here is a concept which includes the phenomenon of imitation."¹⁸⁹

Yet, verses 10-11, though primarily backwards looking, could possibly and implicitly be hortatory in character. As Towner suggests, this important review of their close past association lays "the groundwork for renewed imitation (see 3:14; 4:1-5)."¹⁹⁰ Among the various life and ministry activities Paul lists, teaching the gospel and sound doctrine held the preeminent place.¹⁹¹ Nonetheless, his way of life was closely linked to that teaching.¹⁹² As Mounce says, "Timothy knows Paul's doctrine and his manner of life, his conduct; the truth of a message can be connected to the character of the messenger."¹⁹³ Thus, just as Paul had sought to ensure both orthodoxy and orthopraxy, he now expects Timothy to do likewise going forward. Second Timothy 3:10 resoundingly affirms Wilder and Jones's emphasis upon leaders following good examples even as they set proper examples for their followers to emulate.¹⁹⁴

¹⁸⁸ Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 571. Similarly, Christopher Porter states, "Timothy is to do the work of a prototypical in-group leader, imitating Paul as the prototypical enumeration of 3:10-17 is summarized in suffering and evangelizing to completion (4:5)." Christopher A. Porter, "2 Timothy," in *T & T Clark Social Identity Commentary on the New Testament*, ed. J. Brian Tucker and Aaron Kuecker, 461-68 (New York: T & T Clark, 2020), 467.

¹⁸⁹ Willis Peter de Boer, *The Imitation of Paul: An Exegetical Study* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 1962), 201.

¹⁹⁰ Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 571.

¹⁹¹ Guthrie, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 172; Köstenberger, *Commentary on 1-2 Timothy and Titus*, "Exposition on 2 Timothy," "3:10-13," para. 1; Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 556.

¹⁹² Köstenberger points out that in the original, "teaching is stressed and modifies the following nouns." Köstenberger, *Commentary on 1-2 Timothy and Titus*, "Exposition on 2 Timothy," "3:10-13," para. 2.

¹⁹³ Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 556.

¹⁹⁴ Wilder and Jones, *The God Who Goes Before You*, 152-53.

Endure suffering: 2 Timothy 1:8. Following the customary salutation (1:1-2) and thanksgiving (1:3-5), Paul launches into the letter’s first section (1:6-14) and appeals for Timothy’s loyalty to himself and the gospel.¹⁹⁵ In verses 6-8, Paul implores Timothy to rekindle God’s gift he had earlier received and recalls that God had provided him the resources of love, power, and self-control.¹⁹⁶ The apostle then declares in verse 8, “Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord, nor of me his prisoner, but share in suffering for the gospel by the power of God.”

“Therefore” connects the divinely provided resources in verse 7 to the two directives in verse 8.¹⁹⁷ The initial command “do not be ashamed” (μή ἐπαισχυνοῖς), concerns the “putting behind” or “disregard” of any sense of shame or embarrassment.¹⁹⁸ BDAG defines ἐπαισχύνομαι as “to experience a painful feeling or sense of loss of status because of some particular event or activity.”¹⁹⁹ The objects of the verb ἐπαισχυνοῖς are “testimony about our Lord” (i.e., the gospel message) and Paul himself, a prisoner.²⁰⁰ Though Timothy might be tempted to be ashamed of a crucified

¹⁹⁵ Second Timothy’s structure has produced a litany of different outlines. Based upon my understanding of the letter’s overall development and flow, I find Yarbrough’s the most satisfying. Yarbrough, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 346.

¹⁹⁶ Most commentators view the giver of those divine resources as the Holy Spirit. See Yarbrough, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 357; Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 477-78. Some, such as Fee, understand the actual gift to be the Holy Spirit himself. Fee, *1 and 2 Timothy, Titus*, 226-27.

¹⁹⁷ Marshall states, “The imperative which follows is grounded in the preceding statement. Since Timothy has received the Spirit and the accompanying power, it is both his duty and within his ability to fulfill the command.” Marshall, *Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles*, 700.

¹⁹⁸ Knight used “embarrassment” to describe the idea of shame in this text. Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 372. Yarbrough’s language of “put behind” and “disregard” connects to the idea of shame, and his remarks at this point are especially helpful. Yarbrough, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 358-60.

¹⁹⁹ BDAG, “ἐπαισχύνομαι,” 357.

²⁰⁰ Marshall, *Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles*, 703. Porter observes, “This shame is first linked with the witness about the superordinate group prototype—God—and then secondarily about Paul as a prisoner. These dual characteristics to be ashamed over are introduced here as a pair of foils for the type of leadership of the in-group sought by Paul.” Porter, “2 Timothy,” 463.

Concerning the “testimony about our Lord,” Yarbrough states, “Whereas “witness” or “testimony” today can mean one’s unique personal inner religious experience, its biblical usage points to a sharing of publicly observed phenomena. Jesus did not die for sin in

Savior and a prisoner of the Roman government, Paul calls him to disregard any sense of shame and actually join with him (i.e., Paul) in suffering for the gospel.²⁰¹

Suffering and persecution as a result of gospel fidelity and gospel ministry constitute a major theme of 2 Timothy (see, e.g., 1:8, 12; 2:3, 9; 3:11-12; 4:5). In fact, Marshall understands the second letter to Timothy to be primarily about such matters. Concerning 1:8, he writes, “Timothy is encouraged not be ashamed of the gospel or of Paul but to take his share of suffering for the gospel. The letter thus becomes an appeal for readiness to suffer in the course of Christian witness, and 1:8 could be regarded as summing up the letter.”²⁰² Given the emphasis upon suffering throughout 2 Timothy, one can hardly dispute that Paul understood that suffering and gospel ministry were inseparable. In that case, 2 Timothy in general and 1:8 in particular support Wilder and Jones’s assertion that the practice of enduring suffering forms a critical component of Christ-centered followership.²⁰³

Proclaim the Word: 2 Timothy 4:2. Having just emphasized the importance of the Scriptures in 2 Timothy 3:14-17, Paul invokes God and Christ’s presence, Jesus’s eschatological judgment of all peoples, and his end-of-time return and kingdom consummation (4:1)—all to issue a solemn charge to Timothy: “preach the word” (κήρυξον τὸν λόγον).²⁰⁴ By “the word,” Paul means the message about Christ, the gospel,

secret, or were his resurrection appearances viewed only by a select few off in hiding (see 1 Cor 15:1-8; Acts 1:3). After being told by Jesus, “You will be my witnesses” (Acts 1:8), Peter and John spoke of what they had “seen and heard” (Acts 4:20). Timothy needs to be open and forthright about what had been proclaimed across the Roman world (and beyond) for some three decades by the time Paul writes 2 Timothy. (Yarbrough, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 358)

²⁰¹ See Fiore’s helpful discussion on the Greco-Roman honor-shame cultural and its relevance to 2 Tim 1:8. Fiore, *Pastoral Epistles*, 137. See also Wright, *Paul for Everyone: The Pastoral Letters*, 88. Concerning the meaning of Paul’s directive to Timothy “to share in suffering for the gospel,” see Guthrie, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 141; similarly Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 465.

²⁰² Marshall, *Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles*, 700.

²⁰³ Wilder and Jones, *The God Who Goes Before You*, 157-61.

²⁰⁴ Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 571. See also Calvin, *1 & 2 Timothy and Titus*, 157-58; Wright, *Paul for Everyone: The Pastoral Letters*, 124.

as rooted in the Scriptures.²⁰⁵ The imperative “preach” comes before four others that in total reflect Paul’s commitment to maintaining orthodoxy and promoting orthopraxy. Paul provided a proper pattern (3:10-11), and the time to pass the mantle of ministerial responsibility had come (4:6). As Gloer and Stepp put it, “Now Paul charges Timothy to perform this action that has been so characteristic of his own ministry: ‘preach the word.’”²⁰⁶ Thus, 2 Timothy 4:2 affirms the Christ-centered followership practice of Word-proclamation.

Feed, protect, and equip saints: Titus 1:1-3. The opening to Paul’s letter to Titus evidences the Christ-centered followership practices of feeding, protecting, and equipping God’s people. Grounded in his slave identity and his apostolic role, Paul presents his ministerial purpose in clear relief:

Paul, a servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, for the sake of the faith of God’s elect and their knowledge of the truth, which accords with godliness, in hope of eternal life, which God, who never lies, promised before the ages began and at the proper time manifested in his word through the preaching with which I have been entrusted by the command of God our Savior.

This section, constructed around the repetition of *κατὰ*, presents the grounds, authority, means, and aims of Paul’s ministry. As Genade puts it, Paul’s divinely instituted efforts essentially seek to “advance the faith and knowledge of the church, for the purpose of godliness.”²⁰⁷

Paul expresses his two immediate concerns as fostering or nurturing the faith of God’s elect²⁰⁸ and strengthening their knowledge of the truth.²⁰⁹ “Knowledge

²⁰⁵ Fee, *1 and 2 Timothy, Titus*, 101; Köstenberger, *Commentary on 1-2 Timothy and Titus*, “Exposition on 2 Timothy,” “4:2,” “1. ‘Preach the word’”; Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 600.

²⁰⁶ Gloer and Stepp, *Reading Paul’s Letters to Individuals*, 264.

²⁰⁷ Genade, *Persuading the Cretans*, 15. Paul ministers, as Yarbrough phrases it, “to further the faith of God’s elect.” Yarbrough, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 468.

²⁰⁸ Stott, *Guard the Truth*, 169. See also Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 283.

²⁰⁹ Gloer and Stepp, *Reading Paul’s Letters to Individuals*, 73.

[ἐπίγνωσιν]²¹⁰ of the truth” entails knowing the gospel and, as Towner explains, “depicts the life of faith in terms of a prior and ongoing apprehension of the truth.”²¹¹ An authentic “apprehension” of the gospel results in godliness (εὐσέβειαν).²¹² Knight understands εὐσέβεια to mean “a godly life, the life of one who fears and serves God.”²¹³ Thus, Paul’s apostolic ministry aims to feed and fortify Christians such that their knowledge of the gospel garners godliness.²¹⁴ So, Titus 1:1-3 in brief fashion highlights how Paul—and by extension his delegate, Titus—feeds, protects, and equips God’s people.

Defend and promote justice: 1 Timothy 5:21. Paul devotes the fifth chapter of 1 Timothy to a series of practical directives aimed at guiding Timothy as he ministers to different congregational subgroups (older and younger men and women [5:1-2], widows [5:3-16], elders [5:17-25], and slaves [6:1-2a]). Embedded within his instructions concerning elders, Paul commands Timothy to engage in particular practices that are intended to defend and promote justice. In verse 21, the apostle solemnly directs Timothy, “In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus and of the elect angels I charge you to keep these rules without prejudging, doing nothing from partiality.” Verses 19-20 contain the “rules” to which Paul refers: (1) accusations of improper conduct against an elder must be affirmed by at least two individuals to warrant investigation, and (2) confirmed

²¹⁰ BDAG, “ἐπίγνωσις,” 369.

²¹¹ Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 668.

²¹² BDAG, “εὐσέβεια,” 412.

²¹³ Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 283. Yarbrough provides the following description of what εὐσέβεια means in this context: “Such ‘godliness’ is the practical expression, the living out in real life situation, of the knowledge of God that easily veers off into abstract conviction that is mentally stimulating but practically barren Paul writes to commend ‘knowledge of the truth’ that will make a difference for his readers’ religious disposition, which affects their everyday affairs, relationships, and actions.” Yarbrough, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 469.

²¹⁴ Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 668. Montague helpfully puts it in these terms: “The goal of Paul’s mission was to call forth, foster, and protect the faith of those who, in God’s mysterious providence, would say yes to the gospel.” Montague, *First and Second Timothy, Titus*, 213.

accusations must result in a public rebuke of the offending elder.²¹⁵

By charging Timothy in the presence of God, Christ, and angels, Paul underscores the seriousness of the matters he addresses.²¹⁶ In addition, Towner, points out that the inclusion of angels among the heavenly witnesses to Paul's charge quite possibly "evokes the imagery of the divine court, in which God and his Messiah are attended by angelic beings."²¹⁷ With eschatological judgment in view, Paul directs Timothy to act justly by adhering to his instructions without "prejudging" (προκρίματος²¹⁸) and "partiality" (πρόσκλησιν²¹⁹). Towner helpfully describes these two terms: "The first term, in the phrase 'without partiality' (*prokrimatos*), is attested later as a legal term that stresses objectivity; it instructs Timothy to administer justice without pre-judging the case. The second term, in the participial phrase 'do nothing out of favoritism' (*prosklisin*), describes an inclination or predisposition."²²⁰ Just as God does not practice favoritism (Rom 2:11), so also does Paul instruct Timothy to act in such serious matters.²²¹ Perhaps Yarbrough captures best the impulse behind these seriously pronounced directives: "Justice is supposed to be blind, in God's household just as much as in a secular courtroom."²²² Wilder and Jones maintain that an important aspect of Christ-centered followership is the practice of defending and promoting justice. They write, "*Leadership*

²¹⁵ See especially Stott, *Guard the Truth*, 139; Oden, *First and Second Timothy and Titus*, 151.

²¹⁶ Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 238. See also Fiore, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 112.

²¹⁷ Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 373. Young points out that the notion of God as judge ought to inform and guide the way Timothy must judge in matters related to elders. Young, *The Theology of the Pastoral Letters*, 50.

²¹⁸ BDAG, "πρόκριμα," 871. With reference to 1 Tim 5:21, BDAG notes of πρόκριμα that it concerns "a judgment that involves taking a side beforehand, *prejudgment, discrimination.*"

²¹⁹ BDAG, "πρόσκλησις," 881. The entry reads, "a relatively strong preference for something, *inclination*" (emphasis original).

²²⁰ Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 373.

²²¹ Yarbrough, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 295.

²²² Yarbrough, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 295.

calls for the pursuit of God's justice in the context of a covenant community."²²³ First Timothy 5:21 supports their point by means of specific and direct application—Timothy must defend justice and act justly in view of God's coming judgment for the sake of an accused elder and the entire covenant community.

Summary and Evaluation

Wilder and Jones in *The God Who Goes Before You* aim to present the patterns of leadership "that are uniquely rooted in God's revelation of himself in the whole of his written Word and, supremely, in Jesus Christ."²²⁴ Far from constructing a model of Christian leadership drawn from moralistic, biblically laced leaderships aphorisms, they have produced an inductive, exegetically derived model that incorporates insights from numerous texts across the canon and remains true to the redemptive-historical sweep and trajectory of the Scriptures. The culmination of their effort brings the focal point of Christian leadership into clear relief: the God-man Jesus, who, as archetypal leader, saves and shepherds his people and calls each of them, leaders and followers alike, to fear and follow him.

Thus, Wilder and Jones build their model of Christ-centered followership upon this supposition: "The leader's pursuit of God always takes precedence over the leader's positional authority. Before we are leaders, we must be followers—followers of a God who goes before us."²²⁵ Through careful analysis of Scripture, they identify the elements (i.e., defining identities, important relationships and relational dynamics, specific roles, and particular behaviors) that ground and express their central supposition and support their entire framework.

²²³ Wilder and Jones, *The God Who Goes Before You*, 10 (emphasis original).

²²⁴ Wilder and Jones, *The God Who Goes Before You*, 10.

²²⁵ Wilder and Jones, *The God Who Goes Before You*, 10.

Not surprisingly, the broad patterns of leading and following present in Scripture and noted by Wilder and Jones are also observed by leadership scholars at least to some extent within the broader socio-cultural milieu. Hence, a degree of coincidence exists between Wilder and Jones's biblical understanding of leading and following and someone like Boaz Shamir and his reflections on leadership as presented in his overview of followership theory.²²⁶ Aware of this burgeoning field of study, Wilder and Jones have built a framework of Christ-centered leadership as followership that is firmly grounded in biblical theology and mindful of contemporary followership theory and research.

Summary of Methodological Steps

In this chapter, I have sought to affirm Christ-centered followership by determining the presence of its key concepts and elements within the Pastoral Epistles and evaluating Wilder and Jones's framework in light of the followership content identified therein. I set out to accomplish these goals by means of four tasks: (1) establish a methodology commensurate to an analysis of 1 Timothy, Titus, and 2 Timothy; (2) identifying the key conceptual followership elements and components of Wilder and Jones's framework; (3) analyze the content of each of the Pastoral Epistles for evidence of those key conceptual elements and components; and (4) conduct a more thorough study of twelve key-concept-reflecting texts in order to provide a more robust basis from which to validate and evaluate Christ-centered followership. Lastly, in what follows, I present my research findings.

Research Findings

I found extensive evidence within the Pastoral Epistles for the followership concepts and related subcategories of leader identity, relationships, roles, and practices as

²²⁶ Shamir, "From Passive Recipients to Active Co-Producers," ix-xxxix.

described by Wilder and Jones (with but two exceptions).²²⁷ Therefore, I conclude that the material within the Pastoral Epistles overwhelmingly affirms Christ-centered followership. In fact, given that the Pastoral Epistles' thirteen chapters represent just five percent of the overall New Testament count, I think it remarkable that almost every conceptual element and subcategory of Wilder and Jones's framework is present.²²⁸

The scope and type of supporting material within the Pastoral Epistles for Christ-centered followership suggests very little in terms of critique. The lack of reference to the shepherd identity within the letters to Timothy and Titus coincides with Laniak's findings with respect to the Pauline corpus.²²⁹ Therefore, the absence of supporting shepherd-related material does not necessitate a critique of Wilder and Jones's model as it is supported by numerous other biblical texts.

While Wilder and Jones include the practice of looking to godly models and providing positive examples for others to emulate, their treatment does not fully capture the emphasis and contours of imitation relative to the witness of the Pastoral Epistles.²³⁰ In fact, I contend that the nature and amount of material within Paul's letters to Timothy and Titus warrant an elevation of the practice to an informal role similar to that of teaching and preaching.²³¹ While my critique reflects a difference of degree and not

²²⁷ As noted above, sonship is not explicitly affirmed (though the closely related notion of being a people possessed by God is) and the shepherd identity is not evidenced at all.

²²⁸ The Pastoral Epistles consist of thirteen chapters that represent five percent of the New Testament's 260 chapters. I find it difficult to imagine locating an equivalent level of textual support for Wilder and Jones's model in any other thirteen New Testament chapters. I think it likely that the Pastoral Epistles, by their very nature and subject matter, possess an especially large concentration of Christ-centered followership elements.

²²⁹ With a bit of irony, Laniak addresses the lack of shepherding references in the "pastoral" letters. In point of fact, he states, "Although Paul is quite 'pastoral' in his ministry, engages in second exodus theology at times and refers to church leaders as shepherds occasionally, pastoral imagery is not a central, organizing rubric in the Pauline corpus." Laniak, *Shepherds after My Own Heart*, 25.

²³⁰ While Wilder and Jones provide a number of examples and admonitions to follow or look to Christ's example (as they ought!), they only provide the apostle Peter as an example of a human leader to look to and emulate. Wilder and Jones, *The God Who Goes Before You*, 184. For all of their references to the practice of setting and following godly examples, see the following pp. 14, 127, 128, 152, 154, 183-84.

²³¹ In fact, I would contend that the same argument could be made with respect to the practice

substance, a more robust treatment of looking to and setting godly examples within their construct would enhance it. In fact, Paul's dual emphasis within the Pastoral Epistles upon sound instruction and proper modeling comports with his equal concern for orthodoxy and orthopraxy. Therefore, in the following chapter, I consider leader imitation and modeling as presented within 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus and their place within Christ-centered followership. Ultimately, I intend to employ an adjusted Christ-centered followership model for the purpose of developing emerging-adult men as spiritual leaders.

of enduring suffering. Instead of being referred to as a practice consistent with Christ-centered followership, it ought to be considered an informal role.

CHAPTER 4
FOLLOWING AND SETTING AN EXAMPLE IN
CHRIST-CENTERED FOLLOWERSHIP

Thus far, I have reviewed the followership precedent literature and demonstrated that Paul's correspondence to Timothy and Titus validates Wilder and Jones's Christ-centered followership model. Consideration in chapter 2 of relevant research determined the unique contribution *The God Who Goes Before You* makes to the fields of leadership and followership studies.¹ In addition, the review of the precedent literature found a gap in the research corpus: no study had been undertaken to confirm Christ-centered followership in light of the material within the Pastoral Epistles. Chapter 3, then, reflects my effort to address that void within the research base and demonstrates that 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus resoundingly affirm Christ-centered followership as pastoral leadership.

My analysis of the Pastoral Epistles in the previous chapter also provides the basis by which to critique and adjust Wilder and Jones's model. While Christ-centered followership accurately reflects the biblical data with respect to the followership categories of identity, relationships, roles, and practices, it fails to mirror the contours and prominence of example following and setting found within the Pastoral Epistles. Whereas Wilder and Jones consider the Christian leader's responsibility to emulate and present proper models as a Christ-centered followership practice, the content of the Pastoral Epistles calls for a heightened and adapted emphasis within their construct.

¹ Michael S. Wilder and Timothy Paul Jones, *The God Who Goes Before You: Pastoral Leadership as Christ-Centered Followership* (Nashville: B&H, 2018).

At different points in his letters to his two protégés, Paul presents himself as an example to be imitated, exhorts Timothy and Titus to provide proper models themselves, and commends other positive examples—while also condemning negative ones—as an integral part of his overall concern to ensure the spiritual health of congregations in both Ephesus and Crete.² In fact, setting and following an example reflects a crucial pedagogical methodology utilized by Paul for ensuring both gospel-oriented orthodoxy and orthopraxy on the part of leaders and congregants alike. Therefore, in this chapter, I argue that the nature and extent of the leadership motif of modeling prototypical behavior and emulating positive examples within the Pastoral Epistles warrants positing an informal role of “exemplar” within Christ-centered followership along with corresponding adjustments to the practices category.³ In order to accomplish this aim, the current chapter moves through five sections: The first provides an overview of imitation within Greco-Roman and Jewish cultures. The second section consists of a summary of Paul’s use of the imitation motif within his ecclesiastical letters and establishes the backdrop for a fuller analysis of setting and following an example within the Pastoral Epistles in section three. The fourth section synthesizes and presents the research findings

² First Timothy and Titus are similar in that Paul writes to encourage his liaisons and provide instructions for them in their efforts to confront false teachers in Ephesus and Crete, respectively. Furthermore, both letters demonstrate Paul’s conviction that the gospel, the central message of the Bible concerning Christ, contrasts sharply with the teaching of the false teachers and ought to result in changed lives producing good works when individually believed. Of course, Timothy in Ephesus is dealing with problems within an established congregation, whereas Titus on Crete is working with relatively young congregations. Each, therefore, has correspondingly somewhat different tasks. Second Timothy sees Paul in prison and facing certain execution. Therefore, he writes to call Timothy to his side and encourage Timothy’s fidelity to the gospel, its proclamation, and to Paul in the face of certain suffering. In many respects, 2 Timothy reflects a passage of leadership responsibility from Paul to Timothy. Gordon D. Fee and Douglas Stuart, *How to Read the Bible Book by Book: A Guided Tour* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002), 373-86.

³ Currently, “following and setting godly examples” is categorized as a Christ-centered followership practice within Wilder and Jones’s model. I am proposing elevating its categorization from a “practice” to a “role” within the overall schema and introducing a new practice category entitled “modeling.”

As setting and following an example was a common phenomenon within Greco-Roman culture and is generally referred to as “imitation” or mimesis (from the Ancient Greek μίμησις), I use “example following and setting,” “following and setting an example,” “imitation,” and “personal example” interchangeably.

of the preceding three sections. Then, in light of those conclusions, the fifth section proposes specific adjustments to Wilder and Jones’s Christ-centered followership construct. In the subsequent chapter, I employ their nuanced framework for the purpose of developing emerging-adult men as spiritual leaders.

Following and Setting an Example in Greco-Roman and Jewish Contexts

The ideas related to and the practice of imitation influenced a lengthy swath of Hellenistic history and permeated a number of aspects of Greco-Roman society. Wolfgang Bauder finds that the Greek term μιμέομαι (“imitate, follow”) was used as far back as the sixth century B.C.E.⁴ Michael Fronda observes that within Platonic and Aristotelian philosophy, the concept of *mimesis* was used to describe the ways in which the arts, particularly in written and visual forms, “mimicked or imitated the world.”⁵ Furthermore, Greek and Roman literature, rhetoric, and historiography embraced imitative conceptual frameworks and practices.⁶ The idea of setting and emulating models also infused Greco-Roman pedagogy and moral philosophy.⁷

Stephen Fowl points out that “the notion of imitating some sort of moral exemplar was quite common in the ancient world.”⁸ In fact, Frances Young avers, “The

⁴ Wolfgang Bauder, “μιμέομαι,” in *NIDNTT*, 1:490-92.

⁵ Michael P. Fronda, “Imitation (*mimesis*, *imitation*),” in *The Encyclopedia of Ancient History*, vol. 6, ed. Roger S. Bagnall et al. (Hoboken, NJ: Blackwell, 2013), 3416.

⁶ Fronda, “Imitation,” 3416-417. According to Fronda, most Greek and Roman authors employed imitation in their writings. He describes imitation in literary works as an “author’s conscious use of features and characteristics of earlier works to acknowledge indebtedness to past writers.” Similarly, Brian Dodd says of imitation in Greek literature, “The emulation of personal example was a common literary and hortatory motif in antiquity, and μιμούμενος, its derivatives and related ideas have a broad range of usage in Greek literature.” Brian Dodd, *Paul’s Paradigmatic ‘I’: Personal Example as Literary Strategy* (Sheffield, UK: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999), 16.

⁷ For a helpful overview of the development and use of *mimesis* within Greek pedagogical contexts as well as its utilization within Hellenistic rhetoric, philosophy, art, poetics, and historiography, see Andrew W. Pitts, “The Origins of Greek *Mimesis* and the Gospel of Mark: Genre as a Potential Constraint in Assessing Markan Imitation,” in *Ancient Education and Early Christianity*, ed. Matthew Ryan Hauge and Andrew W. Pitts (New York: T & T Clark, 2016), 107-36.

⁸ Stephen E. Fowl, “Imitation of Paul/of Christ,” in *The Dictionary of Paul and His Letters*, ed.

importance of imitation for the development of moral character in the perception of the ancient world can hardly be overestimated.”⁹ For example, in Paul’s day, philosophers routinely pointed to their own lives as models of the principles they expounded, and teachers often exhorted their students to emulate the way they lived.¹⁰ Such observations—those related to Hellenistic and Roman pedagogy and moral and character development—provide necessary context for any analysis of following and setting personal examples within the Pastoral Epistles. In addition, similar elements within Judaism help inform the imitative material within Paul’s letters to Timothy and Titus. Therefore, in the remainder of this section, I survey the findings concerning Greco-Roman and Jewish imitation from three prominent Pauline imitation studies as a prelude to the main interest of this chapter—understanding the extent and nature of following and setting good examples in the Pastoral Epistles and subsequently adjusting Christ-centered followership in view of that investigation.

Willis de Boer

Willis de Boer’s 1962 exegetically based project *The Imitation of Paul* remains one of the most influential works on the subject.¹¹ Writing in part to critique Wilhelm Michaelis’s earlier work on μιμέομαι,¹² de Boer begins by conducting extensive lexical

Gerald F. Hawthorne, Ralph P. Martin, and Daniel G. Reid (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993), 430.

⁹ Frances Young, *The Theology of the Pastoral Epistles* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 88.

¹⁰ Craig S. Keener, *The IVP Background Commentary: New Testament* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993), 475, 603.

¹¹ Willis Peter de Boer, *The Imitation of Paul: An Exegetical Study* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 1962). De Boer’s work is one of the most frequently cited and referenced in the study of Pauline imitation. Furthermore, *The Imitation of Paul* challenged and significantly contributed to the movement of the scholarly consensus and discussion away from Wilhelm Michaelis’s understanding of Pauline imitation (i.e., that Paul’s call to imitate himself was largely about engendering gospel conformity and obedience to apostolic authority).

¹² Wilhelm Michaelis, “μιμέομαι κτλ.,” in *TDNT*, 4:659-74. Michaelis’s entry was first published in Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich, eds., *Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament*, (Stuttgart, Germany: W. Kohlhammer Verlag, 1933-1979): 4:661-78.

research on the two most frequently occurring imitation-related words within Paul's letters: μιμέομαι (the apostle's word for "imitation") and τύπος (his word for "personal example").¹³ De Boer finds an important dimension of μιμέομαι's usage during the first century centered upon the means of individual moral and character development within the context of relationships. In particular, such imitative outlooks and practices took place in parent-child, teacher-pupil, and leader-follower contexts.¹⁴ Interestingly, de Boer notes that setting and following examples in those situations was not reduced to "uncreative copying" or "slavish reproduction."¹⁵ Rather, "in imitation one could bring a person [the model], his characteristics, ways, and way of life to living expression and personal representation in one's [the imitator] own life."¹⁶ In addition, de Boer establishes that τύπος, as it relates to the topic at hand, conveys the idea of a "pattern, standard, model, or personal example" and that the Greek and Hellenistic Jewish use of τύπος in that fashion "carried strong moralistic accents."¹⁷ Following the linguistic portion of his study, de Boer turns to a socio-historical examination of the phenomenon.

In *The Imitation of Paul*, de Boer devotes considerable space to exploring the development of imitation in Greek, Old Testament, Jewish, and New Testament contexts. He observes that the notion and practice of imitation grew into full form under the

¹³ See de Boer, *The Imitation of Paul*, pp. 1-16 for the discussion on μιμέομαι and pp. 17-23 for the presentation of his findings with respect to τύπος. The opening sections of de Boer's work emphasize lexical analysis as the first of several steps to understand the imitation theme within Paul's writings. While μιμέομαι does not appear within the pages of the Pastoral Epistles, its usage by Paul elsewhere, and prevalence within the prevailing societal milieu requires an understanding of its meaning. Furthermore, the associated term, τύπος, does, in fact, occur in the Pastoral Epistles (e.g., 1 Tim 4:12; Titus 2:7).

¹⁴ de Boer, *The Imitation of Paul*, 211.

¹⁵ de Boer, *The Imitation of Paul*, 211. Concerning the fact that Greco-Roman imitation consisted of more than mechanical, unimaginative aping, Dodd writes, "Ethical emulation of good people, monarchs and deities was a common metaphorical usage of the terminology, and focused on patterning oneself after another rather than slavish mimicry of every detail." Dodd, *Paul's Paradigmatic 'I'*, 16.

¹⁶ de Boer, *The Imitation of Paul*, 211.

¹⁷ de Boer, *The Imitation of Paul*, 211.

Greeks. These ancient peoples, the author notes, possessed “a great appreciation of the importance and influence of a close personal example” and “recognized that under almost every circumstance the older, more experienced, and more advanced serve as a pattern for the younger, less experienced, and less advance to follow.”¹⁸ While the Old Testament does not explicitly address imitation per se, it nonetheless emphasizes the notion of adhering to particular patterns—divine or human—often in terms of “going after, walking after, following” the customs, ordinances, directives, or manner of another.¹⁹ Only within the intertestamental period did Judaism begin to develop a defined and clearly articulated sense of following personal example with respect to God and within rabbi-student relationships.²⁰ De Boer notes that Jesus’s call for disciples to follow and be with him did not exclude the idea of imitation. Rather, such imitation undoubtedly would develop from the sort of discipleship the Lord envisioned.²¹ Finally, de Boer observes that the New Testament letters call upon individuals to imitate Christ, God, and other saints.

Victor Copan

Victor Copan’s 2007 project *Saint Paul as Spiritual Director* examines in detail imitation within Hellenistic and Jewish contexts.²² He found well over two

¹⁸ de Boer, *The Imitation of Paul*, 25.

¹⁹ de Boer, *The Imitation of Paul*, 30-31.

²⁰ de Boer, *The Imitation of Paul*, 25, 43-44. The author points out that this rise in interest in imitation among Jewish writers coincided with increased contact between Semitic and Greek cultures (88). Furthermore, de Boer observes that among both the Greeks and Rabbinic Judaism of the time,

the learning process was viewed as involving much more than acquiring mastery over certain amounts of study material. Rather, it was seen as a kind of apprenticeship in living, where the pupil lived with the master, went with him on all occasions, observed his actions and reactions to all kinds of situations, and learned not only his knowledge but his way of life. The sacred traditions which were to be learned were found in the life and actions of the teacher. (43-44)

As will be seen, what de Boer notes here is very much reflected by Paul, for instance, in 2 Tim 3:10-11.

²¹ de Boer, *The Imitation of Paul*, 57. Concerning the relationship of imitation and discipleship, de Boer notes, “The imitation was rooted in the fellowship and union with Christ and sprang forth from it.” Also, for a helpful discussion concerning the relationship between discipleship and imitation, see Victor Copan, “Μαθητής and Μιμητής: Exploring an Entangled Relationship,” *Bulletin for Biblical Research* 17, no. 2 (2007): 313-23.

²² Victor Copan, *Saint Paul as Spiritual Director: An Analysis of the Imitation of Paul with*

thousand uses in Greek literature of μιμέομαι and its cognates concerning the imitation of people, things, and ideas. With respect to human beings, Copan relates that people were to emulate ancestors or other notable historical figures, other living persons or groups, divine persons (e.g., gods, angels, the Jewish and Christian God), and even some animals in light of certain desirable characteristics. More specifically, he discovered “three major emphases of imitation”:²³ (1) people were to imitate certain virtues as observed in others,²³ (2) the actions of others especially as informed by said virtues, and (3) the lifestyle, character, and manner of a given person—what he refers to as “global imitation.”²⁴ Imitative practices of this type most often took place within the parent-child, teacher-student, and leader-people relationships.²⁵ Copan also notes that socio-cultural realities of honor and shame played a significant role in imitation especially in terms of an individual’s emulation of, and identification with, a family or group and their values. Overall, he concludes, “The basic purpose of imitation was the improvement of the character of an individual based on a virtuous model. Based on this model, one could observe with all the senses how a virtuous person lived and thus have a pattern for one’s own life.”²⁶

Implications and Applications to the Practice of Spiritual Direction (Colorado Springs, CO: Paternoster Press, 2007). The material within this entire paragraph draws from Copan’s chapter “Putting Pauline Imitation in Context: The Concept of Imitation in the Greco-Judaic World” (40-71). See especially his summary and conclusion (70-71).

²³ These admirable and valued qualities included bravery, honesty, goodness, friendliness, wisdom, prudence, and the like. Copan, *Saint Paul as Spiritual Director*, 50, 70, 225-26.

²⁴ Copan, *Saint Paul as Spiritual Director*, 223-25. By “global” or “holistic” imitation, Copan means the imitation of the totality of a person’s life. For “three major emphases of imitation,” see p. 70.

²⁵ Copan’s findings coincide with de Boer’s. Young stresses these common and important imitative relationships by stating the following:

Regularly the theme [imitation as a means for moral development] appears in treatment of the father-son relationship, young men being exhorted to pattern their lives after their fathers, and fathers to set a proper example. It is also used of the relation of subjects and rulers who were ideally expected to set forth a perfect model of virtue. Pupils, too, were expected to imitate their teachers, both in behaviour and practice, and a good teacher was regarded as far better than books. The good, too, were to be imitated, not just praised. (Young, *The Theology of the Pastoral Epistles*, 88)

See also Ernest Best, *Paul and His Converts* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1988), 61-62.

²⁶ Copan, *Saint Paul as Spiritual Director*, 71.

Benjamin Fiore

Benjamin Fiore's 1986 volume *The Function of Personal Example in the Socratic and Pastoral Epistles* compares specific rhetorical features of numerous Hellenistic works—especially the Socratic letters—to the Pastoral Epistles in order to demonstrate the latter works' hortatory nature and the important role personal examples plays within them.²⁷ Fiore's analysis of ancient Greek documents provides substantial insight into the phenomenon of imitation in Hellenistic society. Greeks demonstrated interest in both the theoretical and practical dimensions of personal example across a variety disciplines and fields.²⁸ The role of personal example and emulation as an aspect of pedagogy received considerable discussion within the materials Fiore examined. He notes,

This education by example (*non auribus modo, verum etiam oculis*) looks to various individuals for models; but the parent's role is crucial in proposing them when urging that some vice be avoided or that some course be taken. The parents might propose someone from the family's ancestors as example, or might, like a rhetoric teacher in more institutionalized and technical education, be examples themselves.²⁹

In those more formal educational settings, instructor character and conduct mattered as it was understood that individual example was critical to the student's own personal development.³⁰ Finally, Greek imitation also included appeal to both positive and negative examples, living and historical.³¹

²⁷ Benjamin Fiore, *The Function of Personal Example in the Socratic and Pastoral Epistles*, *Analecta Biblica* 105 (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1986).

²⁸ Fiore, *The Function of Personal Example in the Socratic and Pastoral Epistles*, 26-27, 44.

²⁹ Fiore, *The Function of Personal Example in the Socratic and Pastoral Epistles*, 35.

³⁰ Fiore, *The Function of Personal Example in the Socratic and Pastoral Epistles*, 34-36.

³¹ Fiore, *The Function of Personal Example in the Socratic and Pastoral Epistles*, 22-24, 138-46.

Summation of Imitation in Ancient Contexts

Based upon a review of the studies of de Boer, Copan, and Fiore on imitation and personal example in Greek, Roman, and Jewish settings, a number of common themes with pertinence to this current project emerge.³² Especially within Greco-Roman culture, imitation served a common and important pedagogical function, particularly with respect to individual moral and character development. Certain relationships (i.e., father-son, teacher-student, leader-follower) took on an imitative nature such that the older individual—or more powerful figure in the case of the leader and follower—assumed the role of virtuous model whom the younger person was expected to emulate.³³

Whereas the moral and ethical development of the imitator was the goal, the exemplary character and conduct of the model formed the crucial starting point. In fact, the nature of imitation demanded the integration of the exemplar's moral fiber, instruction, and behavior. Finally, while the aforementioned relationships provided the primary context for imitation, the phenomenon also included appeals to reflection upon the positive and negative examples of both living and deceased individuals. With the historical-cultural backdrop of imitation in place, I briefly consider Paul's utilization of the imitation motif in his earlier correspondence before analyzing the Pastoral Epistles for his usage within them.

Paul's Use of the Imitation Motif in His Ecclesiastical Letters

In a number of passages in his ecclesiastical letters, Paul appropriates the

³² De Boer and Fiore's extensive research projects are affirmed and referenced by a number of smaller subsequent efforts (with the exception of Copan's, whose project is the most recent). See, e.g., Best, *Paul and His Converts*; Andrew D. Clarke, "'Be Imitators of Me': Paul's Model of Leadership," *Tyndale Bulletin* 49, no. 2 (1998): 329-60; Fowl, "Imitation of Paul/of Christ," 428-31; Richard N. Longenecker, ed., *Patterns of Discipleship in the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996).

³³ Of course, such imitation was to be adaptive and integrated into the imitator's unique context. Imitation of this sort was not understood to be mechanistic or complete mimicry. Copan, *Saint Paul as Spiritual Director*, 71.

language of imitation in order to engender and extol the following and setting of examples.³⁴ Fowl observes that while the number of Pauline imitation texts are not particularly numerous, the notion of imitation plays a considerable role in Paul's ethic.³⁵ As the previous section has demonstrated, imitation developed as a common and important pedagogical methodology in the Roman world. As Ernest Best puts it, "Paul did not think up the idea for himself. Imitation of others was a widespread theme in the contemporary world."³⁶ The apostle—in his employment of the imitation motif in his letters to churches—drew upon commonly understood concepts and practices and employed them for distinctly Christian purposes. What, then, did Paul mean when he called congregants to imitate himself or others? What was Paul's intended outcome for those who adhered to his and others' positive example? In order to answer these questions, I overview the Pauline imitation texts outside the Pastoral Epistles and then consider the conclusions of a number of previous studies.

Paul as Example

A survey of imitation-related texts within Paul's ecclesiastical epistles finds three discrete categories related to setting and following a personal example: (1) calls to imitate himself, (2) exhortations to emulate others in addition to or beyond himself, and (3) affirmation of imitators developing into examples for others to imitate. The first grouping of passages reflects the apostle's directive to imitate himself. In 1 Corinthians 4:16, Paul exhorts the believers in Corinth to "be imitators of me" (γείνεσθε μιμηταί μου), and he utilizes identical vocabulary in 11:1. The literary context of 4:16

³⁴ Given the focus of this project upon the Pastoral Epistles and space limitations, an extensive analysis of Paul's use of imitation within his letters to churches is not possible. Instead, this section consists of an overview of those texts along with a discussion of a number of important Pauline imitation studies.

³⁵ Fowl, "Imitation of Paul/of Christ," 428.

³⁶ Best, *Paul and His Converts*, 60.

indicates that Paul’s emphasis lies on the Corinthians’ emulating “his moral way of life and his ministerial lifestyle.”³⁷ In 11:1, he not only calls them to be imitators of himself, but he also immediately adds, “as I am of Christ.” Best points out that in this instance, Paul has his behavior with respect to food sacrificed to idols (8:13) and his financial independence (9:1-23) in view.³⁸ Thus, the apostle calls the Corinthians to emulate his calculations and behavior that put the spiritual growth of others in the community above individual considerations and, thus, reflect the example of Christ.³⁹ In yet another example of exhorting others to imitate himself—in this case to a life fully devoted to knowing Christ and the power of his resurrection—Paul says in Philippians 3:17, “Brothers, join in imitating me” (Συνμιμηταί μου γείνεσθε, ἀδελφοί).⁴⁰ Finally, Paul entreats the Galatian church to “become as I am” (γείνεσθε ὡς ἐγώ; Gal 4:12).⁴¹ That is, those in Galatia should look to and follow Paul’s

³⁷ Ben Witherington III, *Conflict and Community in Corinth: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on 1 and 2 Corinthians* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), 147. Witherington notes that Paul’s calls to imitation are rooted in self-understandings as father and teacher that are distinct from prevailing notions of the day (144-45). Fowl provides further elaboration: “In calling the Corinthians to imitate him, Paul is pointing to his life of weakness as the way to embody the life of the cross. By imitating Paul in this respect the Corinthians will adopt the manner of life needed to live faithfully on this side of Christ’s return.” Fowl, “Imitation of Paul/of Christ,” 429. See also Linda L. Belleville, “Imitate Me, Just as I Imitate Christ’: Discipleship in the Corinthian Correspondence,” in Longenecker, *Patterns of Discipleship in the New Testament*, 120-42.

³⁸ Best, *Paul and His Converts*, 64-66.

³⁹ Fowl captures the context and point of 1 Cor 11:1 as follows: “For the Corinthians to imitate Paul as he imitates Christ, the one who calls the community into being and who sustains it (1 Cor 1:30), they will need to dedicate themselves to the task of building up the body. In terms of concrete action this imitation demands that the Corinthians seek the well-being of others rather than themselves.” Fowl, “Imitation of Paul/of Christ,” 429. See also Witherington, *Conflict and Community in Corinth*, 229; Belleville, “Imitate Me, Just as I Imitate Christ,” 126.

⁴⁰ Peter T. O’Brien, *The Epistle to the Philippians*, New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991), 443-47. See also Best, *Paul and His Converts*, 64-66; Clarke, “Be Imitators of Me,” 348-50; Copan, *Paul as Spiritual Director*, 169; Fowl, “Imitation of Paul/of Christ,” 429; Gerald F. Hawthorne, “The Imitation of Christ: Discipleship in Philippians,” in Longenecker, *Patterns of Discipleship in the New Testament*, 163-79.

⁴¹ Although Paul does not utilize his usual imitation-related vocabulary (i.e., μιμίωμαι, μιμητής, and τύπος), several researchers nonetheless recognize this passage as fitting squarely within the body of Pauline imitation texts. See, e.g., Best, *Paul and His Converts*, 67; Clarke, “Be Imitators of Me,” 352; de Boer, *The Imitation of Paul*, 188-96; Fiore, *The Function of Personal Example in the Socratic and Pastoral Epistles*, 186; D. M. Stanley, “‘Become Imitators of Me’: The Pauline Conception of Apostolic Tradition,” *Biblica* 40, no. 3 (1959): 875.

example of relying upon Christ alone for salvation.⁴²

Others as Examples

The second category of imitative material within Paul's ecclesiastical letters concerns those instances where the apostle directs congregants to imitate someone in addition to, or even other than, himself or acknowledges their efforts in doing so. For instance, Paul writes to the Thessalonians, "For you yourselves know how you ought to imitate [μιμεῖσθαι] us" (2 Thess 3:7). He then states that he and those with him sought to provide the Thessalonians with "an example [τύπον] to imitate [μιμεῖσθαι]" (v. 9).⁴³ These verses form a single unit of thought and reflect Paul's concern that everyone in the Thessalonian church work in order to avoid being a financial burden to others and to be able to give oneself in service to others. Such a course of action stands in contrast to those who were idle and disorderly (1 Thess 4:11-12; 5:14; 2 Thess 3:6).⁴⁴ In essence, Paul reminds them how he and his companions provided for themselves while

⁴² Best, *Paul and His Converts*, 67. More specifically, Fiore and Stanley note the literary context supports the idea that the Galatian congregants are exhorted to imitate Paul, who no longer depends upon the Mosaic law and its observance but on only Christ. Fiore, *The Function of Personal Example in the Socratic and Pastoral Epistles*, 186; Stanley, "Become Imitators of Me," 874-76. Ronald Fung avers, "The point of reference is probably freedom from the law. In exchanging adherence to the law for faith in Christ, Paul became a 'Gentile sinner,' as the Galatians were (cf. 2:15, 17); he now beseeches them to become as he is, to be free from legal bondage and to know the liberty that is in Christ (cf. 5:1)." Ronald Y. K. Fung, *The Epistle to the Galatians*, New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1953), 195.

⁴³ Timothy and Silvanus accompanied Paul to Thessalonica as part of the apostle's second missionary journey. Thus, not only does Paul refer to himself as a model to imitate, but he also considers Timothy and Silvanus as exemplary patterns as well. See 1 Thess 1:1. See also Clarke, "Be Imitators of Me," 333.

⁴⁴ de Boer, *The Imitation of Paul*, 138; Fowl, "Imitation of Paul/of Christ," 429-30. See also Best, *Paul and His Converts*, 64. Leo Morris's commentary at this juncture is especially helpful:

Paul relates this general duty of imitation to the present circumstances by reminding his readers that he and his followers "were not idle when we were with you." This is a classical understatement in view of what we know of Paul's life among the Thessalonians. As the succeeding verses make plain, he had toiled hard among them, both at his trade and in preaching. His life had been highly disciplined. He had not allowed even the importance of preaching the gospel to prevent him from giving a good witness by earning his living. His behavior under those circumstances was the strongest rebuke to those who had no such excuse for not working but who nevertheless had given themselves to idleness. (Leon Morris, *The First and Second Epistles to the Thessalonians*, rev. ed., New International Commentary on the New Testament [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991], 254)

ministering in Thessalonica, and everyone would do well to follow their model. Earlier, in the opening verses of his first letter to the Thessalonian church, Paul addresses imitation by way of acknowledging that the recipients emulated himself and those with him: “And you became imitators [μιμηταί] of us and of the Lord” (1 Thess 1:6). Here, the apostle does not direct the congregants to imitate him and his party; he reminds them that they already had.⁴⁵

Paul also observes that not only did the believers in Thessalonica imitate himself and his missionary companions, but they also became imitators “of the Lord” (τοῦ κυρίου; 1 Thess 1:6).⁴⁶ Then, a few verses later, Paul recognizes that they also “became imitators [μιμηταί] of the churches of God in Christ Jesus that are in Judea” (2:14).⁴⁷ Other instances of Paul’s emphasizing imitation of someone other than himself include 1 Corinthians 11:1, where the apostle declares that he is an imitator of Christ.⁴⁸ He also exhorts the Ephesians to “be imitators [μιμεῖσθαι] of God, as beloved children” (Eph 5:1).⁴⁹ Even as Paul calls the Philippians to imitate himself (“Brothers, join in

⁴⁵ Best, *Paul and His Converts*, 63. Copan provides especially insightful comments concerning Paul’s early remarks in 1 Thess:

Imitation in 1 Thess 1:6 is an active imitation of the lifestyle, ethos, and message of Paul and his companions by the Thessalonian believers. This message is holistically understood to integrate both the embodiment of truth lived out before them as well as the verbal communication of truth. Paul observes here that this imitation is occurring and commends them for it. The numerous personal references to Paul and his team throughout this letter are fresh encouragements to the Thessalonian believers—through an act of internal ‘re-presentation’ (‘remembering’)—to recall the ethos, lifestyle, and teaching of this team, and thus reinforce what they had initially learned through and from them. (Copan, *Saint Paul as Spiritual Director*, 104-5)

⁴⁶ When Paul uses “the Lord,” he refers to Jesus. Clarke, ““Be Imitators of Me,”” 335. See also Stanley, ““Become Imitators of Me,”” 874.

⁴⁷ Clarke notes that in 1 Thess 1:6 and 2:14, μιμηταί appears in the indicative mood rather than in the more common imperative mood elsewhere in Paul’s letters. He goes on to explain that the significance of this difference lies in the fact that “the Thessalonians were already proving to be accurate imitators.” Clarke, ““Be Imitators of Me,”” 335n20. Fowl describes the nature of the Thessalonians’ imitation in that, like the Judean churches, they had received the gospel as nothing less than God’s Word during “affliction” and “tribulation.” Fowl, “Imitation of Paul/of Christ,” 429.

⁴⁹ Andrew Lincoln states in his commentary on Ephesians that the directive to “be imitators of God” requires making “God’s activity the pattern for their lives.” Given the immediate literary context, he notes that imitation of God in this particular case involves “the readers’ forgiving of one another, just as God in Christ forgave them,” and they are to do so in view of the fact that they are loved children of God. Andrew T. Lincoln, *Ephesians*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 42 (Dallas: Word, 1990), 310.

imitating me”; Phil 3:17a), he also directs them to be attentive to those around them who have done well in emulating himself and his party (“keep your eyes on those who walk according to the example you have in us”; Phil 3:17b).⁵⁰ So, not only does Paul direct others to imitate him as well as other individuals (i.e., those on his missionary team as well as those within the Philippian congregation), but he also envisions the imitators as becoming examples to be imitated.⁵¹

Becoming Examples for Others

The third category of imitation-related texts in Paul’s ecclesiastical letters consists of passages that emphasize imitators becoming or being models for others to emulate. As seen above, Paul, in Philippians 3:17, not only exhorts the Philippian believers to imitate himself but also those within the church who had so adhered to Paul’s example (“those who walk according to the example you have in us”) that they had become worthy of imitation themselves (“keep your eyes on [them]”). Similarly, Paul, having just lauded the Thessalonians for becoming “imitators of us and of the Lord” in 1 Thessalonians 1:6, continues by affirming that they had also “became an example [τύπον] to all the believers in Macedonia and in Achaia” (v. 7). As Leon Morris observes, “The imitators in their turn were imitated, and that widely.”⁵² Paul’s confidence in the Thessalonians’ divine election (1 Thess 1:4) rests upon, among other things, their demonstrable commitment to imitate himself, his missionary companions, and—

⁵⁰ Clarke indicates that Paul is pointing out that “there are equally other models whom the Philippians could profitably follow.” Clarke, “Be Imitators of Me,” 349. See also Fiore, *The Function of Personal Example in the Socratic and Pastoral Epistles*, 189.

⁵¹ O’Brien observes that even though Paul and his companions were no longer in Philippi, the Philippians “still possess that example, for there are some who *currently walk* in this manner.” He notes that τούς οὕτω περιπατοῦντας is a present participle. Continuing, he states, “The expression could designate all Christians who follow the Pauline model, but because the Philippians are to pay attention to them it presupposes that they are in Philippi or, at least, are present there from time to time.” O’Brien, *The Epistles to the Philippians*, 448-49 (emphasis original).

⁵² Morris, *The First and Second Epistles to the Thessalonians*, 49.

ultimately—the Lord. Collectively, they had been so transformed that they had become a “an example to be followed” and a “patterned community.”⁵³ Having discussed the three different aspects to Paul’s employment of the imitation motif in his ecclesiastical letters, I now consider his intent in doing so and summarize the findings of this overview in preparation of an analysis of imitation in the Pastoral Epistles.

Major Views of Pauline Imitation

As the above survey demonstrates, the apostle Paul, in his ecclesiastical letters, presents himself and others as models to be imitated. While Paul’s employment of the imitation motif is not unique among New Testament writers (see, e.g., Heb 6:12; 1 Pet 5:3), his repeated directives to others to emulate himself sets him apart.⁵⁴ As Pauline-imitation is a distinct and repeatedly utilized feature within the apostle’s correspondence to congregations, I first provide a discussion as to Paul’s meaning and intent with respect to that particular category of texts. Then, I present several observations of, and findings from, all three categories of Paul’s imitation material as the final act before considering the Pastoral Epistles. By taking these steps, I intend to answer the following questions: (1) What did Paul mean when he called congregants to imitate himself or others? (2) What was Paul’s intended outcome for those who those who adhered to the positive example of himself and others?

Three general views of Paul’s call to “imitate me” emerge from across the literature base during the last century. Wilhelm Michaelis’s influential work makes up the first perspective and maintains that Paul’s employment of the imitation motif reflects his intent to bring about gospel conformity and obedience to his apostolic

⁵³ Morris, *The First and Second Epistles to the Thessalonians*, 49. See also Robert Thomas, “1 Thessalonians,” in *Ephesians through Philemon*, vol. 11 of *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, ed. Frank E. Gaebelin (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1981), 245-48.

⁵⁴ Andrew D. Clarke, *Serve the Community: Christians as Leaders and Ministers* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 223.

authority among his recipients.⁵⁵ Elizabeth Castelli's *Imitating Paul* utilizes a Foucauldian framework to analyze Paul's employment of imitation and advances the obedience-to-apostolic-authority view to far greater heights than Michaelis.⁵⁶ She argues that imitation language within Paul's letters are rhetorical devices intended to buttress the apostle's power over the various congregations to which he writes and to define their collective identity.⁵⁷ While both Michaelis and Castelli nuance their views and allow for pedagogical aspects to Pauline imitation, the clear thrust of their respective projects nonetheless considers the apostle's exerting his authority by means of imitative language and imperatives, though certainly to different degrees and with varying motives.⁵⁸

Several scholars have undertaken efforts to critique both Michaelis and Castelli and argue for understanding Pauline imitation as a pedagogical methodology intended to edify the recipients of his letters. Willis de Boer's *The Imitation of Paul* critically engages Michaelis's view and offers an exegetically grounded counter proposal as to the meaning and intent of Paul's employment of imitation activity and rhetoric.⁵⁹ Paul's calls to

⁵⁵ Michaelis, "μιμέομαι κτλ.," in *TDNT*, 4:672-74. See also Clarke, "Be Imitators of Me," 33; Clarke, *Serve the Community of the Church*, 224; Dodd, *Paul's Paradigmatic 'I'*, 20.

⁵⁶ Elizabeth A. Castelli, *Imitating Paul: A Discourse of Power* (Louisville, KY: Westminster Press, 1991).

⁵⁷ Dodd helpfully summarizes Castelli's argument in the following terms:

From her theoretical perspective she asserts that Paul's exhortation to mimesis may be intended pedagogically, but it functions also as an assertion of power since the asymmetrical model-copy relationship implies a hierarchical power dynamic where the model implicitly possesses authority in the relationship. It is not germane that the readers had a choice to emulate or repudiate Paul's example since a power relationship can and does co-exist with either consent or coercion. Whether or not Paul was conscious of this dynamic and intended this meaning is not a first concern to Castelli since her object of inquiry is the textual effect rather than the textual meaning. (Dodd, *Paul's Paradigmatic 'I'*, 27)

⁵⁸ Michaelis, "μιμέομαι κτλ.," in *TDNT*, 4:672-74; Castelli, *Imitating Paul*, 21-24. Of course, Castelli's entire project is founded upon a problematic supposition—a focus upon "textual effect" rather than, as she says, on "any (fictional) inherent meaning in the text" (18).

⁵⁹ de Boer, *The Imitation of Paul*, 210. De Boer notes that Michaelis recognizes nuances and differences in the ways in which Paul utilizes μιμέομαι. Nonetheless, his overall conclusion is that Paul's use of imitation language emphasizes obedience with respect to his apostolic authority (209-11). Dodd credits de Boer, along with Fiore, with making "a clear case for understanding mimesis as the pedagogical technique of modeling, a claim which Michaelis has been interpreted to deny." Dodd, *Paul's Paradigmatic*

various congregations to imitate him, according to de Boer's findings, function as a pedagogical methodology designed to provide a tangible ethical pattern congregants could emulate. "We notice that the imitation which Paul was urging upon his readers concerned the basic Christian way. Paul found in urging the imitation of himself on his readers he was stimulating them in building their Christian lives."⁶⁰ Similar to de Boer, David Stanley, Ernest Best, Benjamin Fiore, Stephen Fowl, Andrew Clarke, and Victor Copan offer various critiques of Michaelis⁶¹ and advance what has become the prevailing outlook among scholars as well as a clear shift away from the earlier obedience-oriented interpretation. Clarke captures the essences of this perspective when he states, "Paul's focus was to encourage emulation of the ethical example of the apostle, thereby downplaying the significance of a call to obedience or a statement of power."⁶²

In his journal article on Paul's employment of imitation and his leadership approach, Clarke briefly offers several criticisms of Castelli's hermeneutic and her

'T', 29. Upon close examination of Michaelis, I concur with de Boer and Fiore's conclusions and reject Michaelis's understanding. Furthermore, de Boer and Fiore present a convincing case for viewing Paul's use of the imitation motif as a pedagogical methodology. Here, too, I agree with their views.

⁶⁰ de Boer, *The Imitation of Paul*, 213. Summarizing his findings, de Boer states,

There is a certain accent which keeps recurring in the passages on imitation. It is the accent on humility, self-denial, self-giving, self-sacrifice for the sake of Christ and the salvation of others. This is the way of life which Paul found himself representing, and it is the way of life which he expected to find appearing in his readers. In regard to this way of life he speaks of the imitation of himself. (207)

⁶¹ Best observes that Michaelis's "views have been widely rejected." Best, *Paul and His Converts*, 72n14. O'Brien makes a number of helpful points concerning his rejection of Michaelis's conclusions in light of material within Paul's letter to Philippians:

W. Michaelis and others influenced by him have claimed that Paul's call to imitation is primarily an admonition to be obedient by acknowledging his apostolic authority rather than a summons to imitate his way of life. This claim has been subjected to recent detailed criticism and rejected because (a) it has missed the plain meaning of Paul's words, (b) it has misunderstood the relationship between him and the readers, wrongly assuming that his apostleship was under fire in Philippi, and (c) it is inconsistent on both formal and material grounds with his similar admonitions elsewhere (e.g., 1 Cor. 4:16; 11:1). (O'Brien, *The Epistle to the Philippians*, 446)

⁶² Clarke, *Serve the Community of the Church*, 224. In fact, it should be noted that most of the aforementioned authors recognize at least some degree of a call to obedience embedded within imitation as employed by Paul. This is, nonetheless, quite different from Michaelis, who, as Copan says, "sees the call to imitation here [Phil 3:17], as he does in every imitation text, as a call to obedience based on Paul's apostolic authority." Copan, *Paul as Spiritual Director*, 162.

overall findings:

In response to Castelli, it would seem that, if it is possible to recover authorial intent, then a picture which emerges consistently through the Pauline corpus is of one who is using the motif of imitation, not as a power tool in order to bolster authority or to define his social group, but rather as an exhortation that believers ultimately model themselves on Christ.⁶³

Copan undertakes a much more extensive review and evaluation of *Imitating Paul*.⁶⁴

Similar to Clarke, Copan convincingly argues against Castelli's central claim that "Paul uses imitation language as a 'discourse of power,' by which he reinscribes his position as apostle and thus reemphasizes the 'hierarchical power relationship' between him and the congregation, to ensure conformity."⁶⁵ In addition to critiquing Castelli's disregard for authorial intent, Copan also considers and then rejects several of her faulty views concerning the nature of imitation and Paul's utilization of it within his various correspondences.⁶⁶

Finally, Brian Dodd in *Paul's Paradigmatic 'I'* contends that the biblical evidence calls for a middle position that views imitation within the Pauline ecclesiastical texts as both an exercise of authority for the sake of obedience and an educational methodology employed for moral and character development.⁶⁷ Arguing for his position in view of the literature base and biblical warrant, Dodd states, "The scholarly discussion is now ready to move beyond such false dichotomies and acknowledge that the imitation of Paul can and should be understood as a pedagogical technique and as an implied

⁶³ Clark, "Be Imitators of Me," 359.

⁶⁴ Copan, *Paul as Spiritual Director*, 181-218.

⁶⁵ Copan, *Paul as Spiritual Director*, 216.

⁶⁶ Copan finds Castelli's understandings of implicit hierarchy, the model in imitative relationships as being superior in value, and notions of "sameness" as virtuous and "difference" as undesirable" as incongruous with imitative texts from antiquity and the material related to Paul himself. In addition, he finds fault with Castelli's conclusion that Paul assumed a malevolent and authoritarian paternal role within the father-child relationship that framed his interactions with the various congregations. Copan, *Paul as Spiritual Director*, 207-16.

⁶⁷ Dodd, *Paul's Paradigmatic 'I'*, 29.

assertion of authority as a summons to conform to the pattern set by Paul as the regulative model.”⁶⁸ Dodd’s thesis remains largely untested; Clarke only notes and summarizes Dodd’s contribution to the Pauline imitation corpus, but he neither affirms nor critiques it.⁶⁹

Summary of Findings from Survey of Imitation in Paul’s Ecclesiastical Letters

Having reviewed the historical-cultural background of the imitation phenomenon, relevant example-setting-and-following texts in Paul’s ecclesiastical letters, and Pauline-imitation scholarship, I present the findings of this chapter thus far by means of three observations. Only a handful of the previously cited research efforts actually include the Pastoral Epistles in their analyses. Therefore, the following points provide important background for my analysis of 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus with respect to example-setting-and-following-related material.⁷⁰

A distinct imitative approach. First, in his adoption of imitation rhetoric and practices as reflected in his ecclesiastical letters, Paul appropriated a commonly utilized pedagogical methodology.⁷¹ Nonetheless, he infused imitation with a distinct ethos. As de Boer observes, “Paul saw his own example and conduct a significant means of promoting

⁶⁸ Dodd, *Paul’s Paradigmatic ‘I’*, 29.

⁶⁹ Clark, *Serve the Community of the Church*, 224. While I found Dodd’s work both thorough and insightful, I was unconvinced of his argument for a middle view resting between Michaelis and the likes of de Boer.

⁷⁰ Most imitation studies concern themselves with Paul’s undisputed epistles, ecclesiastical letters, or otherwise do not explain their exclusion of 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus. Those imitation-related studies examined for this project that include the Pastoral Epistles within their scope are as follows: Clark, “Be Imitators of Me”; de Boer, *The Imitation of Paul*; Fiore, *The Function of Personal Example in the Socratic and Pastoral Epistles*. Only Fiore, however, engages in an in depth analysis of Paul’s letters to Timothy and Titus.

⁷¹ Best, *Paul and His Converts*, 60; Copan, *Paul as Spiritual Director*, 220.

Christian nurture and growth in his converts.”⁷² Thus, the apostle employed imitative frameworks and practices for pastoral purposes—to establish and nurture congregants in their faith.⁷³

In fact, Paul employed the imitation motif—whether calling people to imitate him or to look to the positive examples of others—in order to engender others’ imitation of Christ for the sake of their salvation and moral development.⁷⁴ As Best observes, for Paul, “the imitation of Christ is primary.”⁷⁵ Similarly, de Boer captures the unique way Paul employed imitation for Christian purposes: “Hence, over against the strong moralistic overtone and emphasis in thought of imitation and example outside the New Testament, we found that these thoughts appear in the New Testament in the service of salvation in Christ.”⁷⁶ Perhaps Copan reflects best the way in which imitation took on a unique dimension in Paul’s life and ministry: “All of Paul’s references to imitation of himself are directly linked to and tied to Christ and his gospel. This consistent orientation toward Christ and his gospel functions for Paul as the radiating center out of which all of Paul’s life, thought, and ministry orbited.”⁷⁷

⁷² de Boer, *The Imitation of Paul*, 216.

⁷³ Best, *Paul and His Converts*, 7.

⁷⁴ Best, *Paul and His Converts*, 69. Earlier, Best notes the following concerning Paul’s call for imitating himself and the centrality of Christ: “While he summons them to imitate him he never summons them to follow him . . . There are however aspects of his character and work which they can and should follow. Most importantly there is the acceptance of salvation through Christ and the continued dedication of life to Christ” (68).

⁷⁵ Best, *Paul and His Converts*, 69-70. De Boer notes, “As mature Christians it will not be the imitation of Paul that is important, but the imitation of Christ.” de Boer, *The Imitation of Paul*, 215.

⁷⁶ de Boer, *The Imitation of Paul*, 213.

⁷⁷ Copan, *Saint Paul as Spiritual Director*, 222. In fact, Copan goes on to state, “If this theme [centrality of and conformity to Christ] is neglected or marginalized, it will distort not only Paul’s conception of imitation but will also skew how one understands his theology as well” (223). In a similar vein, David Stanley submits,

Paul’s singular use of imitation and example is the result of his radical insight into the gospel as the communication of God’s saving power in Christ and his total awareness of human impotence vis-à-vis that divine power. In urging the imitation of himself upon his own Christian foundations, he endeavours to lead them to share his own experience of man’s need to reply with full confidence on the divine power graciously offered through “his gospel.” (David Stanley, “Imitation in Paul’s Letters: Its Significance for His Relationship to Jesus and to His Own Christian Foundations,” in

In addition, as noted previously, philosophers and teachers of Paul's day would regularly exhort their students to imitate them and adhere to the pattern they provided.⁷⁸ So, even in this regard, Paul adopts a different track. Clarke demonstrates that the leadership culture within Greco-Roman society "was dependent on self-promotion and the elaborate pursuit of public popularity."⁷⁹ Yet, Paul never demands exclusive imitation of himself but promotes others as examples to imitate and is in the end concerned that others imitate Christ.⁸⁰ Thus, Clarke concludes that Paul's employment of the imitation motif "is significantly at odds with the nature of much leadership in wider Graeco-Roman society."⁸¹

The primacy of a fatherly relational paradigm. The second summary observation of the imitation motif as used by Paul in his correspondence to churches concerns the ways he utilizes various relational paradigms as he engages congregations. Paul only calls upon those congregants within communities he founded and, thus, with whom he enjoyed some level of personal relationship to "imitate me."⁸² As Greco-Roman imitation primarily took place within specific interpersonal contexts (i.e., parent-child,

From Jesus to Paul: Studies in Honour of Francis Wright Beare, ed. Peter Richardson and John C. Hurd [Waterloo, Canada: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1984], 141)

⁷⁸ Keener, *IVP Background Commentary*, 475, 603.

⁷⁹ Clark, *Serve the Community of the Church*, 228.

⁸⁰ Best, *Paul and His Converts*, 69; de Boer, *The Imitation of Paul*, 215.

⁸¹ Clarke, *Serve the Community of the Church*, 228. Concerning the contemporary accusation by some of arrogance on Paul's part in view of his calls to imitate himself, Fowl states the following:

Hence, rather than reflecting an arrogant desire for self-aggrandizement, the idea of imitation (in certain respects) was crucial to Paul's moral discourse. For Paul (and for all Christians), the only arrogance surrounding the language of imitation would be the arrogance of those who think that they can walk the path of discipleship without observing, learning from and imitating those who are already further down the path. (Fowl, "Imitation of Paul/of Christ," 430-31)

⁸² Stanley, "'Become Imitators of Me,'" 877. Best puts the matter in these terms: "He [Paul] only calls churches which he had founded to imitate him. Their members have been able to observe him. So the Roman Christians are not summoned to copy him, though they are to imitate Christ (Rom. 15.2,3). Even if the Romans know little of Paul they can be expected to know something of Christ." Best, *Paul and His Converts*, 68.

teacher-pupil, and leader-follower), Paul's history of ministerial work and relationship with those within churches he established and cultivated lays a significant foundation upon which the apostle employs the imitation motif. Copan notes that Paul assumes the parent (i.e., spiritual father), teacher, and leader roles vis-à-vis the congregations to which he writes.⁸³

Clark, Best, Fiore, de Boer, and Copan affirm that the father role holds an especially significant place in Paul's self-understanding, the way in which he engages those in the different churches, and its implications for imitation.⁸⁴ In particular, these scholars appreciate that underlying Paul's paternal relationship with his congregations—even when he admonished and chastised them—was a foundation of care, affection, and concern for his spiritual children.⁸⁵ Given both the significance and affirming nature of Paul's fatherly role vis-à-vis his congregations, de Boer states, "His [Paul's] position as spiritual father was determinative of the basic shape of their Christian lives. Therefore, in his Christian nurture of them he appeals to this fact. As children of their father, they are to be his imitators."⁸⁶

Though the fatherly role held the prominent place in Paul's thinking and activities with respect to imitation, the apostle also related to his congregants as a teacher and leader. In 1 Corinthians 4:17, he makes mention of his teaching role with respect to

⁸³ Copan, *Saint Paul as Spiritual Director*, 59.

⁸⁴ See 1 Cor 4:14-16 as well as 1 Thess 1:6 and Gal 4:12 and their surrounding contexts for examples where Paul relates to different congregations out of his fatherly role. Clark, *Serve the Community of the Church*, 218-23, 251; Best, *Paul and His Converts*, 29-58; Fiore, *The Function of Personal Example in the Socratic and Pastoral Epistles*, 175-80; de Boer, *The Imitation of Paul*, 144-45, 214; Copan, *Saint Paul as Spiritual Director*, 208-16.

⁸⁵ See references in footnote 84 above. *Contra* Castelli, who argues that the father in Greco-Roman society was understood to wield "total authority over children" and was far from a benevolent figure. Thus, she contends that Paul's employment of the father metaphor must be viewed in this light and is, therefore, critical of the almost universal interpretation by commentators of Paul's spiritual paternity in positive terms. Castelli, *Imitating Paul*, 100-17.

⁸⁶ de Boer, *The Imitation of Paul*, 214.

the churches: “That is why I sent you Timothy, my beloved and faithful child in the Lord, to remind you of my ways in Christ, as I teach them everywhere in every church.” Copan astutely points out that not only does Paul himself teach “everywhere in every church,” but he also dispatches Timothy to those congregations “to remind them of how Paul lives so that they through him can imitate Paul.”⁸⁷ As I previously established, pupils in a Greco-Roman context would have been expected to imitate their teachers.⁸⁸ Therefore, Paul and his recipients would have understood their respective roles within this particular relational paradigm. In a similar fashion, as both congregation-founder and an apostle, Paul related to the churches as leader. In that capacity, he would have understood his responsibility to provide an emulation-worthy model, while the congregants would have recognized their role to imitate him.⁸⁹

The concept of mediated imitation. The final observation related to the study of Pauline imitation thus far concerns Stanley’s view that the imitation of Christ that Paul presents to his churches is a “mediated imitation.”⁹⁰ In his analysis, Paul, as an apostle, serves as an “authentic representative of Christian tradition” and provides those “he has fathered in the faith” an “objective, concrete norm.”⁹¹ In so much as the churches imitate Paul, “the transmission of apostolic tradition” takes place. De Boer agrees with Stanley in that the imitation of Christ is mediated in so much as “Paul was a vital link in the process by which converts learned to bring Christ and Christianity to expression in their lives.”⁹² However, de Boer emphasizes that this mediation was intended to be temporary—

⁸⁷ Copan, *Paul as Spiritual Director*, 60.

⁸⁸ See also Young, *The Theology of the Pastoral Epistles*, 88.

⁸⁹ Copan, *Paul as Spiritual Director*, 61.

⁹⁰ Stanley, ““Become Imitators of Me,”” 877.

⁹¹ Stanley, ““Become Imitators of Me,”” 877.

⁹² de Boer, *The Imitation of Christ*, 215.

growing under Paul's fatherly model to a point of maturation whereby they imitate Christ and bring "his life to expression in their own lives."⁹³ In addition, while Stanley appears to emphasize the transmission of the apostolic tradition, de Boer understands the transference of said tradition to be one component of a broader objective and a more extensive process—the maturation of a person's imitation of Christ and the deepening of one's faith founded upon that tradition.

Copan expands upon the notion of mediated imitation in his discussion of Pauline imitation within the letters to the Thessalonians. Given the prevailing usage of imitation in Paul's day related to divine figures and absent individuals, the Thessalonians would have had no difficulty in conceptualizing the imitation of Christ.⁹⁴ Copan continues and posits two "mutually complementary" means by which the Thessalonians might have understood or considered imitating a person they had never met (i.e., Jesus). First, the imitation of Christ for the Thessalonians would have been a "textually mediated imitation." Copan states, "From our investigation of imitation in antiquity, the imitation of an absent person was never seen as an insurmountable problem, as the many references to imitating the forefathers show. The imitation of the Lord was a *mediated* imitation, parallel to how the ancients would imitate the forefathers by means of the oral narrative tradition that had been built up in the community."⁹⁵

The second way would be by means of personal mediation. In that instance, the Thessalonians would be able to imitate the Lord by means of the models of Paul and his companions "who understood themselves to be imitators of Christ."⁹⁶ As Morris

⁹³ de Boer, *The Imitation of Christ*, 215. As de Boer avers, "As mature Christians it will not be the imitation of Paul that is important, but the imitation of Christ" (215).

⁹⁴ Copan, *Saint Paul as Spiritual Director*, 101-2.

⁹⁵ Copan, *The Imitation of Paul*, 103 (emphasis original).

⁹⁶ Copan, *The Imitation of Paul*, 104.

observes, “The great example for Christians is that of Christ. If they imitate their teachers it is in order that they may be brought to imitate him more closely thereby.”⁹⁷ Copan’s supposition that the imitation of Christ is “mediated” personally and textually proves both insightful and helpful. I would add that the textually mediated nature of imitation first occurred by means of (1) Paul’s testimony and gospel preaching when he was present in Thessalonica, (2) any follow-up instruction delivered by Paul’s liaison, and (3) his letters to the congregations and other Scripture.

In this chapter’s first two sections, I have provided a historical-cultural survey of imitation as well as an overview and summary of Paul’s use of it within his ecclesiastical letters. In so doing, I sought to answer two critical questions as a preliminary step toward an analysis of following and setting an example within the Pastoral Epistles: (1) What, then, did Paul mean when he called congregants to imitate himself or others? (2) What was Paul’s intended outcome for those who those who adhered to the positive example of himself and others? Concerning the former, I found that Paul appropriated imitative pedagogy as a means to help congregants in the churches he established grow in their faith in Christ and press out the implications of that faith throughout all domains of life. Fowl notes that newer converts need “both instruction in their new faith and concrete examples of how to embody their faith.”⁹⁸ By calling others to look to himself or the mature models of others, Paul exhorted them to consider and emulate those “concrete examples” in their lives within their particular contexts. With respect to the second question, the above investigation demonstrates that Paul’s ultimate

⁹⁷ Morris, *The First and Second Epistles to the Thessalonians*, 47-48. Copan’s use and reference of these two sentences by Morris in a footnote inspired me to locate a copy of Morris’s work. Morris cogently and concisely captures the nature and aim of “mediated imitation.” Copan, *Saint Paul as Spiritual Director*, 104n136.

⁹⁸ Fowl, “Imitation of Paul/of Christ,” 430. Fowl continues by noting the similarities between a new Christian convert and that of an apprentice. He concludes that comparison by stating, “No amount of abstract verbal instruction can bring about mastery of a craft without the concrete example of a master to imitate.”

concern for Christians lied in their own imitation of the Lord. As Peter O'Brien puts it, "The apostle has already reminded his readers that Christ Jesus is the example par excellence [Philippians 2:5-8] and that their attitude and behaviour should be like his."⁹⁹ I now turn to analyze the Pastoral Epistles as a basis for adjusting Christ-centered followership in view of the imitative material contained therein.

Following and Setting an Example in the Pastoral Epistles

My analysis of the Pastoral Epistles in light the personal example motif essentially follows the same methodological approach adopted in chapter 3. On the basis of a careful reading of the Pastoral Epistles in their original language and English translation, I identify those verses that (1) reference historically significant imitative relationships (e.g., father-son, teacher-pupil), (2) contain specific imitation-related vocabulary (e.g., τύπος, ὑποτύπωσις), (3) address the transference of some oral material or methodology by means of personal example, or (4) exhort or warn by means of an appeal to either positive or negative individual models. Then, utilizing grammatical-historical exegesis along with reference to secondary source materials, I analyze those texts, synthesize findings, and draw conclusions. My investigation finds that the imitative material within letters to Timothy and Titus falls into four discrete categories: (1) imitative relational contexts, (2) Paul as example, (3) Timothy and Titus as models, and (4) others as personal examples, whether positive or negative. These groupings inform the progression of the study beyond this point.

Imitative Relational Contexts

As within his ecclesiastical correspondence, Paul in the Pastoral Epistles primarily employs the father-son paradigm as the relational context in which he utilizes

⁹⁹ O'Brien, *The Epistle to the Philippians*, 447.

imitative pedagogy. In the openings of all three letters, he addresses the recipients as “my true child in the faith” (1 Tim 1:2), “my true child in a common faith” (Titus 1:4), and “my beloved child” (2 Tim 1:2). In other places, Paul directly refers to Timothy as “my child” (1 Tim 1:18) and “you then, my child” (2 Tim 2:1). Having previously discussed Paul’s use of τέκνον in Titus 1:4 as it relates to the leader-follower relationship, I do not reiterate that material below.

Though Timothy and Titus were not Paul’s biological offspring, his use of the father-son metaphor mirrored the practice of many philosophers and rabbis of his day who were known to refer to their pupils and disciples as their children.¹⁰⁰ While the language certainly connotes a relationship of “kinship,” “care and intimacy,” as well as “love and service,”¹⁰¹ it also reflects the reality of Paul’s serving as “mentor, guide, and father figure” whereby “the child” would increasingly mirror his “actions and attitudes.”¹⁰² John Chrysostom captures the imitative dimension of this relationship, stressing the notion of “likeness,” when he writes, “The likeness he [Timothy] bore to him [Paul] was in respect to his faith, as in human births there is a likeness in respect of substance.”¹⁰³

¹⁰⁰ Keener. *IVP Bible Background Commentary*. 635. Concerning Paul’s usage of τέκνον in Titus 1:4, BDAG states the following: “one who is dear to another without genetic relationship and without distinction in age.” The idea “of a spiritual child in relation to master, apostle, or teacher” clearly appears to be in view. BDAG, “τέκνον,” 994.

¹⁰¹ Philip H. Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006), 99; W. Hazlitt Gloer and Perry L. Stepp, *Reading Paul’s Letters to Individuals: A Literary and Theological Commentary on Paul’s Letters to Philemon, Titus, and Timothy* (Macon, GA: Smyth and Helwys, 2008), 133; Donald Guthrie, *The Pastoral Epistles*, rev ed., Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990), 66. I. Howard Marshall states that of the potential meanings of the father-son relationship, most plausible here and in Titus 1:4 is that of “the relationship between two people of different ages, expressed in terms of parental love and filial obedience and faithfulness.” I. Howard Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, International Critical Commentary (New York: T & T Clark, 1999), 356.

¹⁰² William B. Barclay, *A Study Commentary on 1 and 2 Timothy* (Webster, NY: Evangelical Press, 2005), 37.

¹⁰³ John Chrysostom, *Saint Chrysostom: Homilies on Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Thessalonians, Timothy, Titus, and Philemon*, vol. 13 of *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, First Series, ed. Philip Schaff (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1994), 409. I am grateful to Barclay and his reference to Chrysostom’s comments concerning the nature of Paul’s relationship with Timothy. His citation encouraged me to find a copy of Chrysostom’s commentary. Barclay, *A Study Commentary on 1*

Jerome Quinn notes that the relational framework of Paul as father and Timothy and Titus as sons appears often throughout the Pastoral Epistles and provides the conduit by which “the apostolic task was shared and transmitted.”¹⁰⁴ Within that important type of relational paradigm characterized by love and authority as well as loyalty and obedience, Quinn points out that the child benefits from “an education for living” as well as the transference of familial possessions and, ultimately, succession to them.¹⁰⁵ Quinn appears to suggest that in the case of Paul and the Pastoral Epistles, “the father” aims to transmit to “the child” the most important familial commodity—in this case, “the pattern of the sound words” (2 Tim 1:13-14; 2:2; i.e., the gospel).¹⁰⁶ Philip Towner also indicates that the father-son language sets the context of the relationship between the two that permits Timothy’s reception, protection, and transmission of the gospel.¹⁰⁷

Another imitative relationship in view within the Pastoral Epistles is that of teacher (1 Tim 2:7; 2 Tim 1:11). Specifically, Paul puts himself forward as a teacher (διδάσκαλος), understands Timothy and Titus as his pupils and instructors in their own rights (e.g., 1 Tim 4:6; Titus 2:1; 15; 2 Tim 2:2), and emphasizes his educational content

and 2 Timothy, 36.

¹⁰⁴ Jerome D. Quinn, *The Letter to Titus: A New Translation with Notes and Commentary and an Introduction to Titus, I and II Timothy, the Pastoral Epistles*, Anchor Bible 35 (New York: Doubleday, 1990), 71.

¹⁰⁵ Quinn, *The Letter to Titus*, 72.

¹⁰⁶ Andreas Köstenberger, *Commentary on 1-2 Timothy and Titus*, Biblical Theology for Christian Proclamation (Nashville: B & H, 2017), “Exposition of 2 Timothy,” “1:8-12,” para. 5. Concerning what Paul is most keen for Timothy to receive from him and then transmit to others, Köstenberger observes the following regarding 2 Tim 1:13-14:

Timothy should be careful to hold onto the pattern (ὑποτύπωσιν; with reference to Paul in 1 Tim 1:16; cf. Phil 3:17) of sound teaching (ὑγιαίνοντων λόγων (cf. 1 Tim 1:10; 6:3; 2 Tim 4:3, lit. “of sound words”; §2.1) he received from Paul, who had in turn received the gospel message from others (1 Cor 15:3) . . . This pattern can also be viewed as a “good deposit” (παραθήκη; see v. 12 above) made by Paul, who again is presented as a model for Timothy to emulate. (“Exposition of 2 Timothy,” “1:13-14,” para. 1).

¹⁰⁷ Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 98. Towner, like Köstenberger, understands that “the pattern of the sound words” is equivalent to the gospel (732).

throughout the Pastoral Epistles (e.g., 2 Tim 1:13).¹⁰⁸ Within this teacher-pupil relationship, Paul anticipates an imitative process both in terms of his personal behavior and with respect to the content and conduct of his teaching (e.g., Titus 2:7-8; 2 Tim 3:10-11).¹⁰⁹ Imitation in the Pastoral Epistles, carried out primarily through the father-son relational paradigm but also through the teacher-student framework, involved a close connection between instructional content and personal conduct.

Finally, imitation commonly functioned within the leader-follower relationship, and that relationship is evident within the Pastoral Epistles. In particular, Paul understood his apostolic role as granting him authority vis-à-vis Timothy and Titus as well as the Ephesian and Cretan congregations.¹¹⁰ In fact, not only is he an apostle, but he introduces himself at the outset of 1 Timothy as “an apostle of Christ Jesus by command of God our Savior and of Christ Jesus our hope” (1 Tim 1:1).¹¹¹ Concerning this introduction and title, George Knight writes, “It is with this awareness of authority as Christ Jesus’ spokesman that Paul writes. Therefore he places this designation of himself at the beginning of the letter to express the authority by which he writes.”¹¹²

So, as an apostle, not only did Paul receive divine revelation, but he also

¹⁰⁸ Young, *The Theology of the Pastoral Epistles*, 89. Paul also views himself as herald, preacher, etc. (1 Tim 2:7). These terms are related to teacher as they involve the proclamation of divinely given truth.

¹⁰⁹ Titus 2:7 is discussed below. Second Timothy 3:10-11 is discussed in chap. 3 above as it relates to followership categories and is considered further below with respect to imitation.

¹¹⁰ See George Knight’s helpful discussion concerning the ways in which Paul expresses and exercise his apostolic authority particularly in 1 Tim. George W. Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1992), 58-59.

¹¹¹ In Titus, Paul introduces himself as follows: “Paul, a servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, for the sake of the faith of God’s elect and their knowledge of the truth, which accords with godliness, in hope of eternal life, which God, who never lies, promised before the ages began and at the proper time manifested in his word through the preaching with which I have been entrusted by the command of God our Savior” (Titus 1:1-3). In 2 Tim, he begins by saying, “Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God according to the promise of the life that is in Christ Jesus” (2 Tim 1:1).

¹¹² Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 58.

assumed the responsibility of proclaiming and preserving the gospel while working to ensure that believers aligned their lives to it. As seen in the Pastoral Epistles, he broadly exercised his authority toward those outcomes and, thus, regularly presented models for them to imitate.¹¹³ While his apostolic authority formed the bedrock upon which Paul built and established his example-setting-and-following pedagogy, he exercised it as a father (primarily) and a teacher (to a lesser extent). Best's conclusions concerning the pedagogical employment of imitation in Paul's ecclesiastical letters readily applies to the Pastoral Epistles and Timothy and Titus as well: "In this kind of cultural environment it is not surprising that Paul's converts should find it natural to imitate him. They would look on him as their father and teacher, and model for Christian conduct."¹¹⁴ And this is how Paul related to, and employed the imitative motif with, Timothy, Titus, the Ephesians, and the Cretans—he was rooted in his apostolic mandate, but he exercised it with the gentleness and care of a parent.

Paul as Example

Out of those relational frames, Paul, especially in his correspondence to Timothy, points his readers to himself as a model to be emulated.¹¹⁵ The apostle presents himself as an example in a number of areas, including salvation, suffering, perseverance, and instruction. Paul's concerns lie in the encouragement of Timothy, the doctrinal purity of the Ephesian church, the proper conduct of its members, and the continuation of gospel

¹¹³ Clarke, *Serve the Community of the Church*, 232.

¹¹⁴ Best, *Paul and His Converts*, 63.

¹¹⁵ In the case of 1 and 2 Tim, the intended recipients of Paul's letters would have been Timothy as well as the congregants in Ephesus. See Aldred Genade concerning the fact that the Pastoral Epistles were not meant solely for Timothy and Titus but also for the church members of Ephesus and Crete. Aldred A. Genade, *Persuading the Cretans: A Text-Generated Persuasion Analysis of the Letter to Titus* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2011), 20. See also Gordon D. Fee, *1 and 2 Timothy, Titus*, New International Biblical Commentary (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1984), 35. In his letter to Titus, Paul does not present himself as a model to imitate. The imitative emphasis of that correspondence lies in Titus's being an example. Furthermore, by selecting qualified elders, they, too, would be expected to conduct themselves in an exemplary fashion.

ministry. As such, the apostle utilizes imitation and imitative language as a means to accomplish those goals.¹¹⁶

First Timothy 1:16. After the customary salutation (1:1-2), Paul launches into an extended assault on false teachers in Ephesus (vv. 3-20). Following highlights of their adherence to incorrect beliefs, improper use of the law, and sinful conduct (vv. 3-11), Paul presents himself, in contrast to the heterodox contingent, as an example of Christ's patience and saving grace (vv. 12-17).¹¹⁷ In 1:12-15, Paul rehearses God's merciful work in saving him and entrusting him with gospel ministry despite his having been a "blasphemer, persecutor, and insolent opponent" (v. 13) as well as one who "acted ignorantly in unbelief" (v. 13) and was the greatest of sinners (v. 15). Then, in verse 16, he declares God's rationale for saving him: "But I received mercy for this reason, that in me, as the foremost, Jesus Christ might display his perfect patience as an example to those who were to believe in him for eternal life."

First Timothy 1:16 marks the initial instance within the Pastoral Epistles where Paul presents himself as an example. He employs the term ὑποτύπωσιν (rendered "example" in the ESV), which, according to BDAG, literally means "a pattern" and conveys the idea in this instance of "a model" or "prototype."¹¹⁸ I. Howard Marshall observes that Paul portrays himself here as "more than a moral example to be followed or an edifying illustration."¹¹⁹ Rather, he sees himself as a demonstration, "an illustration of

¹¹⁶ Fee, *1 and 2 Timothy, Titus*, 7-13.

¹¹⁷ Fiore, *The Function of Personal Example in the Socratic and Pastoral Epistles*, 22.

¹¹⁸ BDAG, "ὑποτύπωσις," 1042. See also Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 402; de Boer, *The Imitation of Paul*, 198-99. Mounce understands ὑποτύπωσις to be essentially equivalent to τύπος. William D. Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 46 (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2000), 58.

¹¹⁹ Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 403. Similarly, de Boer writes, Paul saw himself as an illustration, pattern, or model of what Christ's saving work would do for others coming after him . . . , but then it must not be thought of in the sense of an example which others are to strive to follow or imitate. He is an example of Christ's work for the encouragement and reassurance of others and not for their imitation. It is noteworthy that when the example of Paul is held up for the specific purpose of imitating, it is not the example of his having obtained mercy, "that

how the gospel is operative,” with the emphasis on God’s salvific work rather than himself.¹²⁰ Saul of Tarsus, then, became at his conversion a “living example” of the Lord’s grace declaring to all: “If God’s mercy can extend to someone as sinful as Paul, surely it can reach anyone.”¹²¹ Furthermore, the apostle’s example highlights the authentic, transformative nature of the gospel as “Paul has been brought out of the condition toward which the apostates have turned, e.g., blasphemy, ignorance, lack of faith, self-will, sin.”¹²² While the “speculation” and “vain discussion” of the false teachers resulted in behavior antithetical to sound doctrine, Paul’s personal example authenticates the message he teaches and places the focus squarely upon “the King of the ages, immortal, invisible, the only God” (1:17).¹²³ Finally, the apostle’s personal example serves ultimately to cast Timothy and the Ephesians’ gazes onto Christ.

Second Timothy 1:12. Writing from a Roman prison and anticipating the prospect of his execution, Paul dispatches a second correspondence to Timothy. While the concerns expressed in his initial letter remain unchanged, they assume greater urgency in

in me as chief might Jesus Christ show forth all his longsuffering, for an example of them that should thereafter believe on him unto eternal life” (1 Tim. 1:16). Such an example (ὑποτύπωσιν) calls for other reactions than imitation. (de Boer, *The Imitation of Paul*, 198-99).

See also Risto Saarinen, *The Pastoral Epistles with Philemon and Jude*, Brazos Theological Commentary on the Bible (Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2008), 45.

¹²⁰ Saarinen, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 45. Saarinen finds the word “paradigm” to be a helpful descriptor of Paul’s example in this verse.

¹²¹ Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 57.

¹²² Fiore, *The Function of Personal Example in the Socratic and Pastoral Epistles*, 201. As originally written, Fiore included throughout the sentence several parenthetical statements of transliterated Koine Greek words. For the sake of ease of reading and comprehension, I excluded those from the quote above. In what follows, I provide Fiore’s material exactly as it appears in his text: “Paul has been brought out of the condition toward which the apostates have turned, e.g., blasphemy (compare *blasphēmos*, 13 and *blasphēmein* 20), ignorance (*mē noountes* 7 and *agnoōn* 13), lack of faith (*en apistia*; and *tēn pistin enauagēsan* 19), self-will (*anypotaktois* 9 and *hybristēs* 13), sin (*hōn prōtos eimi egō* 9-10 and 15).”

¹²³ See Fiore, *The Function of Personal Example in the Socratic and Pastoral Epistles*, 201; Ray Van Neste, “1 and 2 Timothy,” in *ESV Study Bible* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2008), 2326. Just as Paul’s employment of imitative pedagogy was ultimately Christocentric (1 Thess 1:6; 1 Cor 11:1), his utilization of personal example in the Pastoral Epistles begins no less so (1 Tim 1:12-16).

view of impending events. In addition, Paul focuses increased attention on Timothy's encouragement and preparation to assume the mantle of gospel-ministry leadership along with its attendant hardship.¹²⁴ As an integral part of that effort, the apostle employs the imitation motif, with its various nuances, throughout his correspondence for his protégé's reinforcement.¹²⁵

In 2 Timothy 1:12, Paul reminds his younger co-laborer that though he—Paul—currently suffers for the sake of the gospel, he remains unashamed. Then, the imprisoned apostle declares the reason for his attitude: “I know whom I have believed, and I am convinced that he is able to guard until that day what has been entrusted to me.” Having earlier noted Timothy's “sincere faith” and “the gift of God, which is in you” (vv. 5-6), Paul turns his attention to exhorting his apprentice away from any sense of shame with respect to himself and toward a willingness to join with him in gospel-related suffering by means of God's power (v. 8).¹²⁶ To that end, within this segment of his letter, he puts himself forward as a positive example for Timothy to emulate.

Verses 8-12 constitute one sentence in the original language that features a “clear paralleling of example and imitation” between two expressions—one at the beginning of the sentence, and the other toward its end.¹²⁷ Paul instructs Timothy to “not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord, nor of me his prisoner, but share in suffering for the gospel by the power of God” (v. 8). Then, he declares that though he suffers, he is

¹²⁴ In fact, John Piper views “the burden of the whole book” as that of “unashamed courage” to speak openly and courageously about Christ and to suffer for the sake of the gospel. In Paul's case, he models these attitudes and behaviors; in Timothy's cases, he is exhorted to do the same as well to put aside any sense of shame he might have being associated with Paul, a prisoner. John Piper, “Feed the Flame of God's Gift: Unashamed Courage in the Gospel,” in *Entrusted with the Gospel: Pastoral Expositions of 2 Timothy*, ed. D. A. Carson (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2010), 15-17.

¹²⁵ Clarke, “Be Imitators of Me,” 354.

¹²⁶ See discussion in chap. 3 concerning 2 Tim 1:8.

¹²⁷ Clarke, “Be Imitators of Me,” 355. See also Gloer and Stepp, *Reading Paul's Letters to Individuals*, 216; Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 709; Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 474; and Van Neste, “1 and 2 Timothy,” 2338.

not ashamed (v. 12). Paul’s imprisonment as a religious zealot espousing beliefs contrary to the prevailing spiritual outlook within the Greco-Roman honor-shame cultural system would almost certainly have tugged at Timothy to distance himself from Paul and perhaps even the gospel.¹²⁸ Such a scenario helps explain why Paul wrote to encourage Timothy and employed the imitation motif as a means to fortify him. In fact, Marshall captures best the imitative dimensions of this section: “Despite his sufferings and imprisonment, Paul is ‘not ashamed’; deliberately he puts himself forward as an example of the attitude which he commended to Timothy (1.8).”¹²⁹

Second Timothy 1:13. Having just called his apprentice to adhere to his example of conduct in 1:8-12, Paul exhorts Timothy in the next verse to follow his model of gospel teaching.¹³⁰ In the preceding verses, Paul emphasized Christ’s gracious salvific work (v. 9) and his own divinely appointed mandate as gospel “preacher and apostle and teacher” (v. 11). Though his devotion to gospel proclamation wrought personal suffering (vv. 8, 12), Paul remains unashamed and confident as his sureness resides in God (v. 12).¹³¹ Then, the apostle issues just the second command of the epistle: “Follow the pattern of the sound words that you have heard from me, in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus”(v. 13).¹³²

¹²⁸ Benjamin Fiore, *The Pastoral Epistles: First Timothy, Second Timothy, Titus*, Sacra Pagina 12 (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2007), 137.

¹²⁹ Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 709. See also Jouette M. Bassler, *1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus*, Abingdon New Testament Commentaries (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1996), 133; Martin Dibelius and Hans Conzelmann, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles*, Hermeneia (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1972), 105; George T. Montague, *First and Second Timothy, Titus*, Catholic Commentary on Sacred Scripture (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2008), 149.

In a reverberation of 1:12, Paul again reminds his protégé in 2:9-10 of his current suffering and imprisonment as well as his eschatologically inspired endurance as a model for Timothy. Barclay, *A Study Commentary on 1 and 2 Timothy*, 249. Towner and Knight understand Paul as presenting himself in 2:9-10 as an example. Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 499; Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 396.

¹³⁰ Philip Ryken, “The Pattern of Sound Words,” in Carson, *Entrusted with the Gospel*, 26-27.

¹³¹ Clarke, “‘Be Imitators of Me,’” 355; Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 380. Both Clarke and Knight’s works were helpful to me in my synthesizing the flow and progression of 2 Tim 1:8-12.

¹³² Robert W. Yarbrough, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, Pillar New Testament

The word “pattern” (ὑποτύπωσις), appearing as it does at the beginning of the sentence in the original language, reflects Paul’s emphasis on a “model” or “standard.”¹³³ “Sound words” (ὑγιαίνοντων λόγων) define the “standard” and mean “the words [Paul] used to preach the gospel. Paul is talking about the apostolic message of the person and work of Christ.”¹³⁴ Furthermore, the imprisoned apostle mentions that Timothy previously heard these words from him, so his protégé was familiar with the teacher and his teaching. In fact, Knight avers that not only does Paul acknowledge himself as the source of these words, but he also understands that as an apostle he conveys God’s message.¹³⁵ Thus, Paul appreciates and stresses that what he teaches is the standard and that Timothy must, therefore, “follow” or “hold fast” to it.¹³⁶ As Timothy maintains the

Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2018), 364.

¹³³ Concerning the emphasis on ὑποτύπωσις by virtue of its placement at the beginning of the sentence, see de Boer, *The Imitation of Paul*, 199; Walter L. Liefeld, *1 & 2 Timothy, Titus*, NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1999), 278; Yarbrough, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 364. Liefeld helpfully comments, “Not only is the occurrence of *didaskalia* at the beginning of the list important, it is repeated as the first important use of Scripture mentioned in verse 16.” Liefeld, *1 & 2 Timothy, Titus*, 278.

Marshall, in his commentary, includes both “model” and “standard” in his discussion of the meaning of ὑποτύπωσις in this context. Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 712. Knight, de Boer, and Saarinen all single out “standard” in their studies. Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 381; de Boer *The Imitation of Paul*, 200; Saarinen, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 128. *NIDNTT* includes the following gloss for ὑποτύπωσις: “pattern, model, example, prototype, standard.” Hermann Müller, “τύπος,” in *NIDNTT*, 3:903-7. Montague renders ὑποτύπωσις as “norm.” Montague, *First and Second Timothy, Titus*, 151.

This is only the second time ὑποτύπωσις appears in the New Testament; the other occurrence being 1 Tim 1:16. Saarinen helpfully describes Paul’s uses of the term in both letters: “Timothy has heard the ‘sound words’ (*hygiainonton logon*) from teacher Paul, and he should hold to this ‘standard’ (*hypotyposis*). In 1 Tim 1:16 Paul is himself the ‘example’ (*hypotyposis*); now his words become this model or standard.” Saarinen, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 128.

¹³⁴ Knight and W. Stanley Outlaw point out that ὑγιαίνοντων λόγων is an appositional genitive. Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 381; W. Stanley Outlaw, *1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, and Titus*, in *1 Thessalonians through Philemon*. Randall House Bible Commentary, by Robert E. Picirilli, W. Stanley Outlaw, and Daryl Ellis (Nashville: Randall House, 1990), 312.

The quotation is taken from Ryken, “The Pattern of Sound Words,” 27. Fiore helpfully explains, “The Gospel message is given in pattern or outline form in these letters to guide fundamental Christian preaching and faith. The ‘pattern’ refers to the words, but also includes behavior (‘heard in faith and love’).” Fiore, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 43-44. See also Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 477; BDAG, “ὑγιαίνω,” 1023.

¹³⁵ Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 381. Knight references Gal 1:11-12.

¹³⁶ Concerning ἔχε in 2 Tim 1:13, BDAG says, “To take a hold on something, *have, hold (to), grip*” and then provides the following notation: “of hold fast to matters of transcendent importance . . . an example of sound teaching 2 Tim 1:13.” BDAG, “ἔχω,” 420-21 (emphasis original). Knight also references 2 Thess 2:13; 3:16; and 1 Cor 11:2 as earlier examples where Paul spoke of himself “as the communicator of a standard to be followed.” Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 381.

integrity of the “norm” of teaching as established by Paul, he must do so “in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus.”¹³⁷ Thus, Paul stresses that the content of Timothy’s teaching must emulate his example, while the young teacher’s conduct must exemplify the faith and love consistent with his being “in Christ.”¹³⁸ Yet again, the text speaks of a close linkage between instruction and example—teaching content and teacher conduct.

Second Timothy 3:10-11. Paul’s words to Timothy in 2 Timothy 3:10-11 reveal the extent to which he employed imitative pedagogy and presented himself as an example for his protégé to emulate.¹³⁹ Having discussed 2 Timothy 3:10 in chapter 3 as a means of validating the practice of setting and following godly examples within Christ-centered followership, I limit my remarks here to those not previously mentioned and germane to the topic at hand—demonstrating the degree to which Paul employed in the Pastoral Epistles the imitation motif, the contours of its use, and its close connection to teaching in his overall ministry approach.

¹³⁷ de Boer, *The Imitation of Paul*, 200. Montague renders the sense of the main imperative in this verse as follows: “Timothy must follow the norm (*hypotyposis*) set by the teaching of Paul, his very words.” Montague, *First and Second Timothy, Titus*, 151.

¹³⁸ Fee, *1 and 2 Timothy, Titus*, 233; Yarbrough, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 365. First Timothy 4:6; 2 Tim 2:2; 3:14 echo central aspects of the example-following-and-setting exhortations presented in 2 Tim 1:13. In 1 Tim 4:6, Timothy is said to have been trained in and that he has been following the “words of the faith and of the good doctrine.” Not only has he apparently held to the standard of Paul’s instruction, but he has also oriented his life around it (as suggested by *παρηκολούθηκας*). Furthermore, it seems likely that the matters Timothy is to put before the congregation at a minimum include the material he had been trained in and followed. Paul, in 2 Tim 2:2, directs his younger co-laborer to instruct men who are reliable and capable of teaching others in “what you have heard from me.” As Yarbrough helpfully puts it, “Now, ‘in the grace that is in Christ Jesus’ (2:1), Timothy is to recall Paul’s words, impart them to faithful listeners, and orient them to convey Paul’s message and teaching to others.” Yarbrough, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 371. Finally, 2 Tim 3:14 notes that Timothy had previously learned from others (including Paul) the gospel and became convinced of it. He is thus exhorted by Paul to “continue in” or “remain in” (*μὲνε*) what he had learned. “Timothy is urged to remain faithful to the apostolic gospel.” Fee, *1 and 2 Timothy, Titus*, 278. In these cases, Paul provided Timothy a standard or norm of instruction that the younger minister was to maintain, personally follow, and carefully pass along to others. In both the content of the teaching and the conduct of his life and ministry, Paul provided a pattern to follow.

¹³⁹ Regarding the role of personal modeling in this section of Paul’s letter, Bassler says, “The pattern of example and counterexample that is developed in this portion of the letter is very complex, with sometimes Paul and sometimes Timothy functioning as the positive role model.” Bassler, *1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus*, 163.

At the opening to the final, climatic hortatory section of the letter (3:10-4:8), the apostle reflects upon the personal example he provided Timothy over the years as a basis for further exhortation and encouragement. In fact, in 3:10-11, Paul references in one place those aspects of his personal model that he had already emphasized at various points throughout 1 and 2 Timothy—sound teaching, proper conduct, and the Lord’s power to save. Paul had previously provided a standard of teaching for Timothy to rigorously maintain, he mentions that several times throughout his correspondences, and he noticeably places teaching first among the other dimensions of his model.¹⁴⁰

As important as teaching is, Paul also stresses the significance of personal conduct as part of his overall example. He lists a number of upright behaviors and perspectives as well as difficult experiences he had endured. Several commentators understand Paul, at this juncture, to be making a clear and strong connection between sound doctrine and orthopraxy.¹⁴¹ Risto Saarinen expresses well the linkage between the two when he writes, “Paul is an example in orthodoxy, namely, teaching and faith. But he is also the example of right conduct and virtuous attitude.”¹⁴²

Not only did Paul present to Timothy over the course of numerous years a holistic model, but the younger man also “followed” (παρηκολούθησάς) the pattern the

¹⁴⁰ Guthrie states concerning teaching at the head of Paul’s list, “It is significant that *teaching* is mentioned first, for throughout the Pastorals it occupies a prominent place. Timothy had been privileged to listen to Paul’s expositions on many themes.” Guthrie, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 172 (emphasis original). See also Saarinen, who notes an emphasis by Paul on teaching (and faith) as well. Saarinen, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 153-54.

¹⁴¹ de Boer, *The Imitation of Paul*, 200; Fiore, *The Function of Personal Example in the Socratic and Pastoral Epistles*, 207; Guthrie, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 172; Keener, *IVP Bible Background Commentary*, 629; J. N. D. Kelly, *A Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles* (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1963), 198; Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 438; Montague, *First and Second Timothy, Titus*, 183; Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 556; Thomas Oden, *First and Second Timothy and Titus*, Interpretation (Louisville, KY: John Knox Press, 1989), 165; Yarbrough, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 419.

¹⁴² Saarinen, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 153-54. John Calvin, commenting on the relationship between teaching and his all-of-life modeling, says, “Paul refers not only to teaching—the other things he mentions are also very important. In this verse he paints a vivid picture of a good teacher as one who influences his pupils not only by his words, but, as it were, one who opens his own heart to them so that they may know that all his teaching is sincere.” John Calvin, *1 & 2 Timothy and Titus*, Crossway Classic Commentaries (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 1998), 151.

apostle provided. Karris points out that *παρηκολουθέω*, in this context, relates to discipleship and means “that Timothy has embodied Paul’s virtues and experiences in his own life.”¹⁴³ While the apostle does not utilize his usual imitative vocabulary, Paul clearly expected and acknowledges that Timothy would and did emulate the key emphases within his model—teaching and proper conduct.¹⁴⁴ Finally, Towner observes that Paul reminds Timothy of his historic model and his apprentice’s past adherence to it as a means to engender continued imitation especially in the face of coming persecution and hardship.¹⁴⁵

Second Timothy 4:6-8. Having begun this apogee hortatory section in 3:10-11 with reference to his personal example, Paul brings this segment and the thrust of the entire letter to a close by presenting himself a final time as a model for emulation (4:6-8).¹⁴⁶ After concluding a series of exhortations to Timothy (4:1-5) that especially stressed the proclamation of “the word,” Paul notes that his death is imminent (v. 6). Nonetheless, he says, “I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith” (v. 7) and then anticipates receiving a crown of righteousness from the Lord himself when he returns (4:8). As Paul nears the end of his life and years of gospel-ministry, as Ligon Duncan points out, he presents himself in this text as an example of “finishing well.”¹⁴⁷

¹⁴³ Robert J. Karris, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Biblical-Theological Commentary*, New Testament Message 17 (Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, 1979), 34. In addition to Karris, see the following works that view 4:6-8 as Paul presenting himself again as a model to be imitated. Bassler, *1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus*, 163-64; Fiore, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 168; Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 438; Montague, *First and Second Timothy, Titus*, 183.

¹⁴⁴ See de Boer, *The Imitation of Paul*, 201; Fiore, *The Function of Personal Example in the Socratic and Pastoral Epistles*, 205; Luke Timothy Johnson, *The First and Second Letters to Timothy: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, Anchor Bible 35A (New York: Doubleday, 2001), 416-17; Montague, *First and Second Timothy, Titus*, 183; Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 556; Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 570.

¹⁴⁵ Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 570.

¹⁴⁶ Johnson, *The First and Second Letters to Timothy*, 436. See also Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 805; Fiore, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 179.

¹⁴⁷ J. Ligon Duncan, “Finishing Well,” in Carson, *Entrusted with the Gospel*, 136-38. Duncan says that it is as if Paul is saying to Timothy, “I can see the finish line from where I am. I’m almost there.”

The way Paul faithfully conducted his life and ministry of gospel proclamation, the manner in which he faces impending execution, and his anticipation of the Lord's eschatological appearing serve as a pattern for Timothy to imitate. Just as Timothy followed Paul's example, so now, with Paul's passing the mantle of ministry leadership, Timothy assumes the role of model whom others are to emulate. Even here, at the end of Paul's "last will and testament," he closely links an emphasis on the Scriptures (3:14-17) and their instruction (3:10, 17; 4:2) with his personal example (3:10-11; 4:6-8).

Timothy and Titus as Examples

Having surveyed the passages within the Pastoral Epistles where Paul presents himself as an example to be imitated, I now consider those texts in which Timothy and Titus are exhorted to be examples for others to emulate. In addition, Paul presents others as exemplars worthy of Timothy's imitation. Just as in his ecclesiastical letters, Paul in these epistles to his protégés expects the imitators to become exemplars in their own right. In this instance, the apostle especially emphasizes the conjoined nature of one's teaching and one's personal example.

First Timothy 4:12. Having yet again confessed the wonder of God's work through the person and work of Christ (3:16), Paul further reminds Timothy of the serious error and problems presented by the false teachers who "depart from the faith by devoting themselves to deceitful spirits and teaching of demons" (4:1). In order to counter the purveyors of heterodoxy, Timothy must instruct the brothers in what is right (v. 6) as well as train himself for godliness (v. 7). Then, immediately following the exhortation of his disciple to "command and teach these things" (v. 11), Paul directs Timothy, "Let no one despise you for your youth, but set the believers an example in speech, in conduct, in

By God's grace, I've made it. You make it, too, Timothy" (138).

love, in faith, in purity” (v. 12).

However, Timothy faces an obstacle in his task of countering false teachers within the Ephesian congregation—his relative age vis-à-vis leaders within the church.¹⁴⁸ Paul, then, writes to bolster Timothy’s position in view of the prevailing cultural norm that younger persons were expected to accede to the views of their elders even when they (i.e., the elders) might be in error.¹⁴⁹ In turn, the apostle instructs Timothy to counteract potential resistance by means of exemplary speech and behavior.¹⁵⁰

Specifically, Paul exhorts Timothy to be a τύπος (“example”); that is, a person so imprinted by the power of the Word that he has “an effect on the community (1 Thess. 1:6), causing it to become a formative example.”¹⁵¹ He expresses his confidence that Timothy has been sufficiently “molded by the gospel” that he can serve as a model for other believers and that he possesses the moral character to stand in contrast to the false teachers.¹⁵² The apostle clearly emphasizes the close connection between teaching and presenting an example in terms of his personal conduct by sandwiching the imperative to “set the believers an example” (v. 12) between two teaching related directives (i.e., “command” and “teach” [v. 11] and

¹⁴⁸ Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 313-14. Mounce observes, “Timothy was dealing with people whom Paul had personally evangelized many years earlier and who had been leaders in their church for some time. It would have been natural for them to have looked down on any younger person who was correcting them.” Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 259. See also Keener, *IVP Bible Background Commentary*, 615.

¹⁴⁹ Gloer and Stepp, *Reading Paul’s Letters to Individuals*, 184. Gloer and Stepp point out that 1 Tim would have been read publicly with both Timothy and its older leaders present. The challenge to church leaders was to support Timothy rather than “despise” him. The challenge to Timothy is to be a model for the church across a number of domains of his life and ministry.

¹⁵⁰ John Stott, *Guard the Truth: The Message of 1 Timothy and Titus* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1996), 120. Fiore captures well the essence of Paul’s instructions when he states, “Timothy can avoid scorn for his youth only by not giving occasion for such scorn. Thus he is to demonstrate personal excellence and be exemplary in his ministry (4:12-16).” Fiore, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 94.

¹⁵¹ Müller, “τύπος,” in *NIDNTT*, 3:905. See also BDAG, “τύπος,” 1020; de Boer, *The Imitation of Paul*, 21-23; Leonhard Goppelt, “τύπος κτλ.,” in *TDNT*, 8:246-59.

¹⁵² Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 561.

“devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation, to teaching” [v. 13]).¹⁵³

Titus 2:7-8a. In contrast to the “insubordinate, empty talkers and deceivers” (1:10) who do not know God and are “unfit for any good work” (v. 16), Titus “must teach what accords with sound doctrine” (2:1) and instruct each group within the church to live consistently with respect to the gospel (vv. 2-10).¹⁵⁴ After commanding Titus concerning older men (2:2), older and younger women (vv. 3-5), and younger men (v. 6), Paul turns his attention to Titus. He declares, “Show yourself in all respects to be a model of good works, and in your teaching show integrity, dignity, and sound speech that cannot be condemned” (vv. 7-8a).

Paul instructs Titus, his protégé and a younger man himself, to “show” or “present” (παρεχόμενος) himself to be a “model” or “example” (τύπος) of “good works” (καλῶν ἔργων) to the young men of the congregation and, most likely, the various groups mentioned in the opening verses of chapter 2.¹⁵⁵ Hulitt Gloer and Perry Stepp point out that Paul, as he frequently does, is employing imitative pedagogy.¹⁵⁶ Given the relative newness of the Cretan church as well as the erroneous model of the false teachers, Paul calls upon Titus to provide a “living model” of sound doctrine and

¹⁵³ In 1 Tim 4:15, Paul issues a command very similar to 4:12. In fact, Mounce sees 4:15 as an “emphatic repetition of the charge in v 12.” Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 263. Paul directs Timothy, “Practice these things, immerse yourself in them, so that all may see your progress.” Timothy’s growth or advancement in the gospel (Barclay: “growth in godliness”) ought to be visible to those around him such that he becomes an example to others. He is also to be mindful of his teaching (4:16). The point of this section is clear: there must be alignment between and integration of Timothy’s conduct and his instruction. Barclay, *A Study Commentary on 1 and 2 Timothy*, 146.

¹⁵⁴ Daniel L. Akin, *Titus*, in *1 & 2 Timothy and Titus*, by David Platt, Daniel L. Akin, and Tony Merida, Christ-Centered Exposition Commentary (Nashville: B & H, 2013), 255. Genade notes, “Thus, the inseparable correspondence between deeds and sound doctrine is at the heart of Paul’s rhetorical objective in this section.” Genade, *Persuading the Cretans*, 43.

¹⁵⁵ Yarbrough, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 520; Quinn, *The Letter to Titus*, 141; Bassler, *1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus*, 197.

¹⁵⁶ Gloer and Stepp, *Reading Paul’s Letters to Individuals*, 98-99.

countervailing pattern for them to follow.¹⁵⁷

The apostle's directive to Titus to present an example-worthy pattern to the Cretan congregants also emphasizes both personal conduct and teaching. Titus, "in all respects" (περὶ πάντα), must provide an example of good works. Robert Yarbrough renders περὶ πάντα as "in everything" and understands it to include all of Paul's instructions to Titus throughout his letter.¹⁵⁸ Here, the stress lies upon presenting an example consistent with both Paul and, by extension, Titus's instruction.¹⁵⁹ By providing a personal example in harmony with his teaching, Titus answers the question "What does sound doctrine *look* like?"¹⁶⁰

In addition to his overall conduct (i.e., good works), Titus must present an exemplary model in the way he goes about as well as the content of his teaching: "in your teaching show integrity, dignity, and sound speech that cannot be condemned" (2:7b-8a). Fee reflects the sense of verse 7b when he notes, "The concern is first of that in his teaching Titus set an example of pure motive and respectful demeanor (integrity and seriousness), in obvious contrast to the 'rebels' of 1:10-16."¹⁶¹ "Sound speech" (λόγον ὑγιῆ) has to do with the content of Titus's teaching. In other words, it must comport with the gospel and be presented in a manner that is "above reproach."¹⁶² In his letter to Titus, as in the correspondences to Timothy, Paul demonstrates his concern that

¹⁵⁷ Genade, *Persuading the Cretans*, 43; Stott, *Guard the Truth*, 190.

¹⁵⁸ Yarbrough, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 520

¹⁵⁹ Keep in mind that as Paul's representative or delegate, Titus also engaged in teaching consistent with the content of Paul's instruction (Titus 2:1; 15; 3:1, 8).

¹⁶⁰ Genade, *Persuading the Cretans*, 43 (emphasis original).

¹⁶¹ Fee, *1 and 2 Timothy, Titus*, 189. The actual act of teaching rather than its content seems to be in view here. See also Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 413.

¹⁶² The grammatical construction in v. 8 is rather difficult to apprehend. I am grateful for Fee, Mounce, Marshall, Quinn, and Yarbrough's commentaries at this juncture. Fee, *1 and 2 Timothy, Titus*; Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*; Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*; Quinn, *The Letter to Titus*; Yarbrough, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*. My conclusion as to Paul's meaning here coincides with Mounce's view. Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 413-14.

exemplary models integrate practice and preaching.

Others as Examples

In his letters to Timothy, Paul also points to the personal examples of others in addition to himself and his two apprentices. In 2 Timothy 1:16-17, as part of his exhortation to Timothy to not be ashamed of the gospel nor of identifying and suffering with him, the apostle mentions Onesiphorus. Marshall points out that Onesiphorus provided Paul tangible aid while in prison, exhibited a willingness to associate with him rather than being ashamed of him, and remained faithful to the gospel and the incarcerated apostle.¹⁶³ Onesiphorus's positive model as part of Paul's appeal to Timothy throws into stark relief the negative examples of Phygelus and Hermogenes and the others in Asia who "turned away" from him (v. 15).¹⁶⁴ Walter Lock's paraphrase captures well the contrasting examples and the implicit call to Timothy to reject the one and imitate the other: "I appeal to yourself: you know instances of both cowardice and of courage."¹⁶⁵

Finally, in 2 Timothy 3:14-15, Paul grounds his exhortation to Timothy to "continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed" partly on the basis of the example of his earlier instructors—most likely, in this case, his mother, Eunice, and

¹⁶³ Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 719.

¹⁶⁴ Thomas G. Long, *1 & 2 Timothy and Titus: A Theological Commentary on the Bible*, Belief: A Theological Commentary on the Bible (Louisville, KY: John Knox Press, 2016), 195.

¹⁶⁵ Walter Lock, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles: I & II Timothy and Titus*, International Critical Commentary (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1924), 89. Lock notes that while the deserters in Asia, especially Phygelus and Hermogenes, are mentioned as warning, Paul's emphasis in this passage lies on the positive example of Onesiphorus. Lock points out that Onesiphorus receives much more attention and his acts are described in fuller detail. I am indebted to Mounce, whose citation of Lock inspired me to locate and utilize his commentary for this project. Mounce, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 492.

In an echo of 2 Tim 1:15, Paul, in 1 Tim 1:19-20, references Hymeneals and Alexander. They serve as negative examples since they had rejected "faith and good conscience" and "made shipwreck of their faith." Other negative examples in the Pastoral Epistles include Demas (2 Tim 4:10) and, in a general sense, the false teachers in both Ephesus (1 Tim 1:3-20) and Crete (Titus 1:10-16). Heterodox elements in Ephesus are likened to Jannes and Jambres in 2 Tim 3:8, who serve as familiar extra-biblical negative examples. See also Ryken, "The Pattern of Sound Words," 29.

grandmother, Lois (see 2 Tim 1:5).¹⁶⁶ Long before Paul and Timothy's paths intersected, these two women modeled lives consistent with the "sacred writings" they taught to young Timothy. As Joutte Bassler observes, "Knowledge of the source of mediator of the tradition provides one basis for confidence in it."¹⁶⁷ Clearly, Paul brings up their (i.e., Eunice and Lois's) example—and his—as encouragement for Timothy to remain unwavering in the gospel, which he had learned since childhood. Yarbrough describes the nature and goal of Paul's use of familial examples as well as his own model in this instance: "The quality of their lives and the truths they confessed commend a similar course to Timothy."¹⁶⁸ The pattern Eunice and Lois provide—as with so many of the models Paul references within the Pastoral Epistles—consists of both an ethical dimension as well as an instructional component centered around conveying or being otherwise being deeply committed to revealed divine truth (i.e., the Scriptures or the gospel).

Research Findings

Having overviewed imitation within Greco-Roman and Jewish cultures, surveyed Paul's use of the imitation motif within his ecclesiastical letters, and analyzed example following and setting within the Pastoral Epistles, I now present a number of findings from the investigation thus far. Specifically, I discovered that Paul's use of

¹⁶⁶ Paul probably includes himself in that list as well. He grounds his exhortation to Timothy in his familiarity with the personal integrity of Eunice, Lois, and himself as well as the teaching of the Scriptures (3:14-17).

¹⁶⁷ Bassler, *1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus*, 166; Liefeld, *1 & 2 Timothy, Titus*, 379. Concerning Paul's use of Eunice and Lois in his exhortation to Timothy, Towner offers the following: "This equation of the reliability of the commodity and character of those who convey it was a standard way of measuring a truth claim in Paul's culture; and it is the steady and historical dimensions of the gospel (demonstrated by the reliability of the people mentioned) that Paul draws on here." Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 581.

¹⁶⁸ Yarbrough, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 426. Gloer and Stepp put the matter as follows: "The teachings that Timothy has received came from reputable sources; this knowledge also gives Timothy incentive to continue in what he has been taught." Gloer and Stepp, *Reading Paul's Letters to Individuals*, 258.

personal example in the Pastoral Epistles is consistent with Greco-Roman imitative pedagogy in a number of notable ways and also coincides with his employment of the imitation motif within in his letters to churches. Furthermore, I observed a handful of unique aspects to the way in which Paul deployed following and setting an example in his epistles to Timothy and Titus that emphasize its importance in his ministry approach. Taken as a whole, these findings inform my efforts in this chapter's final section to adjust the Christ-centered followership construct.

Consistent with Ancient Imitation Pedagogy

An analysis of Paul's use of personal example within the Pastoral Epistles comports with the aforementioned findings of a survey of its pedagogical use within Greco-Roman contexts. As previously noted, the basic aim of imitation was the moral and character development of the imitator in light of an exemplary personal model whereby the child or protégé "could observe with all the senses how a virtuous person lived and thus have a pattern for one's own life."¹⁶⁹ Certainly, 2 Timothy 3:10-11 reflects Paul's most robust reference to the imitation motif in that sense, though Titus's role in Titus 2:7-8b and the familial models to which Paul appeals in 2 Timothy 3:14-15a are as well.¹⁷⁰ Furthermore, imitation required the integration of the exemplar's instruction, character, and conduct with the aim of fostering the same level of integrity within the protégé. In 2 Timothy 3:10-11, Paul first reminds Timothy of his teaching and then of his conduct, aim in life, and the like as a means of showcasing the consistency that ran from his teaching throughout the other domains of his life.¹⁷¹ Also, Paul employs the

¹⁶⁹ Copan, *Saint Paul as Spiritual Director*, 71.

¹⁷⁰ Copan refers to this as "global imitation." Copan, *Saint Paul as Spiritual Director*, 223-25. By "global" or "holistic" imitation, Copan means the imitation of the totality of a person's life.

¹⁷¹ Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 439.

commonly recognized father-son, teacher-pupil, and leader-follower imitative relational modalities in the Pastoral Epistles (1 Tim 1:1-2; 2:7; Titus 1:1, 4). Finally, the phenomenon of imitation included appeals to positive and negative examples of both living and deceased individuals, and Paul certainly does both (2 Tim 1:15-16; 3:8).

Consistent with Imitation in Paul's Letters to Churches

Paul's use of the imitation motif in the Pastoral Epistles also reflects a high degree of consistency with its employment in his ecclesiastical letters. Concerning Paul's overarching aim and focus with respect to personal example in his undisputed letters, Copan states, "All of Paul's references to imitation of himself are directly linked to and tied to Christ and his gospel."¹⁷² Similarly, "the gospel is the driving force behind the Pastoral Epistles," and Paul employs personal example therein to ensure gospel orthodoxy, fidelity, consistency, and mission.¹⁷³ In Paul's thinking as expressed in his letters to Titus and Timothy, the "good news" revolved around "our great God and Savior Jesus Christ" (Titus 2:13) who "came into the world to save sinners" (1 Tim 1:16). Thus, for Paul, the appeal to, and use of, personal example in the Pastoral Epistles served as a critical means to protect the gospel from doctrinal error, engender personal loyalty to it, promote ethical behavior consistent with it, and catalyze its purveyance.¹⁷⁴ In both his letters to churches and to his delegates, Paul uses imitation in a manner that is oriented toward Christ and shaped by his concern for, and overarching interest in, the gospel.

¹⁷² Copan, *Saint Paul as Spiritual Director*, 222. See also Stanley, "Imitation in Paul's Letters," 141.

¹⁷³ Fee, *1 and 2 Timothy, Titus*, 15.

¹⁷⁴ Concerning the connection between the Ephesian and Cretan church's ethical works and witness to non-believers, see Chiao Ek Ho, "Mission in the Pastoral Epistles," in *Entrusted with the Gospel: Paul's Theology in the Pastoral Epistles*, ed. Andreas J. Köstenberger and Terry L. Wilder (Nashville: B&H, 2010), 241-67.

The father-son relational modality. The Pastoral Epistles make use of personal example in other ways similar to those in Paul’s ecclesiastical letters. For example, the father-son relationship in both sets of correspondences becomes for Paul the primary relational paradigm through which he deploys setting and following examples (1 Cor 4:15-17; 1 Tim 1:2; Titus 1:4).¹⁷⁵ Also, the father-son relationship creates the primary context through which he exercises his authority vis-à-vis congregants and protégés. Best argues, within his consideration of Paul’s “fatherly care,” that Paul was much more likely to appeal to congregants or otherwise attempt to persuade those in the churches he founded rather than outright command them to do something—even though he believed he could and did on occasion.¹⁷⁶ Best’s observation holds important implications in terms of how Paul approached the exercise of his authority and sought to bring about obedience with respect to these with whom he enjoyed an imitative relationship—not only in his ecclesiastical letters but also in the Pastoral Epistles.

Imitation, authority, and obedience. Copan avers that even though the notion of father possess an authoritative aspect, Paul, in the context of imitation, opts for a persuasive, nurturing route when it comes to eliciting obedience.¹⁷⁷ Regarding this more gentle approach toward engendering compliance in Paul’s undisputed letters, Copan explains, “Even though the term *πατήρ* has an authoritative dimension, Paul chooses—in

¹⁷⁵ In his summary of his study of imitation across the undisputed ecclesiastical letters of Paul, Copan finds that “father” is one of the primary “self-designations” the apostle uses. Copan, *Saint Paul as Spiritual Director*, 221. See also Best’s excellent treatment on Paul’s “fatherly care.” Best, *Paul and His Converts*, 29-58. This is not to say the teacher-pupil and leader-follower relational paradigms are absent. Rather, they tend to be much more in the background relative to the father-son frame. See also Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 98-101, 442-43, 674-75.

¹⁷⁶ Best, *Paul and His Converts*, 48-52.

¹⁷⁷ Copan, *Saint Paul as Spiritual Director*, 221-22. Concerning the exercise of his apostolic authority in conjunction with imitation, Copan writes, “It is, in closing, noteworthy that Paul nowhere explicitly calls for imitation of himself in connection with his role as apostle.” Even in 1 Cor 4:15-17, Paul downplays the authoritative aspects of the fatherly role in order to emphasize its “nurturing, caring aspects” (222).

the context of a call to imitation—to emphasize the caring concern of a loving father.”¹⁷⁸ Towner notes that Paul’s relationship with Timothy and Titus, as evidenced in the Pastoral Epistles, implies one of closeness and intimacy.¹⁷⁹ That relational context, affirmed by the apostle early in each of his letters to Timothy and Titus, suggests that he seeks to engender obedience and exercise his authority in ways similar to what Copan finds in Paul’s other writings.

Whereas Michaelis largely understands within Paul’s use of imitation an emphasis on his authority in order to bring about obedience on the part of his readers, de Boer, Best, Clark, and Copan contend—and convincingly demonstrate—that Paul actually uses personal example as a pedagogical methodology deeply seated in a framework where Paul views himself in fatherly terms.¹⁸⁰ While obedience on the part of congregates and protégés in light of the gospel (e.g., “good works”) represents an extremely important outcome for the apostle, he labors under the ultimate aim of ensuring that honor and glory be given to “the King of the ages, immortal, invisible, the only God” forever (1 Tim 1:17). Therefore, in the Pastoral Epistles, Paul employs orthodox instruction conjoined with personal example within the paternal relational modality as a means to persuade and engender gospel fidelity and, ultimately, personal devotion to Christ. Authentic dedication to, and imitation of, the incarnate Son serves to bring honor and glory to God and to effect inward transformation that produces ethical behavior (e.g., John 15:5-11; see, esp., v. 8). Dodd notes that Paul’s use of personal example is “sound pedagogy,” “effective psychagogy,” and a persuasive practice because what the apostle aims and argues for “requires a life-pattern that is consistent with spoken values.”¹⁸¹

¹⁷⁸ Copan, *Saint Paul as Spiritual Director*, 221.

¹⁷⁹ Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 99; see also 98-100, 442-43, 488, 674-75.

¹⁸⁰ Dodd, *Paul’s Paradigmatic ‘I’*, 23.

¹⁸¹ Dodd, *Paul’s Paradigmatic ‘I’*, 238.

Herein lies the genius of Paul’s employment of personal example as means to the end of good works—something a raw use of authority could never achieve.¹⁸²

Mediated imitation. Finally, the Pastoral Epistles display clear evidence supporting Stanley, de Boer, and Copan’s concept of mediated imitation. In fact, the three letters to Timothy and Titus exhibit both the textual and personal dimensions of mediated imitation that Copan specifically describes. For example, in 1 Timothy 4:12, Paul instructs Timothy to set an example “in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity,” and, in 4:15, he says that Timothy’s growth in the faith or the gospel would serve as an example for the Ephesians.¹⁸³ In such an instance, as presented by Copan with respect to 1 Thessalonians 1:6 and applied here, Timothy becomes “a true embodiment” or “reflection” of the Lord, who is not physically manifest among them. Then, as they look to and imitate Timothy’s model, the Ephesians, in this case, would “see the Lord in them and thus [become] imitators of Him and then in turn become an example for others.”¹⁸⁴ As such, these instructions reflect the personal dimension of mediated imitation.

In addition, Paul weaves throughout this section a series of imperatives that reflect the notion of textually mediated imitation (e.g., “teach these things” [4:11] and “devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation, to teaching” [4:13]). The gospel forms the center of gravity of teaching throughout the Pastoral Epistles, and “the living God, who is the Savior of all people, especially of those who believe” (1 Tim 4:10) lies at the heart of that body of teaching. As Timothy repeatedly read from the Scriptures and taught about Christ, the Ephesians, by means of what Copan describes as a “metaphorical leap,” “identify” with the narrated Lord, “interact with the narrated picture

¹⁸² A point missed by Castelli in her work. Castelli, *Imitating Paul*, 15.

¹⁸³ Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 264. See also Barclay, *A Study Commentary on 1 and 2 Timothy*, 145-46.

¹⁸⁴ Copan, *Saint Paul as Spiritual Director*, 104.

of that person,” and then begin to “integrate that into their context.”¹⁸⁵ Other verses that reflect the dual-aspects of mediate imitation are as follows: Titus 2:7-8; 2 Timothy 1:8-13; 3:10-4:8.

Unique Aspects of Personal Example in the Pastoral Epistles

Following and setting a personal example in the Pastoral Epistles possesses a number of unique characteristics. While Paul employs imitation in his ecclesiastical letters primarily for the spiritual growth of congregants, he personally uses or directs others to make use of personal example in the Pastoral Epistles for the development of spiritual leaders (i.e., Timothy) as well as congregational members.¹⁸⁶ Paul also utilizes personal example as a pedagogical methodology among more established churches (i.e., the church in Ephesus) as well as newer congregations (i.e., churches in Crete) and, by extension, for the benefit of both newer believers as well as those who have been Christians for longer periods.

The Pastoral Epistles possess another distinct quality with respect to the imitation motif—they contain a comparable number of references of the phenomenon as to what appears in all of Paul’s ecclesiastical letters. Fowl, de Boer, Copan, and Clarke

¹⁸⁵ Copan, *Saint Paul as Spiritual Director*, 103. While I believe Copan is correct in as much as he presents, his description of textually mediated imitation lacks important subsequent components and steps. I maintain that by means of one’s union with Christ, supernatural Holy Spirit enablement, scripturally grounded narrations of the Lord (e.g., descriptions of his actions and interactions with others, thoughts, values, teaching), and prayer, the imitator actually begins to interact with and personally relate to the living Christ and not simply “the narrated picture of that person” on the other side of a metaphorical leap. I would refer the reader to Peter Adam’s work, *Hearing God’s Words*, especially his treatment on the shape and structure of biblical spirituality. What he presents completes and enhances what Copan explains about textually mediated imitation. Adam’s model of biblical spirituality is constructed around four key points, and they are reproduced verbatim as follows: (1) Its content and focus is God in Christ; (2) Its practice is hearing the word of God by faith; (3) Its experience is that of meeting God in his Spirit-given words; (4) Its result is trust in Christ and our heavenly Father. Peter Adam, *Hearing God’s Words: Exploring Biblical Spirituality*, New Studies in Biblical Theology 16 (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2004), 44-45.

¹⁸⁶ It is also interesting to note that Paul adjusts his vocabulary when addressing individuals such as Timothy and Titus with respect to following and setting an example (in those cases he uses τύπος and the similar ὑποτύπωσις), whereas with congregations he employs a slightly broader lexicon (i.e., μιμητής, μιμέομαι, and τύπος).

identify and discuss from as few as four to as many as nine imitation-specific texts from across Paul's letters to churches.¹⁸⁷ This study located and considered seven personal example-related texts across three letters consisting of a total of thirteen chapters.¹⁸⁸ That Paul employed the imitation motif relatively more often in the Pastoral Epistles perhaps suggests that he appreciated the value of it in developing leaders who possessed the qualities and skills as well as exhibited the behaviors so important to the apostle's mandate. To the extent to which Timothy and Titus emulated those traits, Paul could be confident that they would select elders, influence congregants, and contend with false teachers in accord with his aims, values, and methodologies. Almost certainly, imitation, as presented in the Pastoral Epistles, formed the primary pedagogical methodology—in conjunction with orthodox instruction—by which Paul sought to foster the imitation of Christ among leaders and congregants alike as well as ensure orthodoxy and orthopraxy across the whole of the churches then and into the future.

Summation

Paul's use of personal example in the Pastoral Epistles reflects an appropriation and adaptation of a commonly utilized pedagogical methodology for his distinct purposes. While imitation was often employed to develop a son, student, or subject's moral bearing and character, Paul's aims, while inclusive of those, went far beyond them to center on gospel fidelity and cultivate trust in the "one God" and the "one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all" (see 1 Tim 2:5-7). Primarily within a relational paradigm of a loving and caring father, Paul

¹⁸⁷ Of course, differences lie in the selection criteria adopted across these studies (e.g., only explicit references, only texts addressing Pauline imitation, only certain vocabulary) and scope and space limitations. Regardless, Fowl, de Boer, and Clark all include discussions of the following texts: 1 Cor 4:16; 1 Thess 1:6; 2 Thess 3:7-9; Phil 3:17. Some also consider one, some, or all of the following: Acts 20: 35; Rom 15:11-3; Gal 4:12; Eph 5:1.

¹⁸⁸ Paul's letters to churches consist of a total of seventy-three chapters.

presented himself as an integrated model bringing together gospel-grounded instruction and good works for his protégés to aspire to, learn from, and emulate for the sake of becoming loving patterns for others. Certainly, his approach to following and setting personal examples laid claim to a high degree of credibility as it presented a model “where appearance and reality more closely approximate one another.”¹⁸⁹ As Timothy and Titus adopted a similar imitative pedagogy, the apostle would be assured of congregants’ continued orthodoxy and orthopraxy. When conjoined with gospel instruction, Paul perceived the power of providing a credible as well as proximal “living example” of the one to be ultimately imitated.¹⁹⁰

Following and Setting an Example in the Pastoral Epistles and Christ-Centered Followership

The growing academic field of followership studies has correctly pointed out that followers and following are just as important as leaders and leadership to the accomplishment of organizational outcomes.¹⁹¹ Furthermore, researchers have recognized that both follower and leader identity, relationships with each other and others, organizational roles and perceptions of them, and behavior and practices interact in a complex dynamic to forge a leadership process that produces group results.¹⁹² Such insights are increasingly being brought to bear across a variety of career fields.¹⁹³ In fact, a growing number of researchers and professional leaders are advocating for more

¹⁸⁹ Dodd, *Paul’s Paradigmatic ‘I’*, 238.

¹⁹⁰ Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 57.

¹⁹¹ Mary Uhl-Bien et al., “Followership Theory: A Review and Research Agenda,” *Leadership Quarterly* 25, no. 1 (2014): 83-84.

¹⁹² Boas Shamir, “From Passive Recipients to Active Co-Producers,” in *Follower-Centered Perspectives on Leadership: A Tribute to the Memory of James R. Meindl*, ed. Boas Shamir et al. (Greenwich, CT: Information Age, 2009), xix-xxi.

¹⁹³ See, e.g., Rob Koonce et al., eds., *Followership in Action: Cases and Commentaries* (Bingley, UK: Emerald, 2016). See also chap. 2 of this project, the section entitled “Followership Applied in Different Vocational Contexts.”

formalized training to equip individuals in specific vocations to become better followers in light of the growing research base.¹⁹⁴

Work remains, however, in determining what follower traits and behaviors are fundamental to effective following and even as to what constitutes a “good” follower—let alone form a consensus around them.¹⁹⁵ Furthermore, few have undertaken research to establish what, if any, overlap exists between desirable follower and leader traits and behaviors and to what extent “good” following is a requisite to “good” leading. In other words, further study must be conducted to affirm or invalidate the supposition that “he who cannot be a good follower cannot be a good leader.”¹⁹⁶ Finally, while investing in followership training to help individuals become better followers is laudable and a significant development, the pedagogical aspects of effective followership development have yet to be explored.

Wilder and Jones’s presentation of Christ-centered followership in *The God Who Goes before You* significantly advances the discussion about both followers and leaders and followership and leadership by injecting substantive biblically framed

¹⁹⁴ See, e.g., Hester Mannion, Helen O’Sullivan, and Judy McKimm, “Followership, Clinical Leadership and Social Identity,” *British Journal of Hospital Medicine* 76, no. 5 (2015): 270-74; Vaughan Cruickshank, “Followership in the School Context,” *Open Journal of Leadership* 6, no. 3 (2017): 95-103; Paul Berg, “The Importance of Teaching Followership in Professional Military Education,” *Aviation Digest* 3, no. 2 (2015): 28-31.

¹⁹⁵ Consider, e.g., the numerous and somewhat divergent follower-trait taxonomies produced in the years following the release of Kelly’s “In Praise of Followers” in 1988 and *The Power of Followership* in 1992. See my review of the various follower trait taxonomies in chap. 2 of this project, the section entitled “Followership Works; Role-based approaches.” Robert Kelley, “In Praise of Followers,” *Harvard Business Review* 66, no. 6 (1988): 142-48; Kelley, *The Power of Followership* (New York: Currency Doubleday, 1992).

¹⁹⁶ See chap. 1, n. 1 for a full discussion on whether this statement is attributable to Aristotle. Only a handful of studies have been conducted that begin to explore the relationship between good follower traits and behaviors and those considered good leader traits and behaviors. See, e.g., Edwin P. Hollander and Wilse B. Webb, “Leadership, Followership, and Friendship: An Analysis of Peer Nominations,” *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology* 50, no. 2 (1955): 163-67; Paul D. Nelson, “Similarities and Differences among Leaders and Followers,” *Journal of Social Psychology* 63, no. 1 (1962): 161-67; Augustine O. Agho, “Perspectives of Senior-Level Executives on Effective Followership and Leadership,” *Journal of Leadership and Organizational Studies* 16, no. 2 (2009): 159-66. Susan D. Baker, Christopher J. Mathis, Susan Stites-Doe, “An Exploratory Study Investigating Leader and Follower Characteristics at U.S. Healthcare Organizations,” *Journal of Managerial Issues* 23, no. 3 (2011): 341-64.

arguments into those areas in need of further investigation. With respect to the matter of what constitutes “good” follower traits and practices, I believe—based on a thorough study of *The God Who Goes Before You*—that Wilder and Jones would contend that such followers are those who love and walk closely with God, submit to his Word, respect and support their leaders, follow good examples, engage in good works, care for and serve God’s people, love others, defend and promote justice, endure suffering, and testify about Jesus.¹⁹⁷ Since a central premise of their work is that leaders are fundamentally followers, leaders, too, must exhibit these traits—with a few adjustments and biblically mandated additions.¹⁹⁸ Therefore, given the content of Wilder and Jones’s framework, I also believe they would affirm the proposition that “he who cannot be a good follower cannot be a good leader.”

Nonetheless, I submit that for Wilder and Jones’s model to realize the full potential of its contribution to followership and leadership, the authors of *The God Who Goes Before You* must fine-tune the pedagogical dimension of their model. Specifically, the methodology for the development of Christ-centered followers and Christ-following leaders ought to be adjusted if it is to better reflect the biblical witness. I have demonstrated that the apostle Paul, in the Pastoral Epistles, employs an imitative pedagogy for developing leaders (i.e., Timothy and Titus) as well as followers (i.e., congregants). The use of following and setting an example constitutes a critical component in Paul’s overall ministry approach as seen across the Pauline corpus and especially within the Pastoral Epistles.¹⁹⁹ While Wilder and Jones certainly include

¹⁹⁷ Wilder and Jones, *The God Who Goes Before You*, 24.

¹⁹⁸ For example, according to Wilder and Jones, leaders are to submit to God and his Word, proclaim and teach the Scriptures, relate to those they lead as fellow followers, follow and set proper examples, endure suffering, care for and equip God’s people, empower fellow laborers, and defend and promote justice. Wilder and Jones, *The God Who Goes Before You*, 20-21. See also in this project, chap. 2, the section entitled “Christ-Centered Followership: A Review of *The God Who Goes Before You*.”

¹⁹⁹ It is important to note that my use of Paul’s letters to Timothy and Titus as the texts from which to affirm and adjust Wilder and Jones’s framework and then apply it to emerging-adult male leadership development does not suggest that I view Paul’s ministry in Timothy’s life (i.e., an older man

imitative pedagogy as part of the Christ-centered followership practice of looking to godly examples and providing models for others to follow, their treatment does not fully comport with the nature and extent of imitation relative to the witness of the Pastoral Epistles.²⁰⁰

Therefore, in light of the material within Paul's letters to Timothy and Titus, I propose striking the practice of "example following and setting" from their model and creating the informal role of "exemplar" comparable to, and in tandem with, the "teaching and preaching role." Such a change to their current framework would emphasize and elevate in importance personal example as an ongoing, crucial responsibility for a Christ-centered and God-following leader. Furthermore, making this adjustment more closely aligns following and setting an example with Paul's emphasis in the Pastoral Epistles on sound instruction and prototypical modeling that contributes to growing orthodox faith and "good works" among both followers and leaders. Finally, within Christ-centered followership practices, I recommend creating a new category entitled "modeling" that would reflect behaviors consistent with the exemplar role just as "proclaim the Word" and "feed, protect, equip, and empower saints" relate to the teaching category.

First Timothy 4:11-16 provides a "blueprint" for these recommended changes to Wilder and Jones's framework. Having just emphasized the importance of a gospel-trained life exhibiting godliness, Paul highlights in 4:11-16 the interplay of the teaching and preaching roles with the exemplar role in Timothy's life and ministry in Ephesus.²⁰¹

developing a younger man) as completely analogous to contemporary older men mentoring emerging-adult men. In fact, significant socio-cultural differences exist between Timothy and today's emerging adult males in a North American context. As such, I reject any notion that Timothy serves as some sort of proto-emerging adult or a view that might hold Paul as an early young-adult mentor to be copied in every detail. Rather, the value in examining the Pastoral Epistles for this project lies in part in identifying the theological emphases and pedagogy present in Paul's inter-generational leadership development efforts with respect to individuals in the context of his overall ministerial program.

²⁰⁰ Wilder and Jones, *The God Who Goes Before You*, 14, 127, 128, 152, 154, 183-84.

²⁰¹ Van Neste, "1 and 2 Timothy," 2331.

He instructs Timothy to “command” and “teach” (v. 11) as well as dedicate himself “to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation, to teaching” (v. 12). Timothy must also give significant attention to his “teaching” or doctrine (v. 16) in order to ensure its integrity with what Paul passed on to him.²⁰² As a teacher, Timothy assumes the God-mandated responsibility of instructing believers in the Word of God and its implications. So, this section of Scripture reflects the Christ-centered followership role of “teaching and preaching” as well as the related practices of “proclaim the Word” and “feed, protect, equip, and empower saints.”

In the role of exemplar, Timothy shoulders the duty of consciously providing a pattern consistent with those instructions and their implications in his conduct. Paul makes this clear in verse 12, where he tells Timothy to “set the believers an example in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity.” Also, in verse 15, Timothy’s progress in the faith will be on display for others to view. First Timothy 4:11-16, then, evidences the role of “exemplar” in addition to its intimately connected practice of “modeling” in which Timothy—having already closely observed and followed Paul’s model (2 Tim 3:10-11)—keeps careful watch of his own conduct and teaching as well as strives to model the “good works” consistent with godliness.²⁰³ Thus, this text vividly supports the recommended adjustments to Wilder and Jones’s framework.

By overlaying the findings from the study of Pauline example following and setting in the Pastoral Epistles onto the followership categories of identity, relationships, roles, and practices, a robust and nuanced portrayal of Christ-centered followership

²⁰² Yarbrough, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 254. Guthrie describes the thrust of Paul’s directive here as “keep a strict eye on himself” and his “doctrinal orthodoxy.” Guthrie, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 111.

²⁰³ The practice of modeling would include specific instructions to (1) look to other models or patterns for the purpose of personal emulation, (2) examining one’s life and words in order to determine whether they present a good model for others to follow and (3) taking active steps to present a pattern of “good works” for other believers to emulate.

emerges from 1 Timothy, especially 4:11-16. Paul exhorts Timothy out of his (i.e., Paul's) identity as a formerly ignorant, unbelieving blasphemer (1:13-14) who is now united to Christ (v. 14; "in Christ")²⁰⁴ by the Lord's overflowing patience and grace and who has been appointed as a steward in his service (v. 12). Relating to his spiritual child as a tender father (vv. 1:2, 18), Paul longs for Timothy's best—that he would hold to his personal "alignment with Christ and the Christian teaching" (v. 18; "holding faith and a good conscience")²⁰⁵ and grow in faith and godliness (4:8). Thus, he directs Timothy to consider negative examples—"some have made shipwreck of their faith" (1:19)—as well as his own that are ultimately meant to direct the younger man's attention to Christ (1:16).

Well aware of his apostolic, teaching and preaching, and exemplar roles (1 Tim 1:1, 6; 2:7), Paul acts by dispatching correspondence to his beloved co-laborer and protégé that reflect his God-ordained charge as purveyor of divine revelation, gospel instructor, and pattern of gospel living and ministry. Thus, Paul proclaims the Word through his letter and Timothy's faithful teaching (4:11), seeks to feed and protect and empower Timothy (4:6-10)—and ultimately the Ephesians through him—and models (e.g., 4:6) the very things Timothy is expected to do (4:11-16). Thus, the phenomenon of imitation within the Pastoral Epistles nuances Christ-centered followership by elevating its emphasis on setting and following good examples, enhancing its overall pedagogy, and aligns Wilder and Jones's construct more fully with the teaching of the Pastoral Epistles. Now, in the following chapter, I explore how this adjusted framework might be utilized in efforts to develop Christian emerging-adult men as spiritual leaders.

²⁰⁴ Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 99.

²⁰⁵ Fiore, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 52.

CHAPTER 5

DEVELOPING SPIRITUAL LEADERS: CHRIST-CENTERED FOLLOWERSHIP AND EMERGING-ADULT MEN

Throughout the previous chapters, I have endeavored to demonstrate that Michael Wilder and Timothy Paul Jones’s Christ-centered followership framework not only fits squarely within the body of followership research but also significantly contributes to it by integrating theoretical insights within a biblical theology of pastoral leadership. Furthermore, I have shown that the Pastoral Epistles both validate their model of Christ-centered followership and suggest a modification to it. By establishing an “exemplar” role category and placing greater stress upon the practices of following and setting orthodox, ethical models, I argued that Wilder and Jones’s construct would more closely align to the contours and emphases of Paul’s letters to Timothy and Titus. Therefore, I ended the preceding chapter by advancing an imitation-adjusted model of Christ-centered followership.¹

In what follows, I consider the employment of said construct for the purposes of developing Christian emerging-adult men as spiritual leaders. In order to accomplish that task, this chapter moves through four sections. First, I lay the groundwork by presenting the rationale for, and a model of, emerging-adult spiritual leadership as Christ-centered followership informed by Sharon Daloz Parks’s work in emerging-adult faith-

¹ For the sake of ease, Wilder and Jones’s imitation-adjusted model will be referred to throughout the remainder of this chapter as “Christ-centered followership,” “Christ-centered followership as pastoral leadership,” “Wilder and Jones’s model,” “Wilder and Jones’s framework,” and the like. See Michael S. Wilder and Timothy Paul Jones, *The God Who Goes Before You: Pastoral Leadership as Christ-Centered Followership* (Nashville: B & H, 2018) for the full articulation of their model that serves as the foundational work of this project.

based leadership and rooted in Wilder and Jones’s Christ-centered followership construct. In the second section, I discuss the reasons for specifically focusing upon young adult males and their development as spiritual leaders. Third, I outline the impediments and challenges to them becoming such and demonstrate how my proposed model of spiritual leadership addresses and potentially overcomes barriers to Christian emerging-adult men being spiritual leaders. In the final section, I advance a pedagogical blueprint for developing emerging-adult men according to the model of Christ-centered followership as spiritual leadership presented in this chapter.

Rationale and Model for Emerging-Adult Spiritual Leadership

Susan Ashford and Scott DeRue, in their journal article on leadership development, highlight the findings of a survey of senior executives and human resource leaders that indicated a significant “dearth of leadership talent that is and will continue to impede organizational performance.”² Not only did they point out a brewing, multi-sector “leadership talent crisis” nearly a decade ago, but they also anticipated an even greater one in the coming years with the retirement of the Baby Boomer generation from the workforce and senior leadership positions.³ Bruce Avolio and Gretchen Vogelgesang, in their study, underscore the same demographic shifts and emphasize that the smaller population sizes of succeeding generations vis-à-vis Baby Boomers portends poorly for an adequate supply of business and non-profit leaders in coming years.⁴ Furthermore,

² Susan J. Ashford, and D. Scott DeRue, “Developing as a Leader: The Power of Mindful Engagement,” *Organizational Dynamics* 41, no. 2 (2012): 146.

³ Ashford and DeRue, “Developing as a Leader,” 146. Ashford and DeRue go on to say, “Market sectors such as non-profit and social enterprise are experiencing leadership deficits that significantly constrain their ability to meet the needs of their constituencies. Unfortunately, as the baby boomer population retires, this talent shortage will escalate even further, as organizations are projected to lose up to 50% of their senior leadership personnel.”

⁴ Bruce J. Avolio and Gretchen R. Vogelgesang, “Beginnings Matter in Genuine Leadership Development,” in *Early Development and Leadership: Building the Next Generation of Leaders*, ed. Susan Elaine Murphy and Rebecca J. Reichard, Series in Applied Psychology (New York: Routledge, 2011), 180-81.

they assert that greater workforce mobility and organizational moves away from hierarchical authority structures will require an even larger cadre of organizational leaders and, thus, compound the problem.⁵

The need for leaders goes well beyond the senior ranks of corporations and non-profit organizations in the private sector. John Gardner, in his work *On Leadership*, observes that in a large and diverse country like the United States, leadership is distributed across numerous segments (e.g., government, business, universities, social agencies, various professions, minority communities) and throughout different strata (e.g., national-political, school principal, shop supervisor).⁶ He argues that in order for such a large, decentralized, multi-layered system to function, adapt, and remain vital, it requires an adequate supply of leaders.⁷ In fact, he goes so far as to ask, “How many dispersed leaders do we need?” and concludes that approximately one percent of the population must be “prepared to take leaderlike action at their levels.”⁸ Then, he rhetorically inquires, “How can we ever find that many leaders?”⁹

Thom Rainer and Jess Rainer, in their study on the Millennial Generation, consider those born between 1980 and 2000 to be Millennials, those born between 1965 and 1979 to be Generation X, and those born between 1946 and 1964 to be Baby Boomers. Thom S. Rainer and Jess W. Rainer, *The Millennials: Connecting to America's Largest Generation* (Nashville: B & H, 2011), 8. Presumably, Rainer and Rainer would hold that the subsequent generation—commonly referred to as Generation Z—should include anyone born after the year 2000, but they do not discuss the post-Millennial generation. Corey Seemiller and Meghan Grace argue that Generation Z consists of those born between 1995 and 2010. Corey Seemiller and Meghan Grace, *Generation Z: A Century in the Making* (New York: Routledge, 2019), xix. For the purposes of this project, I hold that the Millennial Generation consists of those born between 1980 and 2000 and that Generation Z is made up of those born between 2001 and 2020. Thus, according to my delineations, today's emerging adults straddle the Millennial Generation and Generation Z, with the majority being Millennials.

⁵ Avolio and Vogelgesang, “Genuine Leadership Development,” 181.

⁶ John W. Gardner, *On Leadership* (New York: Free Press, 1990), xvii.

⁷ Gardner, *On Leadership*, xvi-xvii.

⁸ Gardner, *On Leadership*, xix. When Gardner wrote in 1990, one percent of the U.S. population would have been equivalent to 2.4 million people. According to the U.S. Census Bureau's population clock on July 3, 2020 at 18:00 UTC, the U.S. population count stood at 329,891,672. U.S. Census Bureau, “U.S. and World Population Clock,” July 3, 2020, <https://www.census.gov/popclock/>. Using Gardner's baseline of one percent, the total number of leaders needed today is nearly 3.3 million.

⁹ Gardner, *On Leadership*, xix.

While Gardner shines a spotlight on the quantitative dimension of needed leadership development efforts, others point out the requisite qualities required among current and future leaders. In the final decade of the twentieth century, Ronald Heifetz, in his book *Leadership without Easy Answers*, declared, “Today we face a crisis in leadership in many areas of public and private life,” and he decried the “paucity of leadership” that may well “perpetuate our quandaries.”¹⁰ Heifetz was especially concerned with ensuring a growing cadre of adaptive leaders capable of taking a systems approach to problems, developing new and innovative solutions, and operating inside and outside traditional organizational structures and at all levels.¹¹ A quarter of a century later, Sharon Daloz Parks echoes Heifetz by pointing out that the world confronts a host of systemic and large-scale problems across multiple domains of human existence but suffers from a leadership crisis such that we lack the types of leaders capable of confronting contemporary challenges.¹² Leadership scholar Peter Northouse observes concerning the current situation, “Leadership is a highly valued commodity. Given the volatility in world affairs and our national political climate, the public’s desire for constructive leadership is higher than it has ever been.”¹³

Even as I write this thesis, the coronavirus global pandemic wreaks untold human suffering and misery and causes catastrophic economic damage and social dislocation. In addition, a concurrent socio-political movement within the United States

¹⁰ Ronald A. Heifetz, *Leadership without Easy Answers* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 1994), 2.

¹¹ Heifetz, *Leadership without Easy Answers*, 2, 72-73.

¹² Sharon Daloz Parks, *Big Questions, Worthy Dreams: Mentoring Emerging Adults in their Search for Meaning, Purpose, and Faith* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2019), xiv-xvi. See also Sharon Daloz Parks, *Leadership Can Be Taught: A Bold Approach for a Complex World* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Business School Press, 2005), 1-4; Laurent A. Parks Daloz et al., *Common Fire: Leading Lives of Commitment in a Complex World* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1996), 2-15.

¹³ Peter G. Northouse, *Introduction to Leadership: Concepts and Practice*, 5th ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 2021), xviii.

decrying police brutality against those of African descent, racial discrimination, and economic and social inequalities convulses cities, communities, and society as a whole. Such tumultuous events highlight the need for a vast and growing number of capable leaders to help society navigate the realities and challenges before it. So, the question Gardner asked thirty years ago remains unchanged: “How can we ever find that many leaders?”

Emerging Adults as Potential Leaders

Emerging adults, those between the ages of eighteen and twenty-nine years of age, provide a promising answer to Gardner’s question concerning the numbers and source of much-needed leaders. Avolio and Vogelgesang’s research suggests that investing leadership development resources and efforts earlier in a person’s life (i.e., up to and into emerging adulthood) rather than when someone is older (i.e., 45 years and up) results in a much greater impact.¹⁴ Jill Bowers, David Rosch, and Daniel Collier’s study highlights important precursors to emerging-adult leader self-perception and affirms that youth and young adults can grow as leaders despite widespread concerns or stereotypes to the contrary.¹⁵ In fact, they recognize that “adolescents and emerging adults are the

¹⁴ Avolio and Vogelgesang, “Genuine Leadership Development,” 179.

¹⁵ Jill R. Bowers, David M. Rosch, and Daniel A. Collier, “Examining the Relationship between Role Models and Leadership Growth during the Transition to Adulthood,” *Journal of Adolescent Research* 31, no. 1 (2016): 97. Concerning the prevailing view that emerging adults suffer from a “normative crisis,” are selfish and self-focused, and generally lack motivation to embrace the responsibilities of adulthood, Jeffrey Arnett finds a more nuanced and ultimately more positive reality. Jeffrey Jensen Arnett, “Suffering, Selfish, Slackers? Myths and Reality about Emerging Adults,” *Journal of Youth and Adolescence* 36, no. 1 (2007): 23-29. Arnett, in part, responds to Grossman’s 2005 article in *Time*. Lev Grossman, “They Just Won’t Grow Up,” *Time*, January 16, 2005, <http://content.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,1018089-6,00.html>. Rainer and Rainer acknowledge the criticisms of Millennials. Nonetheless, after their research, the authors recognize the Millennial Generation’s capacity and potential for positive impact, stating,

And like any generation, there are wide varieties of characteristics and personalities among the millions represented. Count us, however, among those who are positive about the Millennials. While we don’t turn a blind eye to the challenges they may present, we believe they have much to offer now and even more to offer in the years to come. This is a generation that desires to serve, that is willing to listen, that seeks counsel and advise, that loves family, and that truly desires to make a difference (Rainer and Rainer, *The Millennials*, 280).

future leaders of our communities and organizations” and advance a role-model driven leadership development framework in light of their research findings.¹⁶

Having studied, educated, and worked closely with emerging adults for forty years, Sharon Daloz Parks acknowledges both the challenges to, but also the potential for, emerging adults’ becoming leaders who contribute to the collective good.¹⁷ She points out that emerging adults are “stewards of our shared future” and have the capacity to become transformative, adaptive leaders with the proper input and guidance.¹⁸ In fact, not only does she contend that much of leadership can be taught—of which emerging adults are quite capable of learning—Parks also stresses the centrality of faith to emerging-adult leadership growth.¹⁹ Certainly, her conception of faith and faith development aligns much more closely with James Fowler’s understanding rather than a biblically derived definition of πίστις.²⁰ Nonetheless, Parks stands virtually alone in acknowledging both the significant leadership potential of emerging adults and the centrality of “faith” to the realization of that potential.

¹⁶ Bowers, Rosch, and Collier, “Role Models and Leadership Growth,” 97.

¹⁷ Parks, *Big Questions, Worthy Dreams*, xv, back cover.

¹⁸ Parks, *Big Questions, Worthy Dreams*, xvi, 153-54, 250. Heifetz also sees the leadership promise and potential of adolescents and young adults. He writes in the forward to the spring 2006 issue of *New Directions for Youth Development*, “Young people are valuable stakeholders in their communities. They many not hold positions of authority, but they possess the potential to exercise leadership in meaningful ways.” Ronald Heifetz, “Foreward,” *New Directions for Youth Development*, no. 109 (2006): 2.

¹⁹ Parks, *Big Questions, Worthy Dreams*, 23-50. See also Parks, *Leadership Can Be Taught*.

²⁰ See James Fowler. *Stages of Faith: The Psychology of Human Development and the Quest for Meaning* (New York: HarperCollins, 1981). For an evaluation of Fowler’s understanding of faith and a biblical critique, see Timothy Paul Jones and Michael S. Wilder, “Faith Development and Christian Formation.” in *Christian Formation: Integrating Theology and Human Development*, ed. James R. Estep and Jonathan H. Kim (Nashville: B & H, 2010), 161-207. Of faith, Parks states,

We reserve the word faith for meaning-making in its most comprehensive dimensions. In other words, whenever we organize our sense of a particular object, a series of activities, or an institution, we are also compelled to compose our sense of its place in the whole of existence. Human beings seek to compose and dwell in some conviction of what is ultimately true, real, and dependable within that vast frame. Either unconsciously or self-consciously, individually or together, and taking more or less into account, we compose a sense of the ultimate character of reality and then we stake our lives on that “reality”—the meaning we have made. (Parks, *Big Questions, Worthy Dreams*, 32 [emphasis original])

The critique Jones and Wilder make of Fowler’s definition of faith and human faith development is, in several respects, applicable to Parks’s views as well.

Sharon Daloz Parks: Faith, Purpose, Leadership, and Emerging Adulthood

Parks's conception of leadership and faith and their linkage provides a basis from which to begin a discussion of spiritual leadership that I will ultimately apply to Christian emerging adults in general and young adult men in particular. Drawing from Heifetz, Parks understands leadership to be the ability to help "people move from the current pattern of organization through the swamp of the unknown to a more adequate pattern."²¹ Rather than being a position of formal authority within an organization or society (e.g., a boss, president, dean, CEO) that often functions to maintain equilibrium within the social group, leadership entails helping a group of people mobilize in such a way "to address their toughest problems" in a fashion that adapts to meet the challenge of complex realities.²² Thus, leaders recognize a need for change, marshal others at any level of a group or organization such that they collectively begin to address a common problem, and help them navigate various challenges toward a new configuration and approach to a matter.²³ In addition, Parks's leadership framework places greater emphasis on the leader's understanding his or her purpose and on the achievement of progress made rather than on one's position or power. Furthermore, she stresses that a person's presence in a given situation is far more important to leadership than "the charisma and the traits of the individual personality."²⁴

For Parks, emerging-adult faith formation—and all human faith development for that matter—finds its grounding in the distinctly human orientation toward "meaning

²¹ Parks, *Big Questions, Worthy Dreams*, 154.

²² Parks, *Leadership Can Be Taught*, 9.

²³ Parks, again, drawing from Heifetz, not only differentiates between formal positions of authority and leadership but also distinguishes "technical problems" (i.e., those "problems that are amenable to routine management and expertise already in hand") from "adaptive challenges" (i.e., "challenges that require innovation and new learning"). Parks, *Big Questions, Worthy Dreams*, 154. See also Parks, *Leadership Can Be Taught*, 9-10.

²⁴ Parks, *Leadership Can Be Taught*, 10-11.

making” (i.e., “the activity of composing a sense of the connections among things: a sense of pattern, order, form, and significance”).²⁵ Over time and with ever-increasing experience and knowledge, human beings order and reorder their understanding of the relationship of the discrete elements of life to each other. Then, as people achieve certain developmental milestones, they become more and more capable of considering the totality of those elements. Parks’s perspective holds that faith is about making meaning “of the *whole* of life” such that “we compose a sense of the ultimate character of reality and then we stake our lives on that ‘reality.’”²⁶ The central, cohesive “linchpin of our pattern of meaning,” she says, “functions” as God for individuals and, as such, receives a person’s sense of allegiance and trust.²⁷

The period of emerging adulthood represents for Parks a time where faith has the potential to grow and change rapidly through increased learning and experiences, and, thus, inform and energize leadership as it solidifies an individual’s purpose. As young adults take up and positively resolve important psychosocial developmental tasks (as described, for instance, by Erik Erickson), learn more about themselves and their world, and wrestle with fundamental questions of being, their faith changes and reforms; it, according to Parks, transforms and grows “toward greater adequacy.”²⁸ Faith, “one’s sense of the ultimate character of existence,” undergirds and informs one’s purpose and forms “the orienting and motivating guide of the hand.”²⁹ In Park’s view, a faith-grounded and informed sense of purpose provides the necessary—and sometimes the only—orientation and motivation to catalyze a person to action and to leadership. As she

²⁵ Parks, *Big Questions, Worthy Dreams*, 31.

²⁶ Parks, *Big Questions, Worthy Dreams*, 32 (emphasis original).

²⁷ Parks, *Big Questions, Worthy Dreams*, 34-35.

²⁸ Parks, *Big Questions, Worthy Dreams*, 50, 55.

²⁹ Parks, *Big Questions, Worthy Dreams*, 40.

puts it, “We act in alignment with what we finally perceive as real, oriented by our most powerful centers of trust (or mistrust).”³⁰ Rightly engaged and motivated emerging adults, in Park’s estimation, possess the capacity to “to heal and transform a world.”³¹

Christ-Centered Followership as Emerging-Adult Spiritual Leadership

Few acknowledge, as Parks does, the unique potential for leadership and influence emerging adults represent, and fewer still advance a model of emerging-adult leadership and leader development that emphasizes faith and purpose as necessary, precursor components. Her framework, when adjusted with biblically informed notions of faith, purpose, and leadership, significantly contributes to fashioning a spiritual leadership framework. When integrated into Wilder and Jones’s construct, a model of emerging-adult leadership as Christ-centered followership emerges.

Faith. Parks correctly aims to provide her entire framework some ultimate mooring, but her notion of a self-constructed “sense of the ultimate character of reality” that “functions as ‘God’” certainly falls short of that goal, at least from a biblical perspective.³² Space does not permit a thorough critique of her view, but the Scriptures, as God’s self-disclosed revelation concerning himself and the nature of the reality he created, provide a far better starting point for faith-and-leadership development than a personally crafted, overarching sense of reality.³³ Timothy Jones and Michael Wilder, in

³⁰ Parks, *Big Questions, Worthy Dreams*, 41.

³¹ Parks, *Big Questions, Worthy Dreams*, 176.

³² Timothy Keller describes idolatry in light of the biblical witness as replacing the one true God as our Savior with a counterfeit one. He writes, “God should be our only Lord and Master, but whatever we love and trust we also serve. Anything that becomes more important and nonnegotiable to us than God becomes an enslaving idol.” Timothy Keller, *Counterfeit Gods: The Empty Promises of Money, Sex, and Power, and the Only Hope That Matters* (New York: Dutton, 2009), xxii. One cannot help but conclude that at least in some situations what Parks deems as “meaning-making” becomes terribly problematic in light of Keller’s contribution.

³³ One wonders how most emerging adults with limited knowledge about the complex world in

their critique of Fowler’s definition of faith and framework of faith development, provide a biblically derived and historically rooted alternative: faith for the earliest Christians was “life-defining allegiance to Jesus—as recognized through Holy Scripture and as revealed through the Holy Spirit—that resulted in increasing confidence in God’s decisive action on their behalf in Jesus Christ and in increasing conformity to the character of Jesus Christ.”³⁴ Thus, faith entails devotion to a person, the Son of God, and commitment to divinely revealed propositions about that person and the reality he created rather than loyalty to a self-constructed formulation of that reality.

Purpose. Parks, drawing from William Damon, contends that purpose, a matter of “*ultimate concern*,” spans the gap between faith and leadership by providing answers to important “why” questions: “*Why* am I doing this?” and “Why does it matter?”³⁵ Parks’s framework rightly sequences faith, purpose, and action (e.g., leadership) and recognizes that emerging adults are generally concerned with engaging in

which we live, closely tethered to their own perspective and culture, and, in the case of many, still in the midst of cognitive and identity development, can reasonably hope to self-construct any meaningful framework that reflects “the ultimate character of reality” let alone upon which to stake one’s life and give their complete loyalty. Of course, an even bigger problem for Parks’s view is that she does not account for the noetic effect of sin upon the human mind and the implications for observing the world and formulating meaning from it. See, e.g., Rom 1:21. For a helpful presentation on the noetic effect of sin, see Paul Helm, “John Calvin, the ‘Senses Divinitatis’, and the Noetic Effects of Sin,” *International Journal for Philosophy of Religion* 43, no. 2 (1998): 87-107.

³⁴ Jones and Wilder, “Faith Development and Christian Formation,” 192. Wilder and Jones, addressing alternative epistemological sources for leadership theory and modeling, write in *The God Who Goes Before You*,

When it comes to leadership, there *is* much to be learned from empirical research and from the intuitive reflections of marketplace leaders—but, without the whole canon of Scripture as our supreme and sufficient authority, flawed views of divine purposes and human capacities will skew our view of leadership. That’s why a Christ-centered, kingdom-focused, canonically shaped vision of leadership must precede any principles of leadership that derive from human wisdom. Unless our foundational vision for leadership is grounded in the metanarrative of Scripture that culminates in the kingdom inaugurated through Jesus Christ, we will not be able to separate the wisdom of the world from the wisdom of Christ. (Wilder and Jones, *The God Who Goes Before You*, 8 [emphasis original])

³⁵ Parks, *Big Questions, Worthy Dreams*, 40. Parks quotes from William Damon, *The Path to Purpose: How Young People Find their Calling in Life* (New York: Free Press, 2008), 33-34 (emphasis original).

meaningful and purpose-oriented activities.³⁶ Unfortunately, because purpose in her paradigm emerges from a self-constructed faith-object, corresponding answers to the important “why” questions lack a superindividual basis. Instead, Scripture not only spotlights the focus of individual faith—Jesus Christ and his salvific work—but also provides the basis by which a person can firmly establish his or her purpose as rooted in the design of the Creator.

Creation mandate. The creation mandate along with the great commission provide the biblical underpinnings upon which to establish any sense of individual purpose. Graeme Goldsworthy points out that within the creation accounts in Genesis 1 and 2, God establishes the purpose and function of everything within the created order and declares all of it “very good.”³⁷ Craig Bartholomew and Michael Goheen describe the ways in which human purpose is rooted in the creation mandate: “In God’s kingdom, which he has set up by creating it, the special role he has assigned to humanity is that we should serve as his ‘under-kings,’ vice-regents, or stewards. We are to rule over the creation so that god’s reputation is enhanced within his cosmic kingdom.”³⁸ Within the ancient Near East context in which Genesis was written, the idea of the “image of god” conveys the dual notions of “sonship” and “rulership.”³⁹ As bearers of the divine image, human beings serve the Lord as “servant king and son of God” and, as such, “mediate

³⁶ Parks, *Big Questions, Worthy Dreams*, 40-41, 190-92.

³⁷ Graeme Goldsworthy. *According to Plan: The Unfolding Revelation of God in the Bible* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1991), 92-93.

³⁸ Craig G. Bartholomew and Michael W. Goheen, *The Drama of Scripture: Finding Our Place in the Biblical Story* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2004). 37. Gen 1:26 is often referred to as the “cultural mandate” or “creation mandate.” See, e.g., Bartholomew and Goheen, *The Drama of Scripture*. 37. Gen 1:26 states, “Then God said, ‘Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.’”

³⁹ Peter J. Gentry and Stephen J. Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant: A Biblical-Theological Understanding of Covenants* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012), 192.

God’s rule to the creation in the context of a covenant relationship with God on the one hand and the earth on the other.”⁴⁰ According to Bartholomew and Goheen, then, the creation mandate “enjoins us to bring every type of cultural activity within the service of God.”⁴¹

Great commission. While the creation account establishes the central pillar of human purpose, the great commission, as expressed in Matthew 28:18-20, fixes in place another column of purpose in the life of every Christian: in light of Christ’s “absolute power and jurisdiction,” believers are to “make disciples.”⁴² The imperative “make disciples” grammatically functions as the main verb around which this passage is constructed. Jesus tasks his first disciples with making other disciples—“disciples are those who hear, understand, and obey Jesus’ teaching.”⁴³ Christians, therefore, receive their purpose from King Jesus himself—as D. A. Carson paraphrases it, “Make disciples of all men everywhere, without distinction.”⁴⁴

Leadership. Having presented a biblically informed understanding of faith and human purpose, I consider Parks’s idea of leadership. She differentiates the practice of leadership from the exercise of positional authority and envisions its employment to help

⁴⁰ Gentry and Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant*, 201.

⁴¹ Bartholomew and Goheen, *The Drama of Scripture*, 38. Bartholomew and Goheen continue, “God himself is revealed or ‘imaged’ in his creation precisely in agriculture, art, music, commerce, politics, scholarship, family life, church, leisure, and so on, in ways that honor God.” Stephen Dempster puts it as follows: “It is indispensable for understanding the Bible, sketching out an understanding of what it means to be human, namely to bring the world under the dominion of the image of God.” Stephen G. Dempster, *Dominion and Dynasty: A Biblical Theology of the Hebrew Bible*, New Studies in Biblical Theology 15 (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2003). 58.

⁴² Robert H. Mounce, *Matthew*, New International Biblical Commentary (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1985), 276. I recognize that the other Gospel writers portray Jesus’s commission in particularly nuanced ways. See, e.g., Bartholomew and Goheen, *The Drama of Scripture*, 168-69.

⁴³ D. A. Carson, “Matthew,” in *Matthew Mark, Luke*, vol. 8 of *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, ed. Frank E. Gaebelin (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1984), 596.

⁴⁴ Carson, *Matthew*, 596.

solve “adaptive challenges.”⁴⁵ In particular, she views this type of leadership practiced wherever emerging adults find themselves and whenever leadership is required because “everyone is a part of the pattern that must undergo change and can have an effect within the field of action.”⁴⁶ Thus, leadership becomes something most emerging adults can exercise regardless of organizational title or position and in almost any context (i.e., family, peer group, vocational settings, sports teams, etc.) as it is about individuals exercising influence such that they are collectively engaged to tackle a problem.⁴⁷

Parks’s discussion of leadership fails to take into account followership theory and is essentially leader-centric in orientation—even if it is decentralized and not organizationally restricted. As such, her framework overlooks the role and importance of followers and following in the leadership process and in solving the complex problems with which she is concerned.⁴⁸ Most significantly, for all of the stress Parks places on a faith-grounded notion of leadership, she misses the fact that spiritual leaders, in the biblical sense, are primarily followers—followers of the God and servants under his charge. So, when endowed with biblical definitions of faith and purpose and followership theory, Parks’s understanding of leadership becomes a useful frame for developing a model of emerging-adult spiritual leadership.

⁴⁵ Informed by Heifetz, Parks defines adaptive challenges as those “that require innovation and new learning (and often include loss and grief). Although even very difficult problems can sometimes yield to answers already in hand, an adaptive challenge, by contrast, signals dramatically new conditions that require a creative response.” Parks, *Big Questions, Worthy Dreams*, 154.

⁴⁶ Parks, *Big Questions, Worthy Dreams*, 154.

⁴⁷ Parks’s understanding of leadership closely reflects leadership scholar Peter Northouse’s. He defines leadership as “a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal.” Peter Northouse, *Leadership: Theory and Practice*, 8th ed. (Los Angeles: SAGE, 2019), 5. He continues, “When leadership is defined in this manner, it becomes available to everyone. It is not restricted to the formally designated leader in the group.” As will be demonstrated, such a view of leadership informs the definition of spiritual leadership explicated later in this chapter.

⁴⁸ In fact, her model assumes that an emerging adult must exercise leadership in order to positively contribute to meeting adaptive challenges and solving systemic problems. At times, that may be the case. However, in other situations, contributing to the leadership process and influencing the group as a follower may be a better course of action. Therefore, emerging adults who would be spiritual leaders need to appreciate what it means to lead and follow and that the dynamic between leaders and followers is what produces group outcomes.

Spiritual leadership as followership. Parks, in *Big Questions, Worthy Dreams*, thoughtfully constructs a faith-grounded model of emerging-adult leadership. When rooted in biblically informed notions of its key elements, her framework becomes suitable to inform a model of emerging-adult spiritual leadership. Though Wilder and Jones build their Christ-centered followership framework with pastoral leaders in mind, they intimate its applicability to Christian leadership and other Christian leaders more broadly.⁴⁹ Drawing from the central elements of Wilder and Jones’s schema and enhancements made to Parks’s framework, I propose the following definition of emerging-adult spiritual leadership as Christ-centered followership: The Christ-following emerging adult—living by faith as a bearer of God’s image in union with Christ and his people—seeks to influence and mobilize those around him or her for the purposes of meeting challenges and solving problems related to fulfilling the creation mandate and, in conjunction with other Christians, participating in the great commission in submission to the Word of God. In the next section, I consider the rationale for specifically helping emerging-adult men become Christ-centered spiritual leaders.

A Rationale for Focusing upon Emerging-Adult Male Spiritual Leadership Development

Across industries, government, and not-for-profits and throughout organizations and society as a whole, the need for an expanding group of individuals capable of exercising leadership to meet complex challenges grows acute. Now, more than ever, the occasion for emerging adults to engage and attempt to meet the demands of this leadership crisis presents itself. More to the point, these needs afford emerging-adult Christians a unique opportunity to stand in the breach and exercise spiritual leadership in

⁴⁹ Wilder and Jones, *The God Who Goes Before You*, 16. In my personal conversations with Jones, he directly expressed that he not only understood Christ-centered followership to be applicable across other domains of leadership, but he also hoped others would take their work, build upon it, and bring it to bear in those contexts. I understand this work as fitting within Jones’s desire.

view of the cultural mandate and the great commission for the furtherance of God's glory in Christ. Furthermore, current and looming realities within the evangelical church require emerging adults to become involved in and exercise spiritual leadership on behalf of Christ's body.⁵⁰ Thus, in a nod to Gardner, the question becomes "How can we ever find those types of Christian emerging-adult leaders?"

Parks contends that leadership is largely a learned phenomenon.⁵¹ Thus, she posits that leading and leadership can be taught and that emerging adults are quite capable of learning its practice given the appropriate pedagogy.⁵² Therefore, the question shifts from "How can we ever find those types of Christian emerging-adult leaders?" to "How do we begin to develop Christian emerging adults into those types of leaders?" While such an effort requires a multi-pronged approach, engaging both male and female emerging adults, I propose—for the purposes of this project—to consider the unique dimensions of developing Christian emerging-adult men as spiritual leaders.⁵³

⁵⁰ See Ronald Sider and Ben Lowe's *The Future of Our Faith* for a discussion of some of those challenges as well as the ways in which a younger generation of evangelicals are exercising initiative and leadership to address them. Ronald J. Sider and Ben Lowe, *The Future of Our Faith: An Intergenerational Conversation on Critical Issues Facing the Church* (Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2016).

In addition to the leadership crisis described above, another looms on the immediate horizon for the church in the United States. Albert Mohler puts the matter in these terms: "The increasingly secular character of our age presents Christians with a new and daunting set of challenges. We have witnessed the displacement of Christianity within the culture of the nations throughout Western Europe and Canada, and now in the United States as well." Albert R. Mohler Jr., *The Gathering Storm: Secularism, Culture, and the Church* (Nashville: Nelson Books, 2020), xii. Yet, he goes on to say that because of our love for Christ and those around us, we have no option but to engage the world rather than recoil in fear (14). Nonetheless, the difficult task before the church is to determine how to carry out such action. I contend that this challenge, a leadership test of significant proportions, will fall increasingly to those who today are emerging adults. David Kinnaman and Gabe Lyons portray a similar near-future reality confronting followers of Christ. In such a hostile post-Christian environment, the choice will be either to assimilate or to navigate the landscape by holding to orthodoxy and creating a countercultural alternative. Confronted with such a reality, they ask, "Who will lead?" David Kinnaman and Gabe Lyons, *Good Faith: Being a Christian When Society Thinks You're Irrelevant and Extreme* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2016), 93-106. Again, today's Christian emerging adults will bear that leadership burden. The onus, then, rests upon those who are older to pray for, and prepare by the Spirit's enablement, a younger generation to faithfully lead through an environment as described by Mohler, Kinnaman, and Lyons.

⁵¹ See also Northouse, *Leadership*, 15.

⁵² Parks, *Leadership Can Be Taught*, 6. Avolio and Vogelgesang advocate for interventions and efforts to develop emerging adults as leaders. Avolio and Vogelgesang, "Genuine Leadership Development," 181-82.

⁵³ By giving attention to emerging-adult male leadership development, I do not intend to suggest that men ought to be the dominate gender, nor does this focus reflect some nostalgia for an earlier

The twenty-three million twentysomething men in the United States, along with their twenty-two million female counterparts, represent key stakeholders in American society.⁵⁴ Nonetheless, by several measures, men in general and emerging-adult males in particular increasingly appear uninterested or unable to engage in the world around them as those with a place in the social order and a contribution to make to it.⁵⁵ While the adolescent transition to adulthood has historically been characterized by difficulties and challenges for both men and women, the current period coincides with a growing number of concerning developments with respect to male actions and even inactivity.⁵⁶ Philip Zimbardo and Nikita Coulombe argue that a failure to address alarming trends in young male behavior and engagement levels reflects an inability on the part of leaders at all levels to recognize “that men play such a powerful part in society, which means they are effectively denying their younger counterparts the opportunity to thrive.”⁵⁷

Focusing upon the development of Christian emerging-adult males as spiritual leaders holds the potential to make a number of important contributions.⁵⁸ First, such

period when women were more often excluded from a host of career fields. Furthermore, I am not suggesting that the spiritual and leadership development of women should be neglected or somehow considered of secondary importance. Finally, I differentiate between the practice of spiritual leadership and holding formal offices of pastoral leadership within a local church congregation. I contend that the former is to be practiced by many emerging adults, while pastoral leadership is to be exercised by those appointed to the formal offices of elder and deacon according to the criteria of 1 Tim 3 and Titus 1.

⁵⁴ According to the online resource Statista, there were, in 2018, 23.22 million men, ages 20 to 29, and 22.21 million women within the same age range. Statista, “Resident population of the United States by Sex and Age as of July 1, 2018,” July 1, 2018, <https://www.statista.com/statistics/241488/population-of-the-us-by-sex-and-age/>.

⁵⁵ See, e.g., Hanna Rosin, “The End of Men,” *The Atlantic*, July/August 2010, <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2010/07/the-end-of-men/308135/>.

⁵⁶ Thomas G. Shaw, “Male Call: The Role of the Church in Awakening Young Men to Their Vocational Purpose” (DMin project, George Fox University, 2014), 93.

⁵⁷ Philip Zimbardo and Nikita D. Coulombe. *Man, Interrupted: Why Young Men Are Struggling and What We Can Do about It* (Newburyport, MA: Conari Press, 2016), xvi.

⁵⁸ Adopting a distinct approach to emerging-adult male spiritual leadership development helps them by addressing the unique challenges present in their lives. Furthermore, even though men and women are similar in a great number of categories, there are, nonetheless, important differences to consider. Dave Verhaagen notes that men and women’s brains and minds are dissimilar in several ways. In addition, he

efforts may help reverse at least some of the negative trends that increasingly place men's economic well-being and emotional and physical health at risk and often result in negative individual and societal outcomes.⁵⁹ Second, developing emerging-adult men as Christ-following spiritual leaders prepares a new generation for leadership within the church and deepens its "leadership bench" in preparation for current and future challenges. Third, training young adult male Christians as discussed better enables them to navigate a culture that on one hand rightfully condemns sexist, exploitative, and abusive behavior and on the other rejects historical paradigms of manhood and advocates for a multiplicity of masculinities and sexualities. Such rapid social changes leave many confused and overwhelmed as to what constitutes manhood and a man's contribution to society in general and a Christian man's place in particular. Forth, helping develop young adult men as spiritual leaders who view themselves as first and foremost Christ-followers better positions them to meet the current leadership crisis in the world by purposefully engaging as a leader or follower given the demands of the moment in order to contribute to the fulfillment of the cultural mandate and the great commission. Having just presented the rationale for helping Christian emerging-adult men become spiritual leaders, I consider the common barriers to them becoming such. Then, in the following section, I discuss how Christ-centered followership as spiritual leadership addresses and overcomes those impediments. Finally, I present how such a framework might be employed.

notes a handful of key behavioral differences (e.g., men tend to be more physically aggressive and violent than females). Verhaagen observes that these differences have a significant bearing on how he approaches therapy with older adolescents and young men. Dave Verhaagen, *Therapy with Young Men: 16-24 Year Olds in Treatment*, Routledge Series on Counseling and Psychotherapy with Boys and Young Men 6 (New York: Routledge, 2010), 8-10. I would suggest these differences require a differentiated approach to at least some extent to developing men and women as spiritual leaders.

⁵⁹ See below for a fuller discussion. Verhaagen, *Therapy with Young Men*, 9-12. In addition, refer also to Christian Smith, *Lost in Transition: The Dark Side of Emerging Adulthood* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011). Though Smith by and large presents his findings about troubling emerging-adult beliefs and behaviors in a gender non-differentiated fashion, this work is nevertheless a helpful one with respect to the focus of this project. *Lost in Transition* is arranged around five chapters: (1) "Morality Drift," (2) "Captive to Consumerism," (3) "Intoxication's 'Fake Feelings of Happiness,'" (4) "The Shadow Side of Sexual Liberation," and (5) "Civic and Political Disengagement."

Emerging-Adult Male Spiritual Leadership: Impediments and Mitigators

The definition of emerging-adult spiritual leadership calls individuals to actively follow and trust Christ, live in view of their union with him, understand and align all aspects of their lives according to the creation mandate and great commission, and seek to influence and mobilize others toward those purposes in the context of biblical community and under the authority of Scripture. Unfortunately, when considering U.S. emerging-adult men as a whole, a number of factors across the demographic come into focus that have the potential of functioning as encumbrances or even barriers to Christian young adult men's living as Christ-submitting spiritual leaders. Therefore, I consider answers to the following questions: (1) What factors among U.S. emerging-adult men generally have the potential of keeping the subset of Christian young males from practicing spiritual leadership? (2) What dimensions of Christ-centered followership counteract and mitigate the deleterious impact of those factors?

Impeding Factors to Emerging-Adult Male Spiritual Leadership

Historically, physical maturation out of the teenage years and into the twenties often coincided with generally recognized formative experiences as well as milestone events marking entrance into commonly held conceptions of adulthood.⁶⁰ Yet, the nature and duration of this transition from adolescence to adulthood in contemporary American society has changed so dramatically over the past several decades that sociologists and developmental psychologists have begun to refer to this threshold period as “emerging adulthood.”⁶¹ Jeffrey Arnett describes emerging adulthood as a phenomenon within human

⁶⁰ David Setran and Chris Kiesling relate the five key adulthood markers that many sociologists have identified and use to track cultural shifts in this regard: “leaving home, finishing school, becoming financially independent, getting married, and having children.” David P. Setran and Chris A. Kiesling, *Spiritual Formation in Emerging Adulthood: Practical Theology for College and Young Adult Ministry* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2013), 2. See also Christian Smith, *Souls in Transition: The Religious Lives of Emerging Adults* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 5.

⁶¹ Jeffrey Jensen Arnett first coined the term “emerging adulthood” and proposed it as a unique

development characterized by five “essential qualities:” (1) identity exploration, (2) instability, (3) self-focus, (4) a sense of feeling “in-between” (i.e., no longer feel like an adolescent but also not sensing they have arrived at adulthood), and (5) sense of optimism and possibilities.⁶²

Sociologist Michael Kimmel maps the contours of the male experience of emerging adulthood within the United States and describes this period as extended boyhood and delayed manhood characterized by an array of bewildering—and concerning—activities and perspectives.⁶³ In *Guyland*, Kimmel portrays a disturbing image of emerging-adult male behaviors where playing video games, conversations about sports, the use and abuse of alcohol and other controlled substances, talk of sex and sexual encounters, and viewing pornography are commonplace.⁶⁴ Kimmel presents some of the key axioms that govern male behavior in emerging adulthood as follows: (1) “Boys Don’t Cry”; (2) “It’s Better to Be Mad Than Sad”; (3) “Don’t Get Mad—Get Even”; (4) “Take It Like a Man”; (5) “He Who Has the Most Toys When He Dies, Wins”; (6) “Just Do It” or “Ride or Die”; (7) “Size Matters”; (8) “I Don’t Stop to Ask for Directions”; (9) “Nice Guys Finish Last”; and (10) “It’s All Good.”⁶⁵

Clinical Psychologist Dave Verhaagen seeks to characterize male emerging adulthood by drawing from both his own therapeutic experiences with late teen and early twenty-year-old men as well as an array of research data. He finds that emerging-adult

stage in human development in “Emerging Adulthood: A Theory of Development from the Late Teens through the Twenties,” *American Psychologist* vol. 55, no. 5 (May 2000): 469-80.

⁶² Jeffrey Jensen Arnett, *Emerging Adulthood: The Winding Road from the Late Teens through the Twenties* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 8.

⁶³ Michael Kimmel, *Guyland: The Perilous World Where Boys Become Men* (New York: HarperCollins, 2008), 4-8. As part of his research for *Guyland*, Kimmel conducted nearly four hundred interviews with mostly white, heterosexual men across the country who were college-bound, collegiate, or recent university graduates (3).

⁶⁴ Kimmel, *Guyland*, 9-10.

⁶⁵ Kimmel, *Guyland*, 45.

men, in comparison to their female counterparts, tend to engage in much more problematic behaviors.⁶⁶ He points out that young adult males abuse drugs and alcohol at higher rates than women and are much more likely to threaten violence, bully someone, get in a fight, commit a sexual offense, and be incarcerated.⁶⁷ Furthermore, younger emerging-adult males have higher rates of compulsive sexual behavior and successful suicide rates than women.⁶⁸ Verhaagen also reports that clinicians are seeing increased numbers of young adult male clients with “greater problems in managing their emotions and successfully negotiating close interpersonal relationships.”⁶⁹

Observers have, in view of such data, noted common motifs or trajectories of among young adult men’s more concerning actions. For example, Thomas Shaw categorizes emerging-adult male behavior as often falling into one of two extremes—passivity or aggression.⁷⁰ Similarly, Kimmel’s works portray men as expressing feelings or senses of powerlessness in addition to anger and describes common, often-occurring corollary behaviors.⁷¹ Zimbardo and Coulombe use terms such as “shyness,” “socially isolated,” and “retreat” as well as “excessive maleness,” “intense,” and “Social Intensity

⁶⁶ Verhaagen, *Therapy with Young Men*, 9-12.

⁶⁷ Verhaagen, *Therapy with Young Men*, 11.

⁶⁸ Verhaagen, *Therapy with Young Men*, 10-11. Eric Anderson and Rory Magrath find that U.S. men in general (i.e., not solely emerging adults though not excluding them), regardless of ethnic background, face a number of difficulties when compared to their female counterparts. For example, men die in accidents twice as often as women and are more likely than females to suffer brain trauma, homelessness, criminal prosecution, incarceration, and die from suicide. Eric Anderson and Rory Magrath, *Men and Masculinities* (New York: Routledge, 2019), 151.

⁶⁹ Verhaagen, *Therapy with Young Men*, xvi. He partly attributes a growing male client caseload to a general decreasing sense of stigma associated with seeking mental health services. Nonetheless, he intimates that the expanding number of men seeking help for emotional and behavioral matters and the growing complexity of their problems portends more significant underlying concerns.

⁷⁰ Shaw, “Male Call,” 94.

⁷¹ Kimmel, *Guyland*, 12, 22; Michael Kimmel, *Angry White Men: American Masculinity at the End of an Era* (New York: Bold Type Books, 2017); Kimmel, “Masculinity as Homophobia: Fear, Shame, and Silence in the Construction of Gender Identity,” in *College Men and Masculinities: Theory, Research, and Implications for Practice*, ed. Shaun R. Harper and Frank Harris III (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2010), 23-31.

Syndrome” to describe the poles of young adult male behavior.⁷² I adopt the terms “disengagement” and “intensity” to describe the two trajectories emerging-adult male behavior tends to take. I now briefly consider these behavioral courses as they represent significant impediments to developing emerging-adult men as spiritual leaders.

Disengagement. Data suggests that in the domains of education, economics, and love and matrimony, more and more emerging-adult men appear to be disengaging. Jon Marcus, in a 2017 *The Atlantic* article, describes a great reversal in the gender make-up in higher education over the last forty years.⁷³ As recently as the 1970s, males made up 58 percent of the college population. In the fall of 2017, women constituted 57 percent of university-enrolled students.⁷⁴ In 2016 women earned 57.34 percent of all bachelor’s degrees, and that translates into 134 women completing university coursework for every 100 men who did the same.⁷⁵

⁷² Zimbardo and Coulombe, *Man, Interrupted*, 11-15. They describe Social Intensity Syndrome (SIS) as “a strong preference for social settings that involve the ubiquitous presence of other men. The attraction to this social setting is greater the more intense the nature of the relationship, the more exclusive it is toward tolerating ‘outsiders’ or those who have not qualified for that group membership, and the more embedded each man is perceived to be within that group.” They go on to say that in such environments (e.g., military boot camp, gangs, playing contact sports, fraternities), “men experience a positive arousal—such as cortisol, adrenergic system activation, or an increase in testosterone—when they feel they are part of such all-male social groups. Men gradually adapt to that level of social intensity as the preferred form of social contact” (14). Zimbardo and Coulombe posit that understanding SIS can help explain why some young adults engage in risky behaviors (15-16).

⁷³ Jon Marcus, “Why Men Are the New College Minority,” *The Atlantic*, August 8, 2017, <https://www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2017/08/why-men-are-the-new-college-minority/536103/>. See also Peg Tyre, “Education: Boys Falling behind Girls in Many Areas,” *Newsweek*, January 29, 2006, <https://www.newsweek.com/education-boys-falling-behind-girls-many-areas-108593>; Christina Hoff Sommers, *The War against Boys: How Misguided Policies Are Harming Our Young Men* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2013) 17, 23.

⁷⁴ Keith Edwards and Susan Jones, in their journal article, reference several studies that describe these and other emerging-adult male-related concerns within the university context. They write, “Despite a history of privilege and success in higher education, troubling trends for student affairs and academic leaders have emerged with regard to college men’s recruitment, retention, and academic success. These concerns also have extended to college men’s emotional, mental, and physical well-being; increased likelihood to be the victims and perpetrators of most forms of violence, including suicide; and higher rates of violations of campus policies. (Keith E. Edwards and Susan R. Jones, “Putting My Man Face On’: A Grounded Theory of College Men’s Gender Identity Development,” *Journal of College Student Development* 50, no. 2 [2009]: 210)

⁷⁵ American Enterprise Institute, “Blog Post: Table of the Day: Bachelor’s Degrees for the Class of 2016 by Field and Gender. Oh, and the Overall 25.6% Degree Gap for Men!,” June 18, 2018, <https://www.aei.org/carpe-diem/table-of-the-day-bachelors-degrees-for-the-class-of-2016-by-field-and->

In the realm of economics, according to the U.S. Department of Labor, women compose nearly 47 percent of the U.S. civilian workforce, which reflects a significant shift from the late 1940s, when men made up nearly 70 percent of the labor force.⁷⁶ Even as more women have entered the U.S. workforce, a growing number of younger men have been apparently leaving it or not fully participating in it.⁷⁷ While the causes for the increasing labor-force-non-participation rate among young male workers is multi-faceted and complex, one partial explanation appears to be a more frequent use of video games on their part.⁷⁸

In addition to evidence indicating that a growing number of emerging-adult men are disengaging with respect to post-secondary education and employment, many are also postponing marriage until later in life.⁷⁹ Furthermore, an increasing amount may not even marry.⁸⁰ Helen Smith finds that men generally are more likely to avoid marriage altogether.⁸¹ Again, while these trends reflect a confluence of complex factors and defy

gender-oh-and-the-overall-25-6-college-degree-gap-for-men/.

⁷⁶ U.S. Department of Labor Blog, “12 Stats about Working Women,” March 1, 2017, <https://blog.dol.gov/2017/03/01/12-stats-about-working-women>. Though there is near-parity in terms of workforce composition by measure of gender, women still experience a “wage gap” as well as a “leadership gap.” U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, “Women in the Labor Force: A Databook,” December 2019, <https://www.bls.gov/opub/reports/womens-databook/2019/home.htm>.

⁷⁷ Alan B. Krueger, “Where Have All the Workers Gone? An Inquiry into the Decline of the U.S. Labor Force Participation Rate,” *Brookings Papers on Economic Activity* no. 2 (2017): 30. See also Katharine G. Abraham and Melissa S. Kearney, “Explaining the Decline in the U.S. Employment-to-Population Ratio: A Review of the Evidence” (National Bureau Working Paper Series 24333, National Bureau of Economic Research, Cambridge, MA, 2018); Zimbardo and Coulombe, *Man, Interrupted*, 7-10.

⁷⁸ Mark Aguiar et al., “Leisure Luxuries and the Labor Supply of Young Men,” (National Bureau Working Paper Series 23552, National Bureau of Economic Research, Cambridge, MA, 2017). They found that after the Great Recession, emerging-adult male average hours of work per week have declined. Their research suggests that the phenomenon can at least partially be attributed to an increasing amount of time spent playing video games (48).

⁷⁹ Mark Regnerus and Jeremy Uecker, *Premarital Sex in America: How Young Americans Meet, Mate, and Think about Marrying* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 169.

⁸⁰ Nathan D. Leonhardt et al., “‘We Want to Be Married on Our Own Terms’: Non-University Emerging Adults’ Marital Beliefs and Differences between Men and Women,” *Journal of Family Studies* (2020): 1-2.

⁸¹ Helen Smith, *Men on Strike: Why Men Are Boycotting Marriage, Fatherhood, and the American Dream—and Why It Matters* (New York: Encounter Books, 2015), 1-3.

easy explanations derived from a single variable, Russell Moore raises concerns that expanding pornography use and video-game play may well result in a deleterious effect on levels of male engagement across key domains of life.⁸² Taken as a whole, these indicators—with respect to post-secondary education, employment, and marriage—support the supposition that a growing number of men in general and emerging-adult men in particular are retreating from key aspects of social engagement and historically recognized markers of adulthood.⁸³

Intensity. While some emerging-adult men opt to take a more passive approach in the face of life's numerous and expanding challenges, others embrace a more aggressive, intense route. Kimmel, in his survey of the history of manhood and masculinity in United States, *Manhood in America*, describes the phenomenon of men seeking to “prove” their manhood in the eyes of others in view of prevailing masculine frames.⁸⁴ In *Guyland*, he finds the phenomenon alive and well among emerging-adult males but with the exception that they increasingly look to their peers “for the validation of manhood that was once provided by the community of adults.”⁸⁵ Furthermore, he avers that with fewer and fewer all-male venues within society to demonstrate their true manhood, “that desire has a distinct tone of desperation to it.”⁸⁶ Kimmel's observations

⁸² Russell Moore, “Rescuing Men from Fake Love and Fake War,” September 13, 2016, <https://www.russellmoore.com/2016/09/13/rescuing-young-men-fake-love-fake-war/>. See also Belinda Luscombe, “Porn and the Threat to Virility,” *Time*, March 31, 2016, <https://time.com/4277510/porn-and-the-threat-to-virility/?xid=homepage&pcd=hp-magmod>.

⁸³ Zimbardo and Coulombe also point to other examples such as increasing numbers of single emerging-adult men who continue to live at home with their parents well into their twenties and even their thirties, growing obesity rates among adolescent and adult men, and an expanding use of prescription medications and addictive substances such as THC. Zimbardo and Coulombe, *Man, Interrupted*, xvi, 23-26, 33-36.

⁸⁴ Michael Kimmel, *Manhood in America: A Cultural History*, 4th ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018), ix, 274-75, 316-17.

⁸⁵ Kimmel, *Guyland*, 30.

⁸⁶ Kimmel, *Guyland*, 18.

partially explain why younger and older men are more likely to engage in the increasingly risky behavior discussed above.⁸⁷ Even if emerging-adult men are not regularly participating in over-the-top, perilous behavior or criminal activity—the vast majority are not—the desire to establish one’s masculinity in the eyes of other men explains why many young adults approach sports and sports talk, fitness, their jobs, video games, and pornography with such intensity and allocate large amounts of time and resources to them.⁸⁸ These represent some of the last societal venues where men can “prove” their manhood before a mostly male audience or within their own minds.⁸⁹

Video gaming presents an important example with respect to both emerging-adult male disengagement and intensity, for gaming becomes a venue that brings both extremes together. On one hand, men can isolate themselves in their rooms and engage intensely in a virtual world that plays to historic masculine paradigms. Concerning the altered social and economic landscape of the world and the attractive option video games represent within that milieu, Zimbardo and Coulombe write, “Because of the new difficulties facing young men in this changing, uncertain world, many are choosing to isolate themselves in a more rewarding place where they have control over outcomes, where there is no fear of rejection and they are praised for their abilities.”⁹⁰ Kimmel, similar to Zimbardo and Coulombe, points out that video games provide a sense of “power and control.”⁹¹ He goes on to state, “Games offer safe risk-taking, power without

⁸⁷ Kimmel, *Guyland*, 51.

⁸⁸ See, e.g., Kimmel, *Guyland*, 8-13, 95-122. The entire volume repeatedly highlights this phenomenon.

⁸⁹ Kimmel, *Guyland*, 16-18.

⁹⁰ Zimbardo and Coulombe, *Man, Interrupted*, xvii. They also note that pornography and masturbation function in the lives of young adult men in ways similar to video games. To use their language but applying it to pornography and masturbation, I suggest that these behaviors allow young men “to isolate themselves in a more rewarding place where they have control over outcomes, where there is no fear of rejection and they are praised [at least in their fantasies] for their abilities.”

⁹¹ Kimmel, *Guyland*, 156.

pain. You can be a master of the universe, a gangsta blowing away the police and scoring the babes, without ever leaving the comfort of your dorm room or apartment, let alone venture into the real hood.”⁹² Not only do the behaviors that fall into the disengagement or intensity categories represent challenges to helping emerging-adult men become spiritual leaders, but they also betray more fundamental problems related to individual identity, theological belief, and purpose.

Identity ambiguity. The dramatic, recent shift in Western culture from a socially grounded to an individually formed self-concept or identity creates a situation in which a large number of people are unfamiliar with “living in societies where they are continually confronted with high levels of choice over fundamental matters of personal meaning.”⁹³ Therefore, within this new paradigm, those aspects of personhood that were previously informed by prevailing social frames are now largely left to individual decisions. Though Erik Erikson placed the resolution of identity-role confusion as the primary crisis of adolescence, Arnett maintains that identity formation today continues well past one’s eighteenth birthday. Arnett writes, “In both love and work, the process of identity formation begins in adolescence but intensifies in emerging adulthood,” and, thus, he includes “identity exploration” as one of the essential elements of emerging adulthood.⁹⁴

⁹² Kimmel, *Guyland*, 158.

⁹³ James E. Côte and Charles Levine, *Identity Formation, Agency, and Culture: A Social Psychological Synthesis* (Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum Associates, 2002), 1. See also James E. Côte, “Emerging Adulthood as an Institutionalized Moratorium: Risks and Benefits to Identity Formation,” in *Emerging Adults in America: Coming of Age in the 21st Century*, ed. Jeffrey Jensen Arnett and Jennifer Lynn Tanner, (Washington, DC: American Psychological Association, 2006), 85-116.

⁹⁴ Arnett, *Emerging Adulthood*, 8-9. Erik Erikson himself, writing over half a century ago, postulated the possibility of some sort of ‘prolonged adolescence’ permitted in certain societies. He wrote, “This period can be viewed as a *psychosocial moratorium* during which the young adult through free role experimentation may find a niche in some section of his society, a niche which is firmly defined and yet seems to be uniquely made for him.” Erik H. Erikson, *Identity: Youth and Crisis* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1968), 156 (emphasis original). Of this quotation from Erikson, Arnett writes, “Decades later, this applies to many more young people than when he [Erikson] wrote it.” Arnett, *Emerging Adulthood*, 9.

Erikson's notion of a "moratorium" on psychosocial development allowed in more economically developed economies along with Arnett's idea of emerging adulthood as period of identity exploration might, at first blush, suggest to the unfamiliar an almost exciting period of low-risk learning and identity investigation without the confining, socially prescribed identity frames of the past. Yet, David Setran and Chris Kiesling describe a different reality for many contemporary young adults:

Consider how much more is required of an emerging adult psychologically when the range of alternatives seems endless, when there is no uniform conceptual itinerary to provide guidance, and when one travels with little collective support in navigating the life course. How precarious do choices become when the timing and sequencing of events—like finishing school, starting a career, getting married, buying a house, and having a baby—become decoupled?⁹⁵

Similarly, James Côte and Charles Levine observe that the process of personal identity formation has changed so rapidly and dramatically that "many people have not developed the means for coping with a process that allows them to make choices, the consequences of which they may have to live with for the remainder of their lives."⁹⁶ Setran and Kiesling describe how these realities play out in the lives of emerging adults: "When identity is perceived as a personal project of self-development, these high stakes drive some emerging adults to stress-filled achievement and others to failure-driven despair."⁹⁷

⁹⁵ Setran and Kiesling, *Spiritual Formation in Emerging Adulthood*, 57. See also Michael J. Shanahan, "Pathways to Adulthood in Changing Societies: Variability and Mechanisms in Life Course Perspective," *Annual Review of Sociology* 26 (2000): 667-92.

⁹⁶ Côte and Levine, *Identity Formation, Agency, and Culture*, 2. Stanley Grenz helpfully describes in greater detail both the paradigmatic shift in thinking regarding identity and its formation as well as the unsettling implications of that change:

Postmodern thinkers routinely picture the socially constituted self as a position in a vast web, a nexus, a point of intersection, a bundle of fluctuating relationships and momentary preferences. This means, however, that the self can no longer be seen as standing apart from the vacillations of life. Moreover, the fast-changing world in which we now live exacerbates the fluidity of the self. The result is a self that is not only impermanent but also highly unstable. The postmodern condition, therefore, entails the replacement of the stability and unity that characterized the self of the modern ideal with what Fredric Jameson calls "psychic fragmentation," that is, the splintering of the self into multiple subjectivities. (Stanley J. Grenz, "Christian Spirituality and the Quest for Identity: Toward a Spiritual-Theological Understanding of Life in Christ," *Baptist History and Heritage* 37, no. 2 [2002]: 93)

⁹⁷ Setran and Kiesling, *Spiritual Formation in Emerging Adulthood*, 60.

Parks observes that while men of previous generations received a socially consistent message concerning male-identity-grounded roles (i.e., procreate, provide, and protect), those social cues today “are being significantly recast in new gender role assumptions.”⁹⁸ In fact, these new assumptions and outlooks have largely pushed aside most notions of a normative masculinity and leave each emerging-adult man to construct his own individualized identity.⁹⁹ Jeffrey Weeks puts the current scholarly and prevailing societal framework in clear terms when he writes, “There is no essence of masculinity which transcends time and space, no single quality which is a biological or psychological constant in men, which dictates their behaviour.”¹⁰⁰

Not only has the locus of identity formation moved from the social group to the individual over the last several decades, but masculine paradigms have radically shifted also.¹⁰¹ Today’s emerging-adult male must navigate a whole-host of “masculinities” as well as “sexualities.”¹⁰² Weeks describes both the contours of the current situation as well as its implications when he writes,

It is not surprising therefore that these debates reveal anxiety and uncertainty. In a world where traditional sources of authority such as religion and the patriarchal family are under intense pressure, and heightened individualism is increasingly the norm, it is difficult to see how there can ever be a fixed set of values to which

⁹⁸ Parks, *Big Questions, Worthy Dreams*, 8.

⁹⁹ Keith E. Edwards, “‘Putting My Man Face On’: A Grounded Theory of College Men’s Gender Identity Development” (PhD diss., University of Maryland, 2007), 13-16. Edwards states, “Like race, class, sexual orientation, and other social group identities, gender is socially constructed. Although sex may be biologically defined, gender is socially constructed through a complex interaction between the individual and societal gender roles and expectations” (13). He continues by discussing the construction of individual identity and notes that a man’s identity or “masculinity” is socially constructed by means of a similar process (15). He further observes that traditional understandings of gender, race, and sexual orientation as unchangeable—those from objectivist or essentialist frameworks—tend to be viewed at least by critical and feminist scholars as “hegemonic,” homophobic, and misogynistic (16).

¹⁰⁰ Jeffrey Weeks, “Fallen Heroes: All about Men,” *Irish Journal of Sociology* 14, no. 2 (2005): 56.

¹⁰¹ Kimmel, *Manhood in America*, ix, 274-75, 316-17.

¹⁰² See for example, C. J. Pascoe and Tristan Bridges, eds., *Exploring Masculinities: Identity, Inequality, Continuity, and Change* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016); Michael Kimmel, ed., *Sexualities: Identities, Behaviors, and Society*, 2nd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015).

everyone must adhere The usefulness of seeing gender and sexuality as shaped in culture is that it allows us to recognise the contingency and arbitrariness of one's own social arrangements. It does not, however, tell us how we should live today.¹⁰³

Shaw points out that many young men feel confused, depressed, and even threatened in such an environment that coincides with other systemic economic and social changes.¹⁰⁴

Thus, Kimmel reports, “Guys tell me that they feel they are making up the rules as they go along, with neither adequate adult guidance nor appropriate road maps, and, at the same time, that they feel they are playing by the rules that someone else invented and which they don’t fully understand.”¹⁰⁵ No wonder many emerging-adult men retreat and effectively disengage and others double down on the masculine frames they know.

In addition, fathers appear to play a critical role in the development of a young man’s identity, so absent or disengaged fathers can negatively and significantly impact a male’s self-concept—especially in today’s complex environment.¹⁰⁶ Zimbardo and

¹⁰³ Weeks, “Fallen Heroes,” 64.

¹⁰⁴ Shaw, “Male Call,” 93-94. Kimmel’s research findings suggest a phenomenon within American society where so many changes have taken place over such a relatively brief short period of time producing dislocation and perceptions of lost entitlement that many have simply become angry. Kimmel, *Angry White Men*.

¹⁰⁵ Kimmel, *Guyland*, 22.

¹⁰⁶ Eric D. Miller, “Why the Father Wound Matters: Consequences for Male Mental Health and the Father-Son Relationship,” *Child Abuse Review* 22, no. 3 (2013): 196. See also David Blankenhorn, *Fatherless America: Confronting Our Most Urgent Social Problem* (New York: Basic Books, 1995), 65; Sara Tach, Laura Schneider, and Daniel McLanahan, “The Causal Effects of Father Absence,” *Annual Review of Sociology* 39, no. 1 (2013): 399-427; Mark T. Morman and Kory Floyd, “The Good Son: Men’s Perceptions of the Characteristics of Sonhood,” in *Widening the Family Circle: New Research on Family Communication*, ed. Kory Floyd and Mark T. Morman (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 2006), 37-56. Morman and Floyd state the following concerning the importance of the father-son relationship to identity formation with respect to the other domains of life:

Overwhelming amounts of research support the argument that many important developmental processes regarding the son are significantly mitigated by his father; in fact, few other relationships will have more influence, whether positive or negative, on the trajectory of a man’s life than the relationship between the son and the father. The quality of a son’s relationship with his father has been found to be an important predictor of a son’s future success or failure in a host of important variables like education achievement, relational involvement, income level, gender identity, and parenting styles. (Morman and Kory Floyd, “The Good Son,” 41)

For further research on the topic, see also Zimbardo and Coulombe, *Man, Interrupted*, 49-55; Warren Farrell and John Gray, *The Boy Crisis: Why Our Boys Are Struggling and What We Can Do about It* (Dallas: BenBella Books, 2018), 105-86. In the absence of examples and affirmation from fathers or other important male figures that were historically attached to familial, educational, and religious institutions, young men today are increasingly looking to their peers for developmental guidance and feedback. Kimmel, *Guyland*, 30.

Coulombe report that currently a “high percentage of young men” are maturing and developing with “physically or emotionally absent fathers,” and their data suggests a substantial increase in this phenomenon over the last several decades in view of the expanding number of single-mother-headed homes in the U.S.¹⁰⁷ Eric Mason points out that absentee fathers leave their sons with “no sense of who they are,” and he views the current cultural context emphasizing an individually constructed male identity as a compounding problem.¹⁰⁸ Franciscan priest Richard Rohr, in his book on male spirituality, observes that “father hunger” (i.e., the emotional wounding left in a man’s life as a result of an absent father) results in “a deep hurt, a deprivation that leads to a poor sense of one’s own center and boundaries” and undercuts “a deep secure identity.”¹⁰⁹ That large numbers of emerging-adult men express a significant desire for greater paternal involvement in their lives suggests at least a subjective awareness of the phenomenon Rohr’s “father hunger” represents.¹¹⁰

To the extent that individual cognizance reflects an actual disengaged or even absent father, the research indicates that these young men have heightened potential for greater difficulties over a number of life domains, including identity formation. Given societal expectations for young adult men to construct their own identity among a plethora of confusing options and the growth in scale and depth of “father hunger,” emerging-adult males increasingly lack clarity as to the outcome of their personal identity exploration process and approach it with a level of deficit. In view of the importance of a

¹⁰⁷ Zimbardo and Coulombe, *Man, Interrupted*, xxiii, 50.

¹⁰⁸ Eric Mason, *Manhood Restored: How the Gospel Makes Men Whole* (Nashville: B & H, 2013), 22-23.

¹⁰⁹ Richard Rohr, *From Wild Man to Wise Man: Reflections on Male Spirituality* (Cincinnati: Franciscan Media, 2005), 73-74; see also 65-71, 73-79.

¹¹⁰ Mark D. Brown, “Paternal Influence on the Eudaimonic Well-Being of Emerging Adult Sons Participating in Campus Crusade for Christ” (PhD diss., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2016), 40-41.

well-formed self-concept to both leadership and followership, such realities significantly impede young adult Christian men from exercising spiritual leadership.

Theological disintegration. While identity ambiguity and challenges to identity formation among emerging-adult men present significant hurdles to developing Christian young adult males as spiritual leaders, an even more fundamental and serious barrier to said development exists—theological disintegration. The National Study of Youth and Religion, a far reaching, mixed-methods, longitudinal research project, found that adolescent and emerging adults—regardless of religious tradition—generally hold to a common set of theological outlooks referred to as “Moralistic Therapeutic Deism” (MTD).¹¹¹ Christian Smith, the study’s lead researcher and first to utilize the MTD moniker, described in 2005 the process by which this loose theological framework pervaded the thinking of American adolescents. He writes, “For, it appears to us, another popular religious faith, Moralistic Therapeutic Deism, is colonizing many historical religious traditions and, almost without anyone noticing, converting believers in the old faiths to its alternative religious vision of divinely underwritten personal happiness and interpersonal niceness.”¹¹² With respect to the Christian tradition, he continues by stating that “a significant part of Christianity in the United States is actually only tenuously Christian in any sense that is seriously connected to the actual historical Christian tradition, but has rather substantially morphed into Christianity’s misbegotten stepcousin, Christian Moralistic Therapeutic Deism.”¹¹³ In 2009, Smith reported the following among

¹¹¹ Smith concludes that MTD has emerged as “the dominant de facto religious viewpoint” of American teenagers. Christian Smith, *Soul Searching: The Religious and Spiritual Lives of American Teenagers* (Oxford, University Press, 2005), 163. See also Smith, *Soul’s in Transition*, 154.

¹¹² Smith, *Soul Searching*, 171.

¹¹³ Smith concludes ominously, “Christianity is either degenerating into a pathetic version of itself or, more significantly, Christianity is actively being colonized and displaced by a quite different religious faith.” Smith, *Soul Searching*, 171. See Kenda Dean’s *Almost Christian* for insightful reflections on MTD as well as ways to develop “consequential faith” in the lives of teenage congregants. Kenda Creasy Dean, *Almost Christian: What the Faith of Our Teenagers Is Telling the American Church* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010).

the study's original participants who were by that point all emerging adults: "The latest wave of research reveals that MTD is still alive and well among 18- to 23-year-old American youth Not simply a religion embraced during the teenage years, MTD continues to be the faith of very many emerging adults."¹¹⁴

As described by Smith in 2009, MTD's core consists of a theology that understands God as directly involved in creating but who otherwise is distant and largely disengaged from his creation in general and human affairs in particular. Rarely, God might intervene in people's lives. When he does, he acts only to sort out a problem or aid human beings in their primary purpose of being "happy and to feel good about oneself" and acting in such a way so as to be "good, nice, and fair to each other."¹¹⁵

In a 2020 book entitled *Back-Pocket God*, Melinda Denton and Richard Flory present the findings of the final phase of the National Study of Youth and Religion project. They conclude that the 23-to-28-year-old participants in their study continue to hold views that comport with MTD as described ten years prior, with one significant adjustment.¹¹⁶ Denton and Flory find that older emerging adults tend to conceive of God, however he might be defined, as even more remote and inconsequential to their lives than during previous points in the study.¹¹⁷ The authors observe that as teenagers, participants

¹¹⁴ Smith, *Souls in Transition*, 155.

¹¹⁵ Smith, *Souls in Transition*, 154. For other beliefs that undergird MTD in the early emerging-adult years, see pp. 156-64, 287-89. Setran and Kiesling summarize MTD in these terms: "Those influenced by Moralistic Therapeutic Deism view God as a distant creator who desires humans to be nice and fair to one another and who intervenes in human experience only when called on to bestow blessings or resolve problems. The purpose of life is happiness, self-fulfillment, and a degree of goodness sufficient to earn entrance into heaven." Setran and Kiesling, *Spiritual Formation in Emerging Adulthood*, 7. See Setran and Kiesling's excellent discussion of MTD and how it plays out in the lives of emerging adults in general and Christian young adults in particular (pp. 22-27).

¹¹⁶ Melinda Lundquist Denton and Richard Flory, *Back-Pocket God: Religion and Spirituality in the Lives of Emerging Adults* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2020), 231-32. They refer to this updated and adjusted form of MTD as "Moralistic Therapeutic Deism 2.0." Behind MTD 2.0 stands a "cultural spirituality" that reflects much of U.S. emerging-adult thinking with respect to religion. Denton and Flory distill this "generalized religious or spiritual life perspective" into seven "core tenets": (1) "karma is real"; (2) "Everybody goes to heaven"; (3) "It's all good"; (4) "Religion is easy"; (5) "Just do good"; (6) "Morals are self-evident"; and (7) "No regrets" (228).

¹¹⁷ Denton and Flory, *Back-Pocket God*, 232. They also conclude that among today's emerging

tended to view God as a “cosmic butler” waiting to aid those who might need help. Yet, as older emerging adults, “God is no longer understood in such a proximate and powerful way.”¹¹⁸ Rather, the notion of God at that stage of their lives reflects a belief or even “hope” that “there *might* be something greater than themselves in the universe,” and the act of asking God for assistance by means of prayer becomes more of a “therapeutic device” than a consequential act of actually communicating with the divine.¹¹⁹ Thus, Denton and Flory conclude, God “is increasingly remote from emerging adults’ everyday concerns,” rarely assumes any meaningful place in their thinking or lives, and is generally conceived “in terms and conditions that are set by each individual.”¹²⁰ While this development in thinking with respect to the divine might not be as pronounced among the “religiously committed,” such frames have nonetheless permeated even their perspectives and represent a significant impediment to developing spiritual leaders utilizing a leadership model with an orthodox understanding of God at its core.¹²¹ Hence, I describe this phenomenon as “theological disintegration,” for the notion that God himself and theology—in its historical sense as the study of God—have any bearing on life in general and leadership in particular is rapidly crumbling.¹²²

adults, “there is a definite lack of interest in pursuing any questions about God and the role he could possibility have in their lives” (232).

¹¹⁸ Denton and Flory, *Back-Pocket God*, 232.

¹¹⁹ Denton and Flory, *Back-Pocket God*, 231-32 (emphasis original).

¹²⁰ Denton and Flory, *Back-Pocket God*, 232. Denton and Flory further add the following:

God is thus controlled by the individual and reduced even further from any previous conception they may have had of such a being as a “creator” or “cosmic force.” But even this implies the existence of a God who is waiting around to be called on to do something that emerging adults might ask him to do. While emerging adults have personalized and “reduced” God to serve their own idiosyncratic needs and desires, they don’t seem to have much need for even this reduced idea of God. (232)

Hence, they conclude that God becomes an “easily controlled” figure with a potential to help and provide answers if needed. “In many ways, the MTD God that exists beyond is now a personal ‘Pocket God,’ who occupies the same place in emerging adult lives as do the apps on their smart phones . . . [H]e is accessible but has limited functionality.” (232-33)

¹²¹ Denton and Flory, *Back-Pocket God*, 226-28, 232-33.

¹²² In fact, Christian Smith astutely observes that what I describe as “theological disintegration” actually reflects the “decisive, cultural victory” of liberal Protestantism. Though liberal

Purpose confusion. Research suggests that among evangelical Christian emerging adults, there is a decreased understanding of, or alignment to, the dual purposes of the creation mandate and great commission. Preston Sprinkle, a presenter in a Barna Study on discipleship in the United States, reflecting on some of the study’s findings, states, “One of the biggest complaints among Millennials is that they aren’t told how the gospel relates to everyday interests: vocation, politics, music, art, science and so on.”¹²³ To the extent that young adult Christians do not appreciate how the central tenants of Christianity connect to the key dimensions of human activity (e.g., vocation, culture, science, relationships) and, thus, the creation mandate, they cannot derive a clear sense of purpose for their lives. Furthermore, they lack the capacity to influence and mobilize others around them in any fashion that explicitly links their efforts to the cultural mandate. Finally, such a situation obscures their ability to properly assess related problems and challenges within society as well as identify biblical goals in any leadership process.

In addition, concern grows among informed observers that Christian emerging adults appear to be engaging less in activities historically associated with great commission fulfillment.¹²⁴ Rick Richardson, in his journal article, “Emerging Adults and the Future of Missions,” notes that “missions for the emerging generation has

Protestant churches have been suffering a serious decline in membership for decades, the foundational beliefs of liberal Protestantism have quietly but definitively become the “hegemonic” viewpoint within the culture (Smith cites N. Jay Demerath’s research at this point; see below for bibliographical information). Smith’s research found support of this supposition, for he discovered that the “dominant discourse about religion, faith, and God” among emerging adults “often clearly reflected the basic cultural values and sometime speech modes of liberal Protestantism.” Furthermore, he adds that many “evangelical Protestant and black Protestant emerging adults even talked like liberal Protestants.” Smith, *Souls in Transition*, 287-89; N. Jay Demerath, “Cultural Victory and Organizational Defeat in the Paradoxical Decline of Liberal Protestantism,” *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 34, no. 4 (1995); 458-69.

¹²³ Barna Group, *State of Discipleship* (Colorado Springs: Navigators, 2015), 72.

¹²⁴ Given space limitations, I restricted my analysis to one activity historically connected to the great commission in evangelical contexts—evangelism in foreign and domestic settings. That is not to say there are not other activities or measures available (e.g., baptisms, specific discipleship making efforts). See also Barna Group, *State of Discipleship*.

compassion, justice, and diversity at its heart,” and he observes that for missions to be “true and compelling” for young adult Christians, they must go “beyond doctrinal purity and evangelistic success.”¹²⁵ Such a mindset among young adult believers certainly raises questions about their commitment to historic evangelical distinctives, including the need for personal conversion and the proclamation of the good news about Jesus. Ronald Sider, while celebrating a more holistic approach to ministry by younger evangelicals, nonetheless fears an abandonment of evangelism on their part. Such a development, he avers, could repeat the errors reflected in the historic fundamentalist-modernist split within the United States.¹²⁶ Finally, the Barna Group reports, in *Reviving Evangelism*, that 47 percent of Millennial “practicing Christians” respondents indicate that “it is wrong to evangelize” and that 56 percent report their having two or less faith-related discussions with non-Christians in the twelve months prior to participating in the study.¹²⁷ Therefore, evidence mounts suggesting that emerging-adult males—as well as females—ground their individual sense of purpose less and less in the creation mandate and the great commission and more and more in a personal understanding of happiness and “doing good,” propelling a general sense of purpose confusion as it relates to biblically grounded notions.¹²⁸

Summary. At the outset of this section, I posed the following question: “What

¹²⁵ Rick Richardson, “Emerging Adults and the Future of Missions,” *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 37, no. 2 (2013): 81. In view of the changing interests of emerging-adult Christians vis-à-vis missions that Richardson observes and other social and demographic trends he mentions, I submit that it seems dubious to expect the same level of missions involvement in the future as there is today unless we reconsider our approach. Richardson goes on to suggest changes to how we might mobilize and conduct overseas missions in view of the changes he notes. (81-82)

¹²⁶ Sider and Lowe, *The Future of Our Faith*, 11.

¹²⁷ Barna Group, *Reviving Evangelism* (Ventura, CA: Barna Group, 2019), 10-11. In their study, the Barna Group defined “practicing Christians” as those who “agree strongly that faith is very important in their lives and have attended church within the past month” (9). See also Barna Group, *Spiritual Conversations in the Digital Age* (Ventura, CA: Barna Group, 2018), 18-19.

¹²⁸ Smith, *Souls in Transition*, 154.

factors among U.S. emerging-adult men generally have the potential of inhibiting the subset of Christian young adult males from practicing spiritual leadership grounded in Christ-centered followership?” I answered that question by considering a number of specific barriers and impediments. I initially discussed the tendencies of emerging-adult men to retreat from important vocational, educational, and relational activities or intensely engage in other potentially problematic behaviors. In either case, both extreme sets of actions remove young men from contexts where they can relationally engage with and influence others as well as lean into challenges. Leadership and followership theory stress the importance of identity clarity to the leadership process.¹²⁹ Thus, male-identity-ambiguity-and-formation impediments seriously undercut young Christian men’s ability to follow and lead. Finally, theological disintegration and biblical purpose confusion destroy the possibility of young Christian men from exercising any type of leadership that can be considered spiritual and Christ-centered in its orientation. In what follows, then, I set out to answer the following: “What aspects of spiritual leadership as Christ-centered followership counteract and mitigate the deleterious impact of the aforementioned factors?”

Christ-Centered Followership: Means to Spiritual Leadership

Christ-centered followership as spiritual leadership possesses within its framework biblical remedies to the above impediments to young adult Christian men becoming Christ-centered followers and leaders who influence others and mobilize them to address challenges with respect to the creation mandate and great commission. Wilder and Jones’s adapted Christ-centered followership framework provides a biblically rooted

¹²⁹ See, e.g., Scott DeRue and Susan J. Ashford, “Who Will Lead and Who Will Follow? A Social Process of Leadership Identity Construction in Organizations,” *Academy of Management Review* 35, no. 4 (2010): 627-28.

and scripturally faithful doctrine of God to ground spiritual leadership and correct theological disintegration. Furthermore, its union-with-Christ-situated identity provides the foundation upon which to construct a young adult man's self-concept rather than being left to completely fabricate one on his own. A biblically informed understanding of faith and faith development as well as divinely established purpose nested in the creation mandate and great commission counteract self-constructed notions of ultimacy and derived purpose. Finally, spiritual leadership as Christ-centered followership provides a basis to guide and evaluate personal behavior and exercise leadership that addresses challenges and meets needs in the world.

Theological primacy. Albert Mohler, in the preface to *The God Who Goes Before You*, declares that “leadership is always a theological enterprise”; that is, a truly Christian understanding of leadership is at its fundamental level shaped by what one believes about God.¹³⁰ Wilder and Jones emphasize the centrality of God to their project on pastoral leadership by recognizing that the Scriptures reveal a singular divine plan fixed upon him and his glory that crescendos in his redemptive work and reign through Christ.¹³¹ They continue by affirming the God-in-Christ-centered nature of leadership as presented in the divinely given Scriptures and upholding their primacy vis-à-vis other potential founts of leadership insight:

When it comes to leadership, there *is* much to be learned from empirical research

¹³⁰ R. Albert Mohler Jr., preface to *The God Who Goes Before You*, by Wilder and Jones, xi. Mohler writes,

Christian leaders are called to convictional leadership, and that means leadership defined by beliefs that are transformed into corporate action. The central role of belief is what *must* define any truly Christian understanding of leadership. What this means is that leadership is always a theological enterprise, in the sense that our most important beliefs and convictions are about God. If our beliefs about God are not true, everything we know and everything we are will be warped and contorted by that false knowledge—and this fact points to a huge problem. (xi, emphasis original)

¹³¹ Wilder and Jones, *The God Who Goes Before You*, 8. They state, “The canonical Scriptures are the written revelation of this single divine plan to flood every crest and crevasse in the cosmos with the glories of God's reign. Since the canon is a coherent whole that tells a single story, every biblical text should be interpreted on its own terms as it stands in the context of the entire canon” (8).

and from the intuitive reflections of marketplace leaders—but, without the whole canon of Scripture as our supreme and sufficient authority, flawed views of divine purposes and human capacities will skew our view of leadership. That’s why a Christ-centered, kingdom-focused, canonically shaped vision of leadership must precede any principles of leadership that derive from human wisdom. Unless our foundational vision for leadership is grounded in the metanarrative of Scripture that culminates in the kingdom inaugurated through Jesus Christ, we will not be able to separate the wisdom of the world from the wisdom of Christ.¹³²

Thus, as a “theological enterprise,” leadership must have God at its center and the Scriptures as its source concerning its essential subject. In fact, the very title of their work, *The God Who Goes Before You*, reflects the theologically grounded approach Wilder and Jones bring to the entire topic of leadership—God is the preeminent figure and leader, humans rightly respond to him by following, and the phenomenon of human leadership per se is not mentioned until the subtitle and rightly flows from those two foundational notions.

Spiritual leadership as Christ-centered followership advances a theologically grounded leadership model over and against the theological disintegration commonplace among emerging adults with the hegemonic rise of MTD 2.0.¹³³ Denton and Flory describe the moral code at the center of MTD for emerging adults as simply “be good to other people and treat them fairly.”¹³⁴ By treating people well and not hurting others, a person heightens their prospects of going to heaven.¹³⁵ In contrast to such moralism, spiritual leadership as Christ-centered followership emphasizes at its core the good news of who God is and all he has done for his people through the person and redemptive work of Christ. Paul reminds Titus that “our great God and Savior Jesus Christ” would return,

¹³² Wilder and Jones, *The God Who Goes Before You*, 8.

¹³³ Certainly, Parks, in *Big Questions: Worthy Dreams*, does nothing to counter this development given her theologically empty notion of faith as individually constructed meaning.

¹³⁴ Denton and Flory, *Back-Pocket God*, 229.

¹³⁵ Denton and Flory, *Back-Pocket God*, 229. Denton and Flory describe this as the emerging-adult “golden rule” and is viewed by young adults as the “expected way to live and act” despite not being clearly defined.

having already given “himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works” (Titus 2:13-14).¹³⁶ Setran and Kiesling note that the key to helping emerging adults relinquish their love for, and embrace of, idols that stand behind their moralism is to assist them in beholding “a captivating picture of the beauty of Christ and his promises.”¹³⁷

Denton and Flory observe that in MTD 2.0, God is “controlled” by the individual and essentially “exists” to resolve problems and make individuals “happy.”¹³⁸ Thus, God becomes a therapeutic means to a self-established end—a vague sense of individual happiness. Yet, Christ-centered followership adopts the biblical presentation and assertion that human beings are God’s handiwork, made in his image, and exist to serve him as vice-regents functioning as stewards and priests.¹³⁹ As Wilder and Jones point out, such service in the garden was “neither menial nor meaningless.”¹⁴⁰ In fact, contrary to MTD’s view that happiness can be found in a therapeutically oriented god whose chief concern is serving the individual, true happiness (i.e., joy, satisfaction, pleasure) lies in the biblically disclosed God himself. As John Piper states, “He is the end of our search, not the means to some further end. Our exceeding joy is He, the Lord.”¹⁴¹

Finally, the theological underpinnings of spiritual leadership as Christ-centered followership counteract the theological disintegration wrought by the false god and deism of MTD by affirming God’s immanence. Wayne Grudem summarizes the biblical

¹³⁶ See also Wilder and Jones, *The God Who Goes Before You*, 8.

¹³⁷ Setran and Kiesling, *Spiritual Formation in Emerging Adulthood*, 34.

¹³⁸ Denton and Flory, *Back-Pocket God*, 230-32.

¹³⁹ Wilder and Jones, *The God Who Goes Before You*, 30-31.

¹⁴⁰ Wilder and Jones, *The God Who Goes Before You*, 31.

¹⁴¹ John Piper, *Desiring God: Meditations of a Christian Hedonist*, rev. ed. (Colorado Springs: Multnomah Books, 2011), 24. Setran and Kiesling note that the god of MTD demands little of its adherents and likewise promises little, whereas the God of Scripture asks for much—our entire lives—and promises much in return. Setran and Kiesling, *Spiritual Formation in Emerging Adulthood*, 38-39.

teaching on this matter when he writes, “The God of the Bible is no abstract deity removed from, and uninterested in his creation. The Bible is the story of God’s involvement with his creation, and particularly the people in it.”¹⁴² In fact, at conversion, God comes close—very close. The doctrine of union with Christ holds that the saint who is united with Jesus by means of personal repentance and faith enjoys communion with the transcendent God as his child and is even indwelt by the Holy Spirit.¹⁴³ For Wilder and Jones, union with Christ forms “a foundational theme” throughout their project, for “the Holy Spirit joins us [Christians] with Jesus in such a way that we enjoy the same relationship with the Father that Jesus does.”¹⁴⁴ Therefore, spiritual leadership as Christ-centered followership counteracts the distant, unengaged god of MTD by establishing a theological center—a close, engaged, and personal God who has revealed himself, forgives rebels, and even joins himself to those who turn from sin and to his Son.¹⁴⁵

Christ-grounded identity. Identity formation in emerging adulthood, masculinity, leadership, and followership studies garners considerable attention given its theoretical importance in those fields of research. Scholars across those disciplines understand identity formation as largely self-constructed or, in some cases, as co-

¹⁴² Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Bible Doctrine* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994), 267.

¹⁴³ J. Todd Billings, *Union with Christ: Reframing Theology and Ministry for the Church* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2011), 25. In fact, as my editor, Torey Teer, pointed out, the Spirit’s “indwelling precedes—and, in fact, effects—union with Christ. That is, the Holy Spirit is the means by which we are unified with Christ spiritually.” Torey Teer’s personal editorial remarks were provided to the author on August 18, 2020.

¹⁴⁴ Wilder and Jones, *The God Who Goes Before You*, 18.

¹⁴⁵ Herein lies the difficulty with Parks’s faith-grounded model of emerging-adult leadership. She places the emphasis on individual faith and a self-constructed sense of over-arching meaning. The problem, as I have demonstrated, is that emerging adults by and large have constructed a notion of over-arching meaning, with the result being MTD 2.0. So, rather than Parks’s faith-centric model of emerging-adult leadership that actually promotes theological disintegration, spiritual leadership as Christ-centered followership presents a model holding to theological primacy and a self-disclosed triune God acting in space and time and closely relating with human beings whom he made in his image.

constructed within the leader-follower dynamic.¹⁴⁶ As explained above, the cultural shift away from socially formed identity to an individual-based emphasis creates what I deemed “identity ambiguity.”

Spiritual leadership as Christ-centered followership posits that any consideration of individual identity and identity formation begins with theological reflection. God, the Creator, establishes on, a fundamental level, human identity—whether gender, vocational, leadership-related, or otherwise. Within Wilder and Jones’s framework, God’s choice to make human beings in his image and restore that image by means of union with Christ figures prominently.¹⁴⁷ In fact, the key leader-follower identities Wilder and Jones discuss throughout their volume—son, steward-slave-servant, and shepherd—are inexorably bound up in Christ, who is Son, servant, and shepherd. Todd Billings articulates best how such an understanding of identity acts as a counterweight to individually constructed notions of self and even MTD:

A theology of union with Christ centers Christian identity in Jesus Christ himself, and in the claim of the Triune God upon the Christian. Salvation is not self-centered but is a renewal and restoration of the self precisely through orienting the self toward God, toward the church as the body of Christ, and toward neighbor. Individual believers discover their true identity in communion rather than in a pragmatic, individualistic approach to salvation That God encountered in union with Jesus Christ is at once more majestic and more intimate than the deistic-tending God of the West.¹⁴⁸

Herein lies the ultimate basis for any identity development discussion or project in general and leadership identity formation in particular.¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁶ For a treatment on the co-construction of leader and follower identities, see DeRue and Ashford, “Who Will Lead and Who Will Follow?”

¹⁴⁷ Wilder and Jones, *The God Who Goes Before You*, 16.

¹⁴⁸ Billings, *Union with Christ*, 9.

¹⁴⁹ See Setran and Kiesling’s helpful chapter on emerging-adult identity and identity development from a biblical perspective. Setran and Kiesling, *Spiritual Formation in Emerging Adulthood*, 55-80.

Biblically rooted faith. Sharon Parks’s model of emerging-adult leadership rightly affirms individual faith as an indispensable component; however, she defines faith in terms of personalized meaning making that, in turn, serves as the focus of a young person’s trust and allegiance.¹⁵⁰ As Jones and Wilder point out in their excellent contribution to *Christian Formation* on faith development, such a conception of meaning making comports more with a the concept of biblical wisdom rather than faith.¹⁵¹ Furthermore, Parks maintains that a self-conceived understanding of the nature of reality forms the focal point of emerging adults’ trust and allegiance. In contrast, Jones and Wilder define faith in light of biblical analysis as both “propositional assent to specific truths about transcendent reality (Gospel truths)” and “personal allegiance to reality beyond myself (Jesus Christ).”¹⁵² Parks understands individual faith to grow and deepen as a person gains more knowledge about the world and reformulates his or her conception of the ultimate sense of reality. Jones and Wilder hold that faith grows and deepens upon a foundation of the preeminence of Jesus in a person’s life and that person’s commitment to Scripture’s authority.¹⁵³ Furthermore, growing confidence in Jesus and what the Scripture says about him occurs in the context of biblical community and biblical instruction along with the mysterious work of the Holy Spirit.¹⁵⁴ Jones and Wilder’s

¹⁵⁰ Parks, *Big Questions, Worthy Dreams*, 34-35.

¹⁵¹ Jones and Wilder, “Faith Development and Christian Formation,” 189. Jones and Wilder, in their chapter, actually critique James W. Fowler’s work on faith and faith development. However, given the significant similarities between Fowler’s and Parks’s conception of faith, Jones and Wilder’s analysis and criticisms also cover much of her work at this point.

¹⁵² Jones and Wilder, “Faith Development and Christian Formation,” 192. They describe faith as “*life-defining allegiance to Jesus—as recognized through the Holy Scripture and as revealed through the Holy Spirit—that resulted in increasing confidence in God’s decisive action on their behalf in Jesus Christ and in increasing conformity to the character of Jesus Christ*” (192; emphasis original). For their fuller discussion, see pp. 92-95. See also Grudem’s definition of faith. He speaks of faith in a biblical sense as “knowledge of the facts of the gospel and approval of those facts, in order to be saved” as well as “*personal trust*” in Jesus Christ “*as a living person for forgiveness of sins and for eternal life with God.*” Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 710 (emphasis original).

¹⁵³ Jones and Wilder, “Faith Development and Christian Formation,” 198.

¹⁵⁴ Jones and Wilder, “Faith Development and Christian Formation,” 198. They also point out

understanding of faith and faith development informs spiritual leadership as Christ-centered followership and corrects notions of faith that confuse the concept with wisdom and define it as self-conceived frames of meaning.¹⁵⁵

Divinely established purpose. Spiritual leadership as Christ-centered followership frames human purpose in terms of the divinely established creation mandate and great commission. Such an outlook stands over and against Parks's view of self-conceived purpose arising from an individually constructed sense of meaning or the overarching purpose confusion increasingly common among emerging-adult men. The correction to the self-orientation permeating so much of emerging-adult male thinking resides in the fact that believers are not their own.¹⁵⁶ God purchased them at great cost to himself (see, e.g., 1 Cor 6:19-20), and the Christian emerging-adult man's standing as a redeemed son, steward-slave-servant, and shepherd not only informs his identity but also banishes paralyzing purposelessness. Prior to humanity's fall into sin and just their after having been formed by their Creator, God gave those crafted in his very image their purpose in the creation mandate (Gen 1:28; 2:15). Furthermore, Jesus, the resurrected one and the one to whom all authority in heaven and on earth had been granted, issued the imperative to his disciples to make more disciples "of all nations" (Matt 28:18-20). As

the important role suffering plays in the growth of a person's faith.

¹⁵⁵ Jones and Wilder. "Faith Development and Christian Formation." 189-92. In addition, Jones and Wilder note that faith is also misunderstood as mere intellectual assent to certain theological assertions or trust in vague notions of transcendence. See also Wilder and Jones's references to faith and faith development in Wilder and Jones, *The God Who Goes Before You*, 18, 39, 42-43, 75, 92, 95, 114-17, 139, 143-44, 167, 177. While Wilder and Jones do not provide an explicit definition of faith and faith development in *The God Who Goes Before You*, a survey of their use of the terms "trust" and "faith" in relation to Christ and Scripture and the promises of God demonstrates an understanding parallel to that presented in their earlier "Faith Development and Christian Formation."

¹⁵⁶ For example, Setran and Kiesling observe that a growing number of emerging adults view their twenties as primarily about their own development. As a result, they note that with respect to young adult vocational considerations, "this perception has tended to create a self-focused vocational posture." Furthermore, they aver that without a grand sense of purpose informed by God's kingdom "many emerging adults make the self the vocational reference point." Setran and Kiesling, *Spiritual Formation in Emerging Adulthood*, 114-15. See Wilder and Jones, *The God Who Goes Before You*, 96, for reference to the fact that leaders are in fact God's possession.

Setran and Kiesling put it, “The Creator of the world has revealed his purposes and providentially created each emerging adult with gifts, passions, opportunities, and communities so that they participate in his plan.”¹⁵⁷ So, emerging-adult Christian men need not contend with formulating an overarching sense of purpose; instead, they can give their full attention to living out their divinely established purpose within their particular context.

Spiritually formed leadership. Emerging-adult spiritual leadership’s four pillars—theological primacy, Christ-grounded identity, biblically rooted faith, and divinely established purpose—provide an important context in which key identities are embraced, important relationships forged, specific roles affirmed, and particular practices carried out. Said identities, relationships, roles, and practices are not only critical to the exercise of emerging-adult spiritual leadership, but they also serve a spiritual formation function in the individual’s life. That is to say, as an emerging-adult man embraces and aligns his life according to these central components of spiritual leadership, his own faith should develop, and the three other pillars of the framework are strengthened in his life as well. Resultant spiritual maturation over time, then, ought to begin to recalibrate young adult male behaviors that tend toward isolation and disengagement or intense self-orientation. Increasingly turning from these problematic behaviors, the emerging-adult male simultaneously realigns his life and behavior commensurate with the creation mandate and great commission while influencing others in order to solve problems related to their fulfillment.

The relationship of the emerging-adult male with God—grounded as it is in his union with Christ—establishes this component of the model as the lynchpin connecting the foundational pillars of the framework to its other aspects. As Wilder and Jones point

¹⁵⁷ Setran and Kiesling, *Spiritual Formation in Emerging Adulthood*, 137.

out, the Holy Spirit at conversion unites a Christian with Jesus such that he has the possibility of access to and intimacy with the Father equivalent to what Jesus enjoyed when he walked on this earth.¹⁵⁸ To the extent that the emerging-adult male cultivates his relationship with God by the means of grace in full awareness that he comes to that relationship not as an equal but as a redeemed son, servant, slave, and under-shepherd, he will increasingly reflect Christ in his character, and his faith—as expressed in growing obedience—will increase.¹⁵⁹ The core conceptual dimensions and practices of emerging-adult spiritual leadership, then, directly coincide with the central elements and activities of the sanctification process.¹⁶⁰ Spiritual formation does not subsist as a separate category and detached from leadership. Rather, the two remain interconnected, with the latter dependent upon the former, resulting in leadership that is truly spiritual in nature.

As individual faith or abiding trust in Jesus and his promises—as disclosed in Scripture—expand, allegiance to and affection for Christ also grows. Such a process leads to an ever-increasing theological orientation of one’s life; that is, a person becomes more theocentric and concerned with the Bible’s teaching about God and his ways. Furthermore, a person’s awareness of, trust in, and appreciation for one’s identity in Christ develops, and, thus, that third pillar of spiritual leadership strengthens in his life.

¹⁵⁸ Wilder and Jones, *The God Who Goes Before You*, 18.

¹⁵⁹ As Wilder and Jones state, “Before we are leaders, we must be followers—followers of a God who goes before us.” Wilder and Jones, *The God Who Goes Before You*, 10.

¹⁶⁰ For example, the definition of spiritual leadership emphasizes critical aspects of spiritual growth such as personal faith in Christ, biblical community, and instruction in and submission to God’s Word. Within the framework itself, spiritually formative components are reflected in such categories as submission and dependence upon God and relating to God. Proclamation of the Word presupposes familiarity with it as well as personal study of and reflection upon Scripture as central activities. Of course, space does not permit a full-orbed exposition of the doctrine of sanctification within this model, though one stands solidly in the background and informs this entire discussion. For a helpful explication of the doctrine of sanctification, see Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 746-62; Anthony A. Hoekema, “Reformed View,” in *Five Views on Sanctification*, by Melvin E. Dieter et al., Counterpoints Series (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1987), 59-90; David Peterson, *Possessed by God: A New Testament Theology of Sanctification and Holiness*, New Studies in Biblical Theology 1 (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1995). Setran and Kiesling are some of the few who consider the unique dimensions of emerging-adult spiritual formation. Setran and Kiesling, *Spiritual Formation in Emerging Adulthood*, 29-53.

Then, as a person spends more time under the teaching of Scripture and becomes familiar with Jesus's aims and authority over his life, confidence grows in the divinely given purposes for human beings. Thus, the fourth and final pillar of spiritual leadership becomes more firmly planted within a man's life, and the emerging-adult male earnestly seeks to align all areas of his life according to it. These orientations and practices lay a foundation, then, of a life-long process of becoming intimately familiar with the gospel—and the God at its center—and being trained by it to put off ungodliness and, instead, pursue good works consistent with sound doctrine.¹⁶¹ In total, when emerging-adult men relate to and view themselves as first and foremost Christ-followers, they become better able to meet the current leadership crisis in the world. They do so by purposefully engaging as a leader or follower given the demands of the moment as an exercise of spiritually formed leadership to influence and mobilize others in view of the cultural mandate and the great commission for the furtherance God's glory in Christ.

Summary. Within the just-completed section, I have endeavored to answer the question “What aspects of Christ-centered followership counteract and mitigate those factors that have the potential of keeping Christian emerging-adult men from practicing spiritual leadership?” I argued that spiritual leadership as Christ-centered followership's four key pillars (i.e., theological primacy, Christ-grounded identity, biblically rooted faith, and divinely established purpose) counter prevailing impediments such as theological disintegration, identity ambiguity, and purpose confusion. Furthermore, I proposed that as emerging-adult men cultivate their relationship with God and follow him in line with those four pillars, the resultant spiritual formation process catalyzes a gradual

¹⁶¹ See, e.g., Titus 2:11-14, which states,

For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.

reorientation away from problematic behaviors. In their place, the emerging-adult male begins to pivot toward purposeful engagement as a follower-leader in the world in order to contribute to the fulfillment of the cultural mandate and the great commission. In the final section of this chapter, I advance a proposal to employ the spiritual leadership as Christ-centered followership model as part of an emerging-adult male leadership development process that emphasizes a mentoring pedagogy.

Employing Christ-Centered Followership as Part of a Spiritual Leadership Development Effort

Earlier in this chapter, I posed the question “How do we begin to develop Christian emerging adults into the types of leaders needed to mobilize others in the process of addressing challenges related to fulfilling the creation mandate and great commission?” Thus far, I have only partially answered that question by providing an emerging-adult spiritual leadership framework informed by Scripture, tailored to the specific requirements of the task, and designed to address the impediments present in the lives of young adult Christian men. I have yet to provide the means by which said development is envisioned to occur. Therefore, in the final section of this chapter, I aim to provide the reminder of the answer to the aforementioned interrogative. Below, I outline a proposed church-based learning cohort that includes intergenerational mentoring designed to develop young men in the spiritual leadership framework presented throughout this chapter.¹⁶² For the sake of ease, I refer to this program simply as the Leadership Learning Collective (LLC).

¹⁶² Matthew Shaw presents a rationale and framework for helping Christian emerging-adult men discover their vocational calling and purpose. Fredrick Fay puts forward an emerging-adult faith development model emphasizing intergenerational mentoring. No one to my knowledge beyond Sharon Parks has advanced an emerging-adult spiritual leadership and formation model coupled with an intergenerational mentoring pedagogy. Shaw, *Male Call*; Frederick R. Fay, “Emerging Young Adult Spiritual Formation: A Developmental Approach for an Intergenerational Church” (DMin project, George Fox University, 2015); Parks, *Big Questions, Worthy Dreams*.

Description

The LLC exists to catalyze the development of Christian emerging-adult men as spiritual leaders as defined by Christ-centered followership as spiritual leadership. The LLC aims to cultivate young adult male spiritual leaders by familiarizing them with the four conceptual pillars of the model (i.e., theological primacy, Christ-grounded identity, biblically rooted faith, and divinely established purpose) as well as its central theoretical categories (i.e., identities, relationships, roles, and practices). Furthermore, over the ten-month duration of the program, participants will be guided in considering the personal implications and application of each dimension of the framework by mentor-leaders in the context of local church participation and carefully directed learning communities (i.e., cohorts). Each cohort will consist of six to eight emerging-adult males and three to four male mentor-leaders. Ongoing mentoring following the completion of the ten-month experience will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

Pedagogy

The LLC emphasizes learning and application of biblical-, theological-, and leadership-related content utilizing a varied pedagogy with stress placed upon personal mentoring. Throughout the duration of the experience, participants will read and sometimes study in depth various printed materials—including Scripture—or listen to podcasts or watch short video presentations on specific course-related subject matters. Then, depending upon the educational objectives within a given module, participants may be asked to write their reflections as part of a brief online post, discuss their learning and application with a cohort peer, or make a short creative presentation to deliver before the entire learning community. Participant meetings with their assigned mentors will always involve one-on-one and small-group discussion of studied material with an emphasis on concept mastery and specific, life-application.

The LLC will follow a monthly rhythm. During the first week of each month, the entire cohort will gather for a two-hour mentors-led event divided into two segments.

The initial part of the meeting will entail bringing closure to the topic introduced during the previous month's gathering and considered over the course of the intervening weeks. The second portion of the meeting will introduce and frame, in a creative and compelling fashion, the topic for the upcoming month's work.¹⁶³ Week 2 will involve individual learning utilizing a variety of modalities (i.e., reading, guided study, watching, or listening) made available via an online interactive platform that will also ask the participant to respond to specific questions about the content, reflect on a given subject, or read an additional case study. During week 3 of the cohort learning cycle, participants will meet in pairs for sixty to ninety minutes to discuss specific questions provided by the mentors designed to establish mastery, promote reflection, and consider personal application. Then, discussion partners will pray for each other. A mentor-mentee meeting during the fourth week will constitute the final activity in the LLC rhythm. At the cohort gathering the following week, participants will engage in a final learning activity or guided discussion as a means of bringing closure to that module.

Intergenerational Mentoring

Intergenerational mentoring makes up a critical aspect of LLC pedagogy. Setran and Kiesling contend that the lack of emerging-adult mentoring by older persons as “one of the most significant factors blunting spiritual formation in these years.”¹⁶⁴ They point out that older individuals actively involved in emerging-adult Christian formation provide wisdom, experience, examples, and different perspectives on a myriad

¹⁶³ Each monthly module will be structured around a key conceptual component of spiritual leadership as Christ-centered followership. For example, module one would serve as an introduction to the biblical storyline, its gospel orientation, and implications for Christian living. “Hearing the Music of the Gospel: Christ-Centered Bible Study” would serve as the instructional material for week two of module one. The subject matter for module one would be introduced during the all-cohort gathering during week one. Keith Johnson, “Hearing the Music of the Gospel: Christ-Centered Bible Study” (White Papers: Critical Concept Series 1, Cru Press, Orlando, FL, 2008).

¹⁶⁴ Setran and Kiesling, *Spiritual Formation in Emerging Adulthood*, 212.

of topics that many young adults lack but often desire.¹⁶⁵ Thus, in their volume on emerging-adult spiritual formation, they advance what they describe as a “framework for effective mentoring among emerging adults.”¹⁶⁶ Richard R. Dunn and Jana L. Sundene, in their monograph *Shaping the Journey of Emerging Adults*, also address in a substantive way the topic of emerging-adult mentoring for the purposes of Christian formation.¹⁶⁷ While both Setran and Kiesling’s and Dunn and Sundene’s work make a valuable contribution to the literature base, neither specifically addresses the matter of employing mentoring as a means of developing emerging-adult spiritual leaders. Furthermore, both advance a mentoring-based pedagogy without substantive reference to the imitation motif within the Scriptures. Therefore, I now briefly consider the background to the contemporary practice of mentoring and propose a mentoring approach tailored to emerging-adult male spiritual leadership development as well as informed by the Pauline imitation motif.

Mentoring, Imitation, and Spiritual Leadership Development

Walter Brueggemann observes, “Mentoring as an *idea* is a quite modern notion. The *practice* of mentoring, however, is quite old.”¹⁶⁸ He continues by describing the phenomenon as “a relationship between someone of an older generation with more

¹⁶⁵ Setran and Kiesling, *Spiritual Formation in Emerging Adulthood*, 5, 42, 212. This is particularly important given that emerging adult “views of the world are shaped primarily by those in the same stage of life, and they are rarely challenged by alternative points of view” (212). Of course, the mentor-mentee relationship should not supplant the continuing role of parents, but such a relationship can provide an important complement to the parent-child relationship (213).

¹⁶⁶ Setran and Kiesling, *Spiritual Formation in Emerging Adulthood*, 9.

¹⁶⁷ Richard R. Dunn and Jana L. Sundene, *Shaping the Journey of Emerging Adults: Life-Giving Rhythms for Spiritual Transformation* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2012).

¹⁶⁸ Walter Brueggemann, “Mentoring in the Old Testament,” in *Mentoring: Biblical, Theological, and Practical Perspectives*, ed. Dean K. Thompson and D. Cameron Murchison (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2018), 7 (emphasis original).

experience providing guidance and counsel for someone in a younger generation.”¹⁶⁹

Reflecting upon its classical expressions, Parks describes mentoring as “an intentional and appropriately reciprocal relationship between two individuals, a younger adult and an older, wiser figure that assists the younger person in learning the ways of life.”¹⁷⁰

Contemporary mentoring interest. Rebekah Miles notes that contemporary interest in mentoring began in the 1970s with the publication of several studies demonstrating a relationship between one’s professional success and having received direction earlier in life from an older, trusted, and wiser individual.¹⁷¹ She points out that by the 1990s, mentoring received significant attention as government and social service organizations sought to utilize the practice as a means of social uplift particularly for at-risk youth.¹⁷² In the intervening years, mentoring has made its way into academia and education as well as many other professions. However, U.S. corporations have not only enthusiastically embraced mentoring, but they have also helped define it as a contemporary methodology with an emphasis on professional development and skills acquirement.¹⁷³

¹⁶⁹ Brueggemann, “Mentoring in the Old Testament,” 7. The etymological root of the modern English term “mentor” reaches back in history to the period of Greek mythology where Mentor, the older character in the *Odyssey*, provided younger Telemachus guidance and wisdom. Laurent A. Daloz, *Mentor: Guiding the Journey of Adult Learners*, 2nd ed. (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2012), 20.

¹⁷⁰ Parks, *Big Questions, Worthy Dreams*, 177. About the historical background of mentoring, Brueggemann says, “It [mentoring] is as old as social relationships in which one person knows things that would help another person flourish with well-being and success. Characteristically (but not always) mentoring is a relationship between someone of an older generation with more experience providing guidance and counsel for someone in a younger generation.” Brueggemann, “Mentoring in the Old Testament,” 7.

¹⁷¹ Rebekah Miles, “Ethical Perspectives on Mentoring,” in *Mentoring: Biblical, Theological, and Practical Perspectives*, ed. Dean K. Thompson and D. Cameron Murchison (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2018), 71.

¹⁷² Miles, “Ethical Perspectives on Mentoring,” 71.

¹⁷³ Miles, “Ethical Perspectives on Mentoring,” 71. About these societal trends in mentoring, Miles simply states, “Certainly US corporate life has left its mark on mentoring.” Such developments evoke the following lament from Miles: “Part of the problem may be that much of the mentoring literature is secular and lacks the obvious overarching worldview of a religious system with fully developed ideas about human nature and temptations, the common good, and the ends toward which individuals and groups should be striving” (72).

Recent evangelical mentoring interest. Akira Shinohara cites Richard Foster's 1978 *Celebration of Disciplines* inclusion of "guidance" (and its subset, spiritual direction) among several spiritual disciples as the demarcation point for the contemporary evangelical mentoring literature base.¹⁷⁴ Victor Copan observes an increasing interest in Christian spirituality by evangelicals in the 1980s and 1990s coinciding with a growing curiosity in spiritual mentoring or direction.¹⁷⁵ Eugene Peterson's 1989 book *The Contemplative Pastor: Returning to the Art of Spiritual Direction*, linked integrated-holistic spirituality with pastoral ministry and spiritual direction.¹⁷⁶ Over the last forty years, the evangelical mentoring literature corpus has grown tremendously.¹⁷⁷ Authors such as Parks, Dunn and Sundene, and Setran and Kiesling notably advocate for a mentoring-based pedagogy with respect to emerging-adult spiritual formation.

¹⁷⁴ Akira Shinohara, "Spiritual Formation and Mentoring: An Approach from the Christian Tradition of Spiritual Direction," *Christian Education Journal* 6, no. 2 (Fall 2002): 112-13. Shinohara points out that spiritual direction had not received much discussion until Foster reintroduced the matter for consideration. Regarding guidance, Richard Foster writes of spirit-led corporate or communal direction provided by members of the believing community in contrast to the private, personal, and individualized type. He also includes a section on spiritual direction. Of the role of the spiritual director in the life of the mentee, he says, "His function is purely and simply charismatic. He leads only by the force of his own personal holiness. He is not a superior or some ecclesiastically appointed authority. The relationship is of an adviser to a friend. Though the director has obviously advanced further into the inner depths, the two are both learning and growing in the realm of the Spirit." Richard J. Foster, *Celebration of the Disciplines: The Path to Spiritual Growth* (New York: PerfectBound, 2003), 185.

¹⁷⁵ Copan, *Saint Paul as Spiritual Director*, 5. I would also point out that a growing interest in mentoring by evangelicals in the United States also occurred as the pedagogy was being utilized more and more frequently across various sectors of the economy and society.

¹⁷⁶ Shinohara, "Spiritual Formation and Mentoring," 113-15.

¹⁷⁷ A few notable titles are as follows: Keith Anderson and Randy D. Reese, *Spiritual Mentoring: A Guide for Seeking and Giving Direction* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1999); J. Robert Clinton and Richard Clinton, *The Mentor Handbook: Detailed Guidelines and Helps for Christian Mentors and Mentorees* (Altadena, CA: Barnabas Resources, 1991); Regi Campbell and Richard Chancy, *Mentor Like Jesus* (Nashville: B & H, 2009); Ted Engstrom and Norman B. Rohrer, *The Fine Art of Mentoring: Passing on to Others What God Has Given to You* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2005); Howard Hendricks and William Hendricks, *As Iron Sharpens Iron: Building Character in a Mentoring Relationship* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1995); Bill Hull, *The Complete Book of Discipleship: On Being and Making Followers of Christ* (Colorado Springs: NavPress, 2006); Greg Ogden, *Transforming Discipleship: Making Disciples a Few at a Time*, 2nd ed. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2016); Randy D. Reese and Robert Loane, *Deep Mentoring: Guiding Others on Their Leadership Journey* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2012).

Pauline-imitation-informed mentoring. Victor Copan’s work *Saint Paul as Spiritual Director* reflects one of the few serious efforts to bring insights gained from a detailed study of Pauline imitation to bear in contemporary mentoring practices focused upon the spiritual development of the mentee.¹⁷⁸ As noted in the previous chapter, the “model” in Greco-Roman imitation was especially concerned with presenting a proper example for the “imitator” to observe and follow. By means of instruction and especially illustration, the model would shape both internal dimensions of the imitator’s life (i.e., character, perspectives, motivations, etc.) and external behaviors (i.e., skills and activities).¹⁷⁹ Copan determines that Paul’s employment of imitation adhered to much of the of Greco-Roman practice but that the apostle utilized it for distinctly Christian ends and with uniquely Christian emphases. Ultimately, Copan distills implications from his findings for those seeking to engage in mentoring efforts today. I summarize below the points Copan makes that are germane to this project.

Mentors: fellow-followers of God. Copan observes that Paul describes himself as brother, spiritual father, and servant and steward. Regarding the apostle’s use of these terms, he concludes, “Thus, Paul seeks—with respect to imitation of himself—to accentuate both equality as well as maternal/paternal concern for the recipients based on understanding himself as exclusively in the service of God in Christ.”¹⁸⁰ Copan draws out several implications, each connected to the particular set of terms Paul uses. First, Paul’s

¹⁷⁸ Copan is especially interested in the historic Roman Catholic practice of spiritual direction. His understanding of spiritual direction coincides on many levels with how I understand mentoring in light of Brueggemann, Parks, Miles, Dolaz, etc. Therefore, I will use the term “mentoring” in place of Copan’s “spiritual direction” for the sake of clarity and consistency. Nonetheless, the reader should note that Copan’s terminology through and through is that of “spiritual direction.” While I appreciate his interest in reframing this traditional practice in view of Pauline imitation, I believe the term “mentoring” is more commonly understood by contemporary audiences and, resultantly, less confusing.

¹⁷⁹ Copan, *Saint Paul as Spiritual Director*, 219.

¹⁸⁰ Copan, *Saint Paul as Spiritual Director*, 222. Copan also points out that nowhere does Paul call anyone to imitate him with respect to his apostolic role, though he often utilizes that designation of himself.

“unadorned equality” suggests that mentors today should to be characterized by a “fundamental relationality” (i.e., shared lives of mutuality and affection) and a sense of co-equality between director and directees before God.¹⁸¹ Second, Paul’s use of the spiritual parent language (i.e., father and mother imagery) calls mentoring today to be characterized by “parental concern, love, responsibility, and duty.”¹⁸² Finally, as a servant and steward of God, contemporary mentors must understand their ministries as under God’s exclusive authority and that they are employed as selfless servants of others.¹⁸³

The implications of Copan’s recommendations for LLC mentors are clear: they must whole-heartedly embrace and live out the core identities of Christ-centered followership themselves and lead and mentor LLC participants as fellow followers, stewards, and shepherds accountable to the master. Out of these core identities, they relate to mentees aware of their roles as teachers and leaders but with the affection, love, and concern of a father for a son. Furthermore, mentors model the key practices of spiritual leadership, knowing that they provide an up-close, embodied example to the mentee of what it means to embrace the core identities of Christ-centered followership and live and lead consistent with them. Therefore, mentors must embrace and minister from their biblically grounded identity and an awareness that they lead only because they follow the God who goes before them.

¹⁸¹ Copan, *Saint Paul as Spiritual Director*, 244-45. He suggests that the contemporary concept of “player-coach” makes an appropriate analogy at this point: “Paul is, on the one hand, a full-fledged player, who is required to undergo all the training and exercise that all the other players must do. Yet, on the other hand, he is also their coach, who has more experience in the game, knows the plays, the dangers, and the strategy” (245).

¹⁸² Copan, *Saint Paul as Spiritual Director*, 247. Copan also discusses another implication of the spiritual father motif as it relates to mentoring. As a spiritual paterfamilias, Paul would have understood an aspect of his role to be that of establishing space for the family to safely learn and grow (247-48). Copan devotes considerable space to the inappropriate application of the spiritual parent motif in spiritual directorship as well as the role of negative parenting examples, the concern of perpetual childhood, and use of power by spiritual directors vis-à-vis those under their charge (247-54).

¹⁸³ Copan, *Saint Paul as Spiritual Director*, 246.

Mentors: Christ-centered and gospel-oriented. Copan declares, “All of Paul’s references to imitation of himself are directly linked to and tied to Christ and his gospel. This consistent orientation toward Christ the Lord and the good news about him functions for Paul as the radiating center around which all of the apostle’s life, thoughts, and ministry orbited.”¹⁸⁴ Such an orientation sprang from Paul’s Damascus road conversion, dramatic life-change, and “unapologetic christocentrism.”¹⁸⁵ Likewise, Copan avers, mentors today must be marked by conversion to Christ that comprehensively and significantly impacts his or her life and angles all its dimensions toward the Lord Jesus himself.¹⁸⁶

In view of these implications, LLC mentors must be able to make a clear profession of faith in Christ and demonstrate growing confidence in him and his promises. Mentors should also cultivate personal allegiance to, and affection for, Christ and evidence lives oriented around the authority of the Scripture. From this base, mentors should lead the cohort and guide their mentees in such a way that they avoid moralism on the one hand and cold doctrinalism on the other as both are antithetical to christocentrism and the gospel. Rather, they must creatively and compellingly—by means of biblical instruction and life-illustration—portray the beauty and majesty of Christ in as clear a fashion as possible. Furthermore, they must give themselves to the task of communicating the ways in which such a wonderful Savior and his salvific work directly and specifically impacts and transforms all domains of a person’s life while counteracting the impediments and barriers discussed above.¹⁸⁷

¹⁸⁴ Copan, *Saint Paul as Spiritual Director*, 222.

¹⁸⁵ Copan, *Saint Paul as Spiritual Director*, 255.

¹⁸⁶ Copan, *Saint Paul as Spiritual Director*, 254-45.

¹⁸⁷ Setran and Kiesling, *Spiritual Formation in Emerging Adulthood*, 35-36.

Mentors: Christ-formed virtues. Concerning the content of Pauline imitation, Copan notes two broad categories: “global/holistic” and “virtues.”¹⁸⁸ By global/holistic, Copan seeks to reflect the idea that Paul understood that all areas of his life were to be deeply impacted by the gospel and, therefore, to be observed and imitated by the recipients of his letters. Virtues form the second half of the content of Pauline imitation. These virtues were uniquely reflective of Christ and the gospel and were often at odds with earthly defined virtues.¹⁸⁹ Therefore, mentors must aim to cultivate an integrated and Christocentric life along with Christ-formed virtues such as servanthood and humility.¹⁹⁰ Furthermore, Copan points out that the mentor’s life, his ethos, must be central to his mentoring ministry.¹⁹¹

LLC mentors must not only be familiar with the content of the gospel and doctrines of Christ and grace, but they also must increasingly exhibit the fruit of good works consistent with them. Furthermore, these men must be intimately aware of the process of bringing those truths to bear in one’s own life for the purposes of virtue cultivation. That is to say, they understand well the linkage between theological indicatives and imperatives and the dynamics within the human mind and soul such that they can help young men make those deep internal connections and grow in sanctification and as spiritual leaders.

Thus, redemptively formed leaders approach the tasking of mentoring in an overtly redemptive manner. Such men remain cognizant of the fact that only Christ and the gospel rightly applied attack the root causes of sin and transform an individual into an

¹⁸⁸ Copan, *Saint Paul as Spiritual Director*, 223.

¹⁸⁹ Copan, *Saint Paul as Spiritual Director*, 225-26.

¹⁹⁰ Copan, *Saint Paul as Spiritual Director*, 256-57.

¹⁹¹ Copan, *Saint Paul as Spiritual Director*, 259. Copan asserts, “Since the shape of the director’s life is the foundation of direction, it is important to cultivate this life with determined intentionality.”

increasingly holy leader.¹⁹² Therefore, the mentor assumes the task of “redemptive guide” in a mentee’s life. He leads the mentee to gospel truth in Scripture and then aids the mentee through a series of questions and observations intended to help him identify the correspondence between the fallen condition focus of a given text and the mentee’s own sin and fallen experience.¹⁹³ Then, he aids the mentee in the process of observing and then applying the redemptive solution and divine grace to his situation as presented in a passage.¹⁹⁴ Furthermore, the mentor must draw heavily from his own life in describing that process and his own example as it pertains to illustrating it.

The common impediments and barriers to emerging-adult male spiritual leadership discussed above provide a ready list of potential real-life “fallen conditions” present in a young man’s life—as well as from the mentor’s—and from which he can authentically speak and illustrate. Furthermore, many of the pillars and conceptual categories within spiritual leadership reflect Christ’s gracious redemptive work. Thus, when rightly employed, spiritual leadership as Christ-centered followership can serve as a redemptive framework not only for the mentor’s own life but also for his ministry to mentees as well. By means of their instruction, gospel application, and model, mentors can play a powerful role in developing young Christian men as spiritual leaders; they provide a tangible model that emerging-adult men can begin to emulate. Setran and Kiesling make plain that mentors provide emerging adults with important embodied

¹⁹² Setran and Kiesling, *Spiritual Formation in Emerging Adulthood*, 30-31. Setran and Kiesling engage in a helpful discussion on this subject, drawing from both Dallas Willard’s notion of “sin management” and Paul David Tripp’s emphasis of getting to the root of a person’s behavior at the level of beliefs and desires rather than focusing simply upon the fruit.

¹⁹³ Brian Chapel, *Christ-Centered Preaching: Redeeming the Expository Sermon*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2005), 48-57, 269-72. Timothy Keller puts the matter in these terms: “If we are going to grow in grace, we must stay aware of being both sinners and also loved children in Christ. We need a high and due sense of our sin before God *and* a deep and profound sense of our union with and acceptance in Christ. In the end, it’s the joy and wonder of the gospel that will change you permanently.” Timothy Keller, “When Sin Is Grievous and Grace Is Stunning,” Gospel Coalition, June 23, 2013, <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/when-sin-is-grievous-and-grace-is-stunning/> (emphasis original).

¹⁹⁴ Chapel, *Christ-Centered Preaching*, 297-309.

examples of biblical faithfulness across multiple domains of life ripe for imitation. Referring to 2 Timothy 3:10-11, they state, “The role of a mentor is certainly to communicate truth, but the truth also derives power, clarity, and credibility from the ‘way of life’ of its bearer.”¹⁹⁵ The power of a Pauline-imitation-informed approach to mentoring lies in the manner it connects orthodoxy and orthopraxy in an embodied example and is, thus, well-suited as a pedagogical methodology to develop emerging-adult men as Christ-centered followers ready to practice spiritual leadership whenever the opportunity presents itself.¹⁹⁶

In this chapter, I discussed the employment of Wilder and Jones’s imitation-adjusted construct for the purposes of developing Christian emerging-adult men as spiritual leaders. Initially, I presented a rationale for addressing emerging adult leadership development and proposed a spiritual leadership framework informed by Sharon Parks’s work and grounded in Wilder and Jones’s imitation-adjusted Christ-centered followership

¹⁹⁵ Setran and Kiesling, *Spiritual Formation in Emerging Adulthood*, 226. Paul, reflecting on his life and ministry to Timothy in 2 Tim 3:10-11, says, “You, however, have followed my teaching, my conduct, my aim in life, my faith, my patience, my love, my steadfastness, my persecutions and sufferings that happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium, and at Lystra—which persecutions I endured; yet from them all the Lord rescued me.”

¹⁹⁶ Dallas Willard likens Christian discipleship to that of an apprenticeship of Jesus himself. He writes, “So the greatest issue facing the world today, with all its heart-breaking needs, is whether those who, by profession or culture, are identified as ‘Christians’ will become *disciples*—students, apprentices, practitioners—of *Jesus Christ*, steadily learning from him how to live the life of the Kingdom of the Heavens into every corner of human existence.” Dallas Willard, *The Great Omission: Reclaiming Jesus’s Essential Teaching on Discipleship* (New York: HarperCollins, 2006), xv (emphasis original). Willard notes in another work, *The Divine Conspiracy*, that Jesus, during his earthly ministry, took “apprentices” (i.e., disciples) into his work in order “to teach them how to do what he did.” Dallas Willard, *The Divine Conspiracy: Rediscovering our Hidden Life in God* (New York: HaperCollins, 1998), 288. Furthermore, he observes that Jesus’s ministry, which was closely observed by his apprentices, moved through three phases that also coincide with aspects of the proposed model in this work: (1) proclaiming (i.e., declaring the arrival of God’s kingdom in the person of Jesus himself), (2) manifesting (i.e., showing the reality of God’s rule by means of words and deeds), and (3) teaching (i.e., instruction about the very nature of God) (288-90). Then, on the heels of his discussion of the Christian life as an apprenticeship to Jesus, Willard turns his attention to a discussion of contemporary apprentices of Christ making other disciples. I commend his reflections on the subject of discipling (i.e., making apprentices of Jesus) as they affirm and buttress much of the discussion within this chapter (299-310). Willard’s notion of apprenticeship echoes Peter de Boer’s who avers that the ancient Greeks—and later those within Rabbinic Judaism—recognized imitation as “a kind of apprenticeship in living, where the pupil lived with the master, went with him on all occasions, observed his actions and reactions to all kinds of situations, and learned not only his knowledge but his way of life.” Willis Peter de Boer, *The Imitation of Paul: An Exegetical Study* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 1962), 43-44.

construct. Then, I discussed the reasons for focusing on young adult males and their development as spiritual leaders. Afterwards, I considered the various barriers and challenges to them becoming spiritual leaders and how my proposed model possesses the potential of overcoming those impediments. Lastly, I put forward a pedagogical outline for developing emerging-adult men as spiritual leaders in view of the Christ-centered followership as spiritual leadership framework advanced throughout the chapter.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

The phenomenon of leadership garners considerable interest. A search of Amazon’s book database using the keyword “leadership” produces ninety thousand titles. Peter Northouse observes, “Leadership is a highly sought-after and highly valued commodity.”¹ Academics and non-academicians alike desire to better understand what is increasingly recognized as a complex process that includes not just leaders and their traits and behaviors but followers as well.² In fact, relatively recent efforts to investigate followers and followership have served to enhance our understanding of leadership as a relational process whereby leader and follower self-concepts, role perceptions, characteristics, and behaviors interact and produce group outcomes—or fail to do so! Thus, followers and following—once maligned and neglected—receive an ever-growing level of attention and study.

Nonetheless, at present, few have actually investigated to what extent positively viewed follower traits and behaviors constitute prerequisites for a person to also exercise good leadership.³ In addition, only a handful of evangelicals have written with an awareness of followership theory and research, with even less endeavoring to interact with that body of knowledge in a scholarly fashion. However, Michael Wilder and Timothy Jones, in *The God Who Goes Before You*, have not only produced a biblical theology of leadership cognizant of followership theory and research; they also

¹ Peter Northouse, *Leadership: Theory and Practice*, 8th ed. (Los Angeles: SAGE, 2019), 1.

² Northouse, *Leadership*, 1.

³ Certainly, this is an area deserving further theoretical and empirical research.

demonstrated by means of a thorough study of Scripture that being a good follower is a precondition for being a good leader. In fact, they assert that the consistent teaching of the Bible is that good human leadership is contingent upon good followership—following the God who always goes before us. As Wilder and Jones put it, “For the Christian leader, followership means that everyone, even the leader, is always being led.”⁴

I found that the major elements of Wilder and Jones’s biblically derived model, Christ-centered followership as pastoral leadership, were consistent with the theoretical followership categories of identity, relationships, roles, and practices. Their biblical research determined that the key leader-as-God-follower identities were those of son, united with Christ, steward-servant-slave, and shepherd. Within their framework, they point out that pastoral leaders primarily relate to the Lord, other leaders, and fellow-followers and assume a number of different and divinely assigned formal and informal roles. On the basis of those identities, relationships, and roles, the Scriptures mandate and describe several important leader-as-follower practices: (1) submission to, and dependence upon, God; (2) follow and set godly examples; (3) proclaim the Word; (4) feed, protect, equip, and empower saints; and (5) defend and promote justice.

An analysis of Wilder and Jones’s project demonstrates both minimal grounding of their model in Pastoral Epistles as well as the applicability of their framework beyond pastoral leadership.⁵ While Wilder and Jones devote considerable effort to establishing the various dimensions of Christ-centered followership within the pages of the Old Testament as well as the Gospels and a number of New Testament

⁴ Michael S. Wilder and Timothy Paul Jones, *The God Who Goes Before You: Pastoral Leadership as Christ-Centered Followership* (Nashville: B & H, 2018), 21.

⁵ Christian researchers would do well to apply Wilder and Jones’s construct in variety of settings. In fact, the church could benefit greatly from the application of the Christ-centered followership paradigm in cross-cultural missions, youth ministry, collegiate settings, parachurch ministry, and a variety of leadership and student development efforts. Such endeavors would parallel other researchers who are increasingly taking followership constructs and applying them within different career fields and exploring the intricacies of the leader-follower relational dynamic in those various settings.

letters, the Pastoral Epistles receive relatively little attention. As Paul's letters to Timothy and Titus address a wide-range of topics related to the distinct aspects of Christian leadership in general and local church oversight in particular, Wilder and Jones's comparative neglect of the Pastoral Epistles reflects one of the few gaps in their otherwise excellent work.⁶

Furthermore, while they intimate the applicability of their construct beyond pastoral leadership contexts, the scope of their project precluded the possibility of such an endeavor. Given today's profound needs inside and outside the church for biblically grounded frames of leading and following, the importance and value of Wilder and Jones's project becomes readily apparent. The unique needs and leadership potential of emerging-adult men within the church as well as the developmentally significant period represented by emerging adulthood presents an important occasion to consider how Christ-centered followership might benefit them—and, by extension, the church and the world.

Therefore, Wilder and Jones's groundbreaking work prompts three questions: (1) In what ways, if any, is Christ-centered followership evidenced in the Pastoral Epistles? (2) How does the phenomenon of imitation within the Pastoral Epistles nuance Christ-centered followership? (3) How might Christ-centered followership as demonstrated in, and adjusted by, the Pastoral Epistles be deployed in the development of Christian emerging-adult males as spiritual leaders? Seeking answers to these questions entails much more than satiating mere academic curiosity or advancing yet another leadership paradigm. Any project attempting to find responses to those questions must do so with the aim of helping God's people, including emerging-adult men, know him and

⁶ Furthermore, the Pastoral Epistles provide glimpses into Paul's cross-generational leadership and mentoring as well as his approach to cultivating leaders in a setting that presents a myriad of potential barriers to Christian formation and spiritual leadership development.

his ways more intimately and serve him wholeheartedly and in closer accord with his will. Therefore, I sought to show that the material within the Pastoral Epistles affirms Wilder and Jones's model of Christ-centered followership and nuances it in light of the imitation motif featured therein. In addition, I endeavored to demonstrate the applicability and implications of an imitation-adjusted model of Christ-centered followership for aiding emerging-adult male Christians in becoming spiritual leaders. As an integral part of that effort, I proposed a model of emerging-adult spiritual leadership as Christ-centered followership and a mentoring-oriented pedagogical framework to ground young adult men in it.

Since Wilder and Jones presented Christ-centered followership as a scripturally derived construct, I hypothesized that Paul's letters to Timothy and Titus would contain at least some material corresponding to aspects of their model. Therefore, utilizing a historical-grammatical exegetical methodology, I analyzed the Pastoral Epistles for evidence of the four conceptual categories of their model (i.e., identity, relationships, roles, and practices) and their corresponding subcategories (e.g., dependence upon and submission to God, Word proclamation). With the exception of the shepherd identity, I found overwhelming support within 1 Timothy, Titus, and 2 Timothy for the various components of Christ-centered followership as pastoral leadership.

The imitation motif appears throughout those three letters and constitutes an important aspect of their contents and Paul's ministry approach. Though Wilder and Jones's model makes mention of Christ-centered leaders following and setting ethical models, I concluded that they under-emphasized the practice. After reviewing studies of Greco-Roman imitation pedagogy and Paul's reference to imitation in his ecclesiastical letters, I engaged in an in-depth study of the phenomenon within the Pastoral Epistles. In view of my research findings, I proposed an imitation-adjusted model of Christ-centered followership. Specifically, I suggested nuancing their framework by establishing an informal "exemplar" role equivalent with that of teaching and, thus, elevating its

importance within the model and more closely aligning the role with that of teaching. I also advanced and described a “modeling” practice as a counterpart to that of Word proclamation.

While Christian emerging-adult men represent a potential source of much-needed leaders to address global and ecclesiastical challenges, the hurdles to developing that demographic as individuals capable of leading and following appear especially acute among the broader demographic. Today’s young adult males face a myriad of psychological, theological, sociological, and behavioral factors that potentially undercut their ability to exercise the biblical leadership necessary to serve Christ in today’s world.⁷ By integrating biblically adjusted elements of Sharon Parks’s emerging-adult leadership framework with the key aspects of Wilder and Jones’s schema, a definition of emerging-adult spiritual leadership as Christ-centered followership emerges: the Christ-following emerging adult—living by faith as a bearer of God’s image in union with Christ and his people—seeks to influence and mobilize those around him for the purposes of meeting challenges and solving problems related to fulfilling the creation mandate and, in conjunction with other Christians, participating in the great commission in submission to the Word of God. I argued in chapter 5 that Christ-centered followership as emerging-adult spiritual leadership’s key conceptual pillars (i.e., theological primacy, Christ-grounded identity, biblically rooted faith, and divinely established purpose) serve as counterweights to the prevailing impediments to Christian men becoming spiritual leaders.⁸

⁷ Another area of possible research would be the application of Wilder and Jones’s framework by female scholars to the development of emerging-adult Christian women as spiritual leaders. Given the unique realities confronting emerging-adult women, their distinct potential, and the specific hurdles and barriers to their growth as spiritual leaders, such a study would undoubtedly make an important scholarly as well as practical contribution to the life and ministry of the church and beyond.

⁸ While much of this project focused upon the consideration and application of the identity and relationship categories within emerging-adult spiritual leadership as Christ-centered followership, space did not permit a full-orbed examination of those conceptual groupings let alone roles and practices beyond the exemplar role and modeling-related practices. Therefore, the framework I propose within the pages of this thesis would benefit from further research into the ways in which the four followership categories of

Finally, I presented a sketch of a church-based cohort emphasizing communal learning and intergenerational mentoring intended to develop emerging-adult men as spiritual leaders. This Leadership Learning Collective's weekly cycle along with its mentor-leaders acting as redemptive guides create avenues for biblical instruction and reflection, robust personalized gospel application, and exemplary modeling.⁹ By utilizing the Christ-centered followership as spiritual leadership framework, mentor-leaders possess a blueprint for their own mentoring practices as well as the possible redemptive truths to bring to bear with respect to leadership impediments common among emerging-adult men. Furthermore, a Pauline-imitation-informed approach to mentoring coincides with and reinforces key elements of Wilder and Jones's imitation-adjusted Christ-centered followership construct. Thus, equipped with a model of spiritual leadership as well as a pedagogical blueprint, mentors and leaders can serve emerging-adult men by helping them become spiritual leaders who above all else follow the God who goes before them.

identity, relationships, roles, and practices uniquely undergird it and are expressed.

⁹ Even though I provide a blueprint for the employment of emerging-adult spiritual leadership as Christ-centered followership in a local church context for the development of Christian young-adult men, further research needs to be undertaken as it relates to the application of the theoretical to the practical, the learning cohort methodology as described (i.e., the Leadership Learning Collective), and matters pertaining to the scaling of said framework beyond an initial test group.

APPENDIX 1

PASTORAL EPISTLES CHRIST-CENTERED
FOLLOWERSHIP MATRICES

Table A1. First Timothy identity-related texts

Category: Identity	Biblical Text	Summary Analysis
Union with Christ	<p>1:14 “with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus.” μετὰ πίστεως καὶ ἀγάπης τῆς ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ.</p> <p>Similarly 3:13 “in the faith that is in Christ Jesus.”</p>	<p>The use of “in Christ Jesus” (ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ) in 1:14 and 3:13 suggests reference to union with Christ. Marshall indicates that in the Pastoral Epistles “in Christ” language expresses union with Christ.¹</p>
Sonship	<p>3:14-15 “I hope to come to you soon, but I am writing these things to you so that, ¹⁵ if I delay, <u>you may know how one ought to behave in the household of God</u>, which is the church of the living God” εἰδῆς πῶς δεῖ ἐν οἴκῳ θεοῦ ἀναστρέφεσθαι</p>	<p>Paul indicates that Christians are members of God’s household (οἶκος θεοῦ). The BDAG entry for οἶκος, suggests that not only do Christians constitute the temple of God, but in this instance οἶκος conveys the idea of Christians “as God’s family.”² Familial connection with God tentatively suggests coincidence with concept of sonship.</p>
Shepherd		

¹ I. Howard Marshall, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles* (London: T & T Clark, 2007), 105-6. Due to a lack of space throughout the appendix, verses may not be reproduced in their entirety. In fact, I regularly include only a key portion of a verse’s English or Greek text.

² BDAG, “οἶκος,” 699. Please note: whenever a quotation from BDAG within the appendices contains italicized words, those emphasizes are original to the work itself.

Category: Identity	Biblical Text	Summary Analysis
Steward, Slave, or Servant	<p>1:11 “the gospel of the glory of the blessed God with which I have been entrusted.” τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τῆς δόξης τοῦ μακαρίου θεοῦ, ὃ ἐπιστεύθη ἐγώ.</p> <p>6:20 “O Timothy, guard the deposit entrusted to you” ὦ Τιμόθεε, τὴν παραθήκην φύλαξον</p> <p>1:12 “because he [Christ Jesus our Lord] judged me faithful, appointing me to his service.” ὅτι πιστόν με ἠγήσατο θέμενος εἰς διακονίαν</p> <p>Similarly, 2:7 “For this I was appointed” εἰς ὃ ἐτέθη</p> <p>1:18 “This charge I [Paul] entrust to you [Timothy]” Ταύτην τὴν παραγγελίαν παρατίθεμαί σοι</p>	<p>Paul was “entrusted” (ἐπιστεύθη³) with “the gospel of the glory of the blessed God.” This evidences Paul’s self-understanding as steward.</p> <p>Paul charges Timothy in 6:20 to carefully protect that which has been given over to his care.⁴ Paul views Timothy as steward. The concept of steward in 1:11 and 6:20 is very much in view.</p> <p>Paul declares in 1:12 that it was Christ appointing (θέμενος⁵) him to serve (διακονίαν⁶) as an agent in his [Christ’s] service. Paul understands his ministry, his “service,” comes as the result of a greater authority, God, assigning him tasks and responsibilities.⁷ Conceptually and at a minimum, steward appears to be the best framework to understand these references.</p> <p>Paul, by means of a charge or directive (παραγγελίαν⁸), “entrusts” (παρατίθεμαί⁹) specific responsibilities to Timothy for “safekeeping or transmission.”¹⁰ See also 1:11.</p>

³ BDAG, “πιστεύω,” 818.

⁴ BDAG, “παραθήκη,” 764; BDAG, “φυλάσσω,” 1068. BDAG states that παραθήκη refers to “property entrusted to another” and only appears in the Pastoral Epistles and always with φυλάσσω referring to the spiritual heritage entrusted to the orthodox Christian” (764).

⁵ BDAG, “τίθημι,” 1004. The entry for τίθημι in the case of 1 Tim 1:12 reads, “to assign to some task or function, appoint, assign.”

⁶ BDAG, “διακονία,” 230.

⁷ BDAG, “τίθημι,” 1004.

⁸ BDAG, “παραγγελία,” 760. Specifically, the entry for παραγγελία states, “an announcement respecting something that must be done. *order. command. precept. advice. exhortation.*” Concerning 1 Tim 1:18 in particular, the entry further states, “Of apostolic *instructions.*”

⁹ BDAG, “παρατίθημι,” 772.

¹⁰ BDAG, “παρατίθημι,” 772.

Category: Identity	Biblical Text	Summary Analysis
Steward, Slave, or Servant (cont.)	<p>Likewise, 6:13, Paul charges Timothy παράγγελλω σοι</p> <p>See also 5:21 “I [Paul] charge you [Timothy]” διαμαρτύρομαι</p> <p>4:6-7 “If you put these things before the brothers, you will be a good servant of Christ Jesus” Ταῦτα ὑποτιθέμενος τοῖς ἀδελφοῖς καλὸς ἔσῃ διάκονος Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ</p> <p>3:5 “for if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he care for God's church?” ἐκκλησίας θεοῦ ἐπιμελήσεται</p>	<p>Paul, by means of serious exhortation (διαμαρτύρομαι ¹¹), directs Timothy to carry out significant responsibilities. Not only does Paul appear to operate from the steward identity (see above), but he also appears, in these instances, to understand Timothy as possessing that same identity.</p> <p>“Servant” (διάκονος) conveys the notion of one who “serves” as an “agent, intermediary, courier.” ¹² Paul appears to emphasize to Timothy both the “servant” identity and the practices consistent with that identity.</p> <p>Overseers are to “care for” (ἐπιμελήσεται ¹³) God’s church as they do their own household. Here is an argument from lesser to greater. If they cannot effectively steward their immediate familial oversight responsibilities, how can they possibly do so with God’s? Also, as members of God’s household, all believers, including church leaders, appear to be considered members of the Lord’s family. This suggests the sonship identity is in view. See also 1 Tim 3:14-15 “Summary Analysis.”</p>

¹¹ BDAG, “διαμαρτύρομαι,” 233. BDAG provides the following with respect to διαμαρτύρομαι in this context: “to exhort with authority in matters of extraordinary importance, frequently with reference to higher powers and/or suggestion of peril, *solemnly urge, exhort, warn.*”

¹² BDAG, “διάκονος,” 230. With respect to 1 Tim 4:6, the BDAG entry states, “if Timothy provides proper instruction he will be considered an admirable transmitter of the gospel tradition.”

¹³ BDAG, “ἐπιμελέομαι,” 375. In the case of 1 Tim 3:5, the entry indicates that ἐπιμελέομαι conveys the idea of “*care for, take care of.*”

Table A2. First Timothy relationships-related texts

Category: Relationships	Biblical Text	Summary Analysis
With God	6:11 “Pursue . . . godliness” δίωκε . . . εὐσέβειαν	Paul instructs Timothy to “run after” (δίωκε ¹⁴) “godliness” (εὐσέβειαν) among other things. BDAG indicates that an important dimension of εὐσέβεια is an “awesome respect accorded to God.” ¹⁵ Pursuing and having an “awesome respect accorded to God” suggest foundational aspects of properly relating to him.
With Leaders	1:2 “Timothy, my true child in the faith” Τιμοθέω γνησίῳ τέκνῳ ἐν πίστει Similarly 1:18 where Paul again refers to Timothy as “my child.” τέκνον	Paul’s references to Timothy as “my true child” and “my child” (τέκνον) convey the notion of a close friendship rather than biological parentage. ¹⁶ The usage of “child” demonstrates how Paul uniquely relates to Timothy, a leader-follower under his authority.
With Fellow Followers	5:1-3 v.1 “Do not rebuke an older man but encourage him as you would a father,” Πρεσβυτέρῳ μὴ ἐπιπλήξῃς, ἀλλὰ παρακάλει ὡς πατέρα “younger men as brothers,” νεωτέρους ὡς ἀδελφούς v.2 “older women as mothers,” πρεσβυτέρας ὡς μητέρας “younger women as sisters, in all purity.” νεωτέρας ὡς ἀδελφὰς ἐν πάσῃ ἀγνεΐᾳ v.3 “Honor widows who are truly widows” Χήρας τίμα τὰς ὄντως χήρας	Paul outlines how Timothy’s relationships with different demographic groups within the assembly ought to be characterized. He is to “encourage” (παρακάλει ¹⁷) each group as a particular type of family member. In addition, Timothy is to “honor” (τίμα) widows. Relating to different demographic group members in terms of specific family members would appear to make a significant impact upon the leader-follower relational dynamic.

¹⁴ BDAG, “διώκω,” 254.

¹⁵ BDAG, “εὐσέβεια,” 412.

¹⁶ BDAG, “τέκνον,” 994. Paul’s use of “child” speaks to both a close friendship as well as spiritual parentage. The BDAG entry for τέκνον states, “one who is dear to another without genetic relationship and without distinction in age” and that 1 Tim 3:5 has in view the notion “of a spiritual child in relation to master, apostle, or teacher.”

¹⁷ BDAG, “παρακαλέω,” 765. BDAG provides the following concerning παρακαλέω in this instance: “to urge strongly, appeal to, urge, exhort, encourage.”

Table A3. First Timothy roles-related texts

Category: Roles	Biblical Text	Summary Analysis
Formal Roles and Offices: Apostle	<p>1:1 “Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus” Παῦλος ἀπόστολος Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ</p> <p>Similarly, see 2:7 where Paul mentions being appointed as an apostle.</p>	<p>Paul references his apostolic role from the outset. Literally, ἀπόστολος means “messenger” and can either refer to Paul’s apostolic office or role as gospel envoy.¹⁸ The question emerges from 1:1 and 2:7 which notion is in view.</p>
Formal Roles and Offices: Elders	<p>3:1-2 v.1 “If anyone aspires to the office of overseer, he desires a noble task.” εἴ τις ἐπισκοπῆς ὀρέγεται, καλοῦ ἔργου ἐπιθυμεῖ v.2 “Therefore an overseer” τὸν ἐπίσκοπον</p> <p>See also 5:17 “Let the elders who rule well” Οἱ καλῶς προεστῶτες πρεσβύτεροι</p>	<p>Paul affirms those who desire to assume the office of overseer (ἐπισκοπῆς) given the significance of the role.¹⁹ Such a person “desires a noble task,” he says. Paul then describes the requirements and duties commensurate to being an overseer (ἐπίσκοπον²⁰). In 5:17, Paul has the same office in view though he uses a different term, “elder” (πρεσβύτεροι).</p>
Formal Roles and Offices: Deacons	<p>3:8 “Deacons likewise must be dignified” Διακόνους 3:10-13 v.10 “let them serve as deacons” διακονεῖτωσαν v.12 “deacons” διάκονοι v.13 “For those who serve well as deacons” οἱ γὰρ καλῶς διακονήσαντες</p>	<p>Διακόνους, according to BDAG, in common usage describes “one who gets something done at the behest of a superior, <i>assistant</i>.”²¹ In Christian contexts it refers to someone “identified for special ministerial service in a Christian community”²² Also see 3:12. Verses 10 and 13 in chapter 3 use the cognate διάκονέω.²³</p>

¹⁸ BDAG, “ἀπόστολος,” 122. Regarding ἀπόστολος, BDAG notes, “of messengers with extraordinary status, especially of God’s *messenger, envoy*” and “predominately in the NT of a group of highly honored believers with a special function as God’s envoys.” Concerning Paul’s use in 1 Tim 1:1, the entry continues, “In Christian circles, at first ἀπόστολος denoted one who proclaimed the gospel, and was not strictly limited: Paul frequently calls himself an ἀπόστολος.”

¹⁹ The office of overseer entails, according to BDAG, “engagement in oversight, *supervision*,” and is related to or “of leaders of Christian communities.” BDAG, “ἐπισκοπή,” 379.

²⁰ BDAG, “ἐπισκοπος,” 379-80. The entry for ἐπισκοπος includes some of the following socio-historical context and lexical information: “In the Greco-Roman world ἐπισκοπος frequently refers to one who has a definite function or fixed office of guardianship and related activity within a group . . . including a religious group . . . The term was taken over in Christian communities in reference to one who served as *overseer* or *supervisor*, with special interest in guarding the apostolic tradition.”

²¹ BDAG, “διάκονος,” 230-31.

²² BDAG, “διάκονος,” 230-31.

²³ BDAG, “διάκονέω,” 229.

Category: Roles	Biblical Text	Summary Analysis
Informal Roles: Preacher and Teacher	<p>2:7 “For this I was appointed a <u>preacher and an apostle (I am telling the truth, I am not lying), a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth.</u>”</p> <p>κῆρυξ καὶ ἀπόστολος—ἀλήθειαν λέγω, οὐ ψεύδομαι—διδάσκαλος ἐθνῶν ἐν πίστει καὶ ἀληθείᾳ.</p>	<p>Paul indicates that he was appointed by God to the roles of “preacher,” (κῆρυξ²⁴) “apostle,” (ἀπόστολος²⁵) and “teacher” (διδάσκαλος²⁶). At least in the cases of “preacher” and “teacher,” Paul appears to understand those roles as informal in nature rather than as specific church offices such as in the case of elders and deacons. Further investigation is needed in order to make a determination.</p>

²⁴ A preacher is described as “one who makes public declarations, especially of a transcendent nature, *herald, proclaimer*.” BDAG, “κῆρυξ,” 543.

²⁵ See “Summary Analysis” for 1 Tim 1:1 for a discussion concerning ἀπόστολος.

²⁶ BDAG, “διδάσκαλος,” 241.

Table A4. First Timothy practices-related texts

Category: Practices	Biblical Text	Summary Analysis
Submission to and Dependence upon God	<p>6:11 “flee these things” ταῦτα φεῦγε “Pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, steadfastness, gentleness.” δίωκε δὲ δικαιοσύνην, εὐσέβειαν, πίστιν, ἀγάπην, ὑπομονήν, πραῦπαθίαν</p>	<p>Timothy is told to “flee” (φεῦγε²⁷) the love of money and material things and instead “run after” (δίωκε²⁸), “righteousness” (δικαιοσύνην²⁹), “godliness” (εὐσέβειαν³⁰), and the like. Such directives appear to reflect tangible ways of submitting to and being dependent upon God—practices commensurate to a relationship with the Lord.</p>
Follow and Set Godly Examples	<p>1:16 “But I received mercy for this reason, that in me, as the foremost, Jesus Christ might display his perfect patience <u>as an example</u> to those who were to believe in him for eternal life.” πρὸς ὑποτύπωσιν</p> <p>4:12 “but set the believers an example in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity.” ἀλλὰ τύπος γίνου τῶν πιστῶν ἐν λόγῳ, ἐν ἀναστροφῇ, ἐν ἀγάπῃ, ἐν πίστει, ἐν ἀγνεΐᾳ.</p>	<p>1:16 Paul understands his life to be “an example” (ὑποτύπωσιν) of the availability of God’s abundant mercy to those who believe.³¹</p> <p>4:12 Paul exhorts Timothy in light of his relative youth to set an “example” or “pattern” (τύπος) in his personal conduct.³²</p>

²⁷ BDAG, “φεύγω,” 1052.

²⁸ BDAG, “διώκω,” 254.

²⁹ BDAG, “δικαιοσύνη,” 248. Concerning 1 Tim 6:11, the gloss reads, “*seek to attain/achieve uprightness.*”

³⁰ Within the Septuagint, the New Testament, and early Christian literature, εὐσέβεια can best be understood as “awesome respect accorded to God, *devoutness, piety, godliness.*” BDAG, “εὐσέβεια,” 412.

³¹ Literally, ὑποτύπωσις means “a pattern.” In 1 Tim 1:16, the notions of “model” and “*prototype*” are in view. Concerning 1 Tim 1:16, the entry reads, “as prime recipient of extraordinary mercy in view of his infamous past, Paul serves as a model for the certainty of availability of mercy to others.” BDAG, “ὑποτύπωσις,” 1042.

³² BDAG, “τύπος,” 1020. According to BDAG, τύπος conveys the idea of “an archetype serving as a model, *type pattern, model.*” In 1 Tim 4:12, the idea is further described as “in the moral life *example, pattern.*”

Category: Practices	Biblical Text	Summary Analysis
Follow and Set Godly Examples (cont.)	4:15 “Practice these things, immerse yourself in them, so that all may see your progress.” ταῦτα μελέτα, ἐν τούτοις ἴσθι, ἵνα σου ἡ προκοπή φανερά ᾗ πᾶσιν	Again (4:15), Paul exhorts Timothy to give serious attention to certain ministerial and spiritual practices in order that his “progress” (προκοπή ³³) will be “evident so as to be readily known” (φανερὰ ³⁴). Paul understands his life is an example to other and calls Timothy to the practice of example setting.
Feed, Protect, Equip, and Empower Saints	1:3-5 v.3 “so that you may charge certain persons not to teach any different doctrine,” ἵνα παραγγείλης τισὶν μὴ ἑτεροδιδασκαλεῖν v.4 “nor to devote themselves to myths and endless genealogies which promote speculations rather than the stewardship from God that is by faith.” μηδὲ προσέχειν μύθοις καὶ γενεαλογίαις ἀπεράντοις, αἵτινες ἐκζητήσεις παρέχουσι μᾶλλον ἢ οἰκονομίαν θεοῦ τὴν ἐν πίστει v.5 “The aim of our charge is love” τὸ δὲ τέλος τῆς παραγγελίας ἐστὶν ἀγάπη See also 1:6-7 where some desiring to be “teachers of the law” (νομοδιδάσκαλοι) lack the necessary “understanding” (νοοῦντες).	Paul reminds Timothy to “give orders, command, instruct, direct” (παραγγείλης ³⁵) certain persons to cease teaching contrary doctrine (τεροδιδασκαλεῖν ³⁶) and giving attention to unprofitable myths and genealogies. Love motivates the command. Part of protecting God’s people in this situation entails ending erroneous doctrinal instruction and focus that undermine “the stewardship from God” (οἰκονομίαν θεοῦ). The BDAG discussion of οἰκονομίαν θεοῦ is extremely helpful. ³⁷ 1:6-7 Timothy must also be on guard for those who would presume to instruct others in the law (νομοδιδάσκαλοι) but are “of deviants from correct teaching” ³⁸ and “comprehend nothing.” ³⁹

³³ BDAG, “προκοπή,” 871. BDAG provides the following regarding προκοπή: “a movement forward to an improved state, *progress, advancement, furtherance.*”

³⁴ BDAG, “φανερὸς,” 1047-48.

³⁵ BDAG, “παραγγέλλω,” 760.

³⁶ BDAG, “ἑτεροδιδασκαλέω,” 399. The verb ἑτεροδιδασκαλέω means “to teach contrary to standard instruction, *give divergent, i.e. divisive, instruction.*”

³⁷ The semantic domain of “οἰκονομία” includes, according to BDAG, a “program of instruction, *training* (in the way of salvation).” The lexical entry continues, “This meaning . . . seems to fit best in 1 Tim 1:4, where it is said of the erroneous teaching of certain persons ἐκζητήσεις παρέχουσι μᾶλλον ἢ οἰκονομίαν θεοῦ τὴν ἐν πίστει *they promote useless speculations rather than divine training that is in faith . . . the thought of the verse would be somewhat as follows: ‘endless speculative inquiry merely brings about contention instead of the realization of God’s purpose which has to do with faith.’*” BDAG, “οἰκονομία,” 698.

³⁸ BDAG, “νομοδιδάσκαλος,” 676.

Category: Practices	Biblical Text	Summary Analysis
Feed, Protect, Equip, and Empower Saints (cont.)	<p>1:3-5 v.3 “so that you may charge certain persons not to teach any different doctrine,” ἵνα παραγγείλης τοῖσιν μὴ ἑτεροδιδασκαλεῖν v.4 “nor to devote themselves to myths and endless genealogies which promote speculations rather than the stewardship from God that is by faith.” μηδὲ προσέχειν μύθοις καὶ γενεαλογίαις ἀπεράντοις, αἵτινες ἐκζητήσεις παρέχουσι μᾶλλον ἢ οἰκονομίαν θεοῦ τὴν ἐν πίστει v.5 “The aim of our charge is love” τὸ δὲ τέλος τῆς παραγγελίας ἐστὶν ἀγάπη</p> <p>See also 1:6-7 where some desiring to be “teachers of the law” (νομοδιδάσκαλοι) lack the necessary “understanding” (νοοῦντες).</p>	<p>Paul reminds Timothy to “<i>give orders, command, instruct, direct</i>” (παραγγείλης⁴⁰) certain persons to cease teaching contrary doctrine (τεροδιδασκαλεῖν⁴¹) and giving attention to unprofitable myths and genealogies. Love motivates the command. Part of protecting God’s people in this situation entails ending erroneous doctrinal instruction and focus that undermine “the stewardship from God” (οἰκονομίαν θεοῦ). The discussion in BDAG regarding οἰκονομίαν θεοῦ is extremely helpful.⁴²</p> <p>1:6-7 Timothy must also be on guard for those who would presume to instruct others in the law (νομοδιδάσκαλοι) but are “<i>of deviants from correct teaching</i>”⁴³ and “<i>comprehend nothing</i>.”⁴⁴</p>
Defend and Promote Justice	<p>5:21 “keep these rules without prejudging, doing nothing from partiality.” φυλάξης χωρὶς προκρίματος, μηδὲν ποιῶν κατὰ πρόσκλησιν See also 5:3-16 concerning the care and treatment of widows within the church.</p>	<p>Paul directs Timothy very specifically in terms of dealing with accusations of sinful conduct against an elder and confirmed cases of elder sin. Timothy is to act justly by following Paul’s instructions without “prejudging” (προκρίματος⁴⁵) and “partiality” (πρόσκλησιν⁴⁶).</p>

³⁹ BDAG, “νοέω,” 674-45.

⁴⁰ BDAG, “παραγγέλλω,” 760 (emphasis original).

⁴¹ BDAG, “ἑτεροδιδασκαλέω.” 399. The verb ἑτεροδιδασκαλέω means “to teach contrary to standard instruction, *give divergent*, i.e. *divisive, instruction*.”

⁴² The semantic domain of “οἰκονομία” includes, according to BDAG, a “program of instruction, *training* (in the way of salvation).” The lexical entry continues, “This meaning . . . seems to fit best in 1 Tim 1:4, where it is said of the erroneous teaching of certain persons ἐκζητήσεις παρέχουσι μᾶλλον ἢ οἰκονομίαν θεοῦ τὴν ἐν πίστει *they promote useless speculations rather than divine training that is in faith* . . . the thought of the verse would be somewhat as follows: ‘endless speculative inquiry merely brings about contention instead of the realization of God’s purpose which has to do with faith.’” BDAG, “οἰκονομία,” 698.

⁴³ BDAG, “νομοδιδάσκαλος,” 676.

⁴⁴ BDAG, “νοέω,” 674-45.

⁴⁵ BDAG, “πρόκριμα.” 871. With reference to 1 Tim 5:21. BDAG notes of πρόκριμα that it concerns “a judgment that involves taking a side beforehand, *prejudgment, discrimination*.”

Category: Practices	Biblical Text	Summary Analysis
<p>Proclaim the Word</p>	<p>3:2 Overseers must be “able to teach” διδακτικόν</p> <p>4:6 “If you put these things before the brothers ” Ταῦτα ὑποτιθέμενος τοῖς ἀδελφοῖς “being trained in the words of the faith and of the good doctrine that you have followed.” ἐντρεφόμενος τοῖς λόγοις τῆς πίστεως καὶ τῆς καλῆς διδασκαλίας ἧ παρεκολούθηκας</p> <p>4:11 “Command and teach these things.” Παράγγελλε ταῦτα καὶ δίδασκε</p> <p>4:13 “devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation, to teaching.” πρόσεχε τῇ ἀναγνώσει, τῇ παρακλήσει, τῇ διδασκαλίᾳ</p> <p>4:16 “Keep a close watch on yourself and on the teaching.” ἔπεχε σεαυτῷ καὶ τῇ διδασκαλίᾳ See also 6:20.</p> <p>6:2 “Teach and urge these things” Ταῦτα δίδασκε καὶ παρακάλει.</p>	<p>3:2 Elders must be “skillful in teaching.”⁴⁷</p> <p>4:6 “Put these things before” (ὑποτιθέμενος) conveys the notion of teaching and instruction. ⁴⁸ The specifics of the teaching consists of 4:1-5 and are grounded in “the words of the faith and of good doctrine” that have been part of Timothy’s own life, “that you have followed.”</p> <p>4:11 The imperatives and commands in view are informed by 4:6-10 that have to do with godliness and hoping in God.</p> <p>4:13 Timothy is to proclaim the Scriptures by giving “close attention” to their public reading.⁴⁹</p> <p>4:16 Paul implores Timothy to be “mindful” or “observant” (ἔπεχε⁵⁰) of his teaching.</p> <p>6:2 Timothy is to instruct slaves in specific behaviors and to provide their rationale (6:1,2)</p> <p>Teaching in 1 Timoty includes Word-proclamation, requires careful attention, and emphasizes correct doctrine and good works. These all fall under the practice of Word-proclamation.</p>

⁴⁶ BDAG, “πρόσκλησις,” 881. The entry reads as follows: “a relatively strong preference for something, *inclination*.”

⁴⁷ BDAG, “διδακτικός,” 240.

⁴⁸ BDAG, “ὑποτίθημι,” 1042. The lexical entry for ὑποτίθημι reads as follows: “to provide instruction, *make known, teach something to someone*.” Concerning 1 Tim 4:6, the following notation appears: “This sense appears to fit the context better than *suggest* or *point out something to someone*.”

⁴⁹ The ESV renders πρόσεχε as “devote.” According to BDAG, πρόσεχε conveys “to continue in close attention to something, *occupy oneself with, devote or apply oneself to*.” BDAG, “προσέχω,” 880.

⁵⁰ BDAG, “ἐπέχω,” 362.

Table A5. Titus identity-related texts

Category: Identity	Biblical Text	Summary Analysis
Union with Christ	<p>2:14 [Our great God and Savior Jesus Christ] v. 14 “who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness <u>and to purify for himself a people for his own possession</u> who are zealous for good works.”</p> <p>καὶ καθάριση ἑαυτῷ λαὸν περιούσιον</p>	<p>Paul provides theological grounding (11-14) as basis for various ethical instructions that accord with sound doctrine (2:2-10). Within that framework, he states that Christ’s redemptive work garnered a people “for his own possession” (περιούσιον).⁵¹ BDAG suggests emphasis of περιούσιος lies in being “<i>chosen, especial</i>.”⁵² Without further research it is difficult to definitively determine whether union with Christ or sonship is in view though it seems likely.</p>
Sonship		
Shepherd		

⁵¹ The ESV renders περιούσιον as “for his own possession.” The BDAG entry for περιούσιος reads as follows: “pertaining to being of very special status, *chosen, especial*.” BDAG, “περιούσιος,” 802-3.

⁵² BDAG, “περιούσιος,” 802.

Category: Identity	Biblical Text	Summary Analysis
Steward, Slave, or Servant	<p>1:1 “Paul, a servant of God” Παῦλος δοῦλος θεοῦ</p> <p>1:3 “through the preaching with which I have been entrusted by the command of God our Savior” ἐν κηρύγματι ὃ ἐπιστεύθην ἐγὼ κατ’ ἐπιταγὴν τοῦ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν θεοῦ</p> <p>1:7 “For an overseer, as God’s steward, must be above reproach” δεῖ γὰρ τὸν ἐπίσκοπον ἀνέγκλητον εἶναι ὡς θεοῦ οἰκονόμου</p> <p>2:15 “Declare these things; exhort and rebuke with all authority. Let no one disregard you.” Ταῦτα λάλει καὶ παρακάλει καὶ ἔλεγχε μετὰ πάσης ἐπιταγῆς μηδεὶς σου περιφρονεῖτω.</p>	<p>Paul’s initial self-identifier in his letter to Titus is as a “servant of God” (δοῦλος θεοῦ). A preferable rendering of δοῦλος is “slave.”⁵³ Paul understands his identity as a slave with God as his master.⁵⁴</p> <p>Paul was “entrusted” (ἐπιστεύθην⁵⁵) by God’s command with what appears to be the preaching of God’s Word. The notion of steward seems to be very much in view.</p> <p>The steward identity of an ecclesiastical leader is in view when Paul, in apposition, refers to overseer as “steward” (οἰκονόμου⁵⁶).</p> <p>Paul exhorts Titus to conduct his exhortative and rebuking responsibilities with full “authority” (ἐπιταγῆς⁵⁷). Wilder and Jones note that a steward has “delegated authority.”⁵⁸ Titus’s authority in this instance appears to be complete and delegated by Paul and ultimately derived from God. Further study is required to confirm this observation.</p>

⁵³ See especially Murray J. Harris, *Slave of Christ: A New Testament Metaphor for Total Devotion to Christ*, New Studies in Biblical Theology 8 (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2001).

⁵⁴ BDAG defines δοῦλος as “one who is solely committed to another, *slave, subject* . . . , especially of the relationship of humans to God.” Furthermore, the entry notes that with respect to Titus 1:1, “Christ as master” is in view. BDAG, “δοῦλος,” 260.

⁵⁵ BDAG, “πιστεύω,” 818.

⁵⁶ An οἰκονόμου is “one who is entrusted with management in connection with transcendent matters, *administrator*.” BDAG, “οἰκονόμος,” 698. Furthermore, with reference to Titus 1:7, BDAG notes, “So the overseer of a Christian community must conduct himself as a θεοῦ οἰκονόμου.”

⁵⁷ The ESV uses “authority” in this instance to render ἐπιταγῆς. The BDAG entry reads as follows: “right or authority to command, *authority*.” Furthermore, the entry continues by noting that in the case of Titus 2:15, μετὰ πάσης ἐπιταγῆς means “with all or full authority.” BDAG, “ἐπιταγή,” 383.

⁵⁸ Michael S. Wilder and Timothy Paul Jones, *The God Who Goes Before You* (Nashville: B&H, 2018), 10.

Table A6. Titus relationships-related texts

Category: Relationships	Biblical Text	Summary Analysis
With God		
With Leaders	<p>1:4 “To Titus, my true child in a common faith” Τίτῳ γνησίῳ τέκνῳ κατὰ κοινὴν πίστιν</p>	<p>Paul refers to Titus as his “child” (τέκνον) which conveys the idea of a close friendship rather than biological parentage.⁵⁹ This usage of “child” demonstrates how Paul uniquely relates to a follower-leader, in this case Titus, under his authority and care.</p>
With Fellow Followers	<p>2:7-8 v.7 “Show yourself in all respects to be a model of good works, and in your teaching show integrity, dignity, v.8 and sound speech that cannot be condemned, so that an opponent may be put to shame, having nothing evil to say about us.” περὶ πάντα σεαυτὸν παρεχόμενος τύπον καλῶν ἔργων, ἐν τῇ διδασκαλίᾳ ἀφθορίαν, σεμνότητα, λόγον ὑγιῆ ἀκατάγνωστον, ἵνα ὁ ἐξ ἐναντίας ἐντραπῆ μηδὲν ἔχων λέγειν περὶ ἡμῶν φαῦλον.</p>	<p>Titus is to conduct himself in such a fashion that he is a model (τύπον) of good works and his teaching is characterized by “integrity” or “soundness” (ἀφθορίαν⁶⁰), “dignity” (σεμνότητα⁶¹) and “sound speech” (λόγον ὑγιῆ).</p> <p>While these verses do not contain explicit directives concerning his relational conduct with regard to fellow followers, such personal behavior undoubtedly would ground his relational ethos. Hence, I include 2:7-8 under this particular category.</p>

⁵⁹ BDAG, “τέκνον,” 994. Concerning τέκνον, the entry states the following: “one who is dear to another without genetic relationship and without distinction in age.” In this occurrence, the notion “of a spiritual child in relation to master, apostle, or teacher” appears to be in view.

⁶⁰ BDAG, “ἀφθορία,” 156.

⁶¹ The entry in BDAG for σεμνότης reads as follows: “a manner or mode of behavior that indicates one is above what is ordinary and therefore worthy of special respect.” BDAG, “σεμνότης,” 919.

Table A7. Titus roles-related texts

Category: Roles	Biblical Text	Summary Analysis
Formal Roles and Offices: Apostle	<p>1:1 “Paul, a servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ” Παῦλος δοῦλος θεοῦ, ἀπόστολος δὲ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ</p>	<p>Following his self-reference as a “servant,” Paul notes his apostolic role. The term ἀπόστολος means “messenger” and can either be a reference to Paul’s apostolic office or role as gospel envoy.⁶² Perhaps both are in view. Further investigation is required to establish whatever the case might be.</p>
Formal Roles and Offices: Elders	<p>1:5 “appoint elders in every town as I directed you” καταστήσης κατὰ πόλιν πρεσβυτέρους, ὡς ἐγὼ σοι διαταξάμην</p> <p>See also 1:7 “For an overseer, as God’s steward, must be above reproach” δεῖ γὰρ τὸν ἐπίσκοπον ἀνέγκλητον εἶναι ὡς θεοῦ οἰκονόμον</p>	<p>Paul reminds Titus of the importance of appointing elders (πρεσβυτέρους⁶³) for the churches in towns across Crete.⁶⁴ Then, in verses 6-9, he describes the requirements and duties of the role of overseer (ἐπίσκοπον⁶⁵). Paul seems to have the same office and role in view though he uses different terms, “elders” (πρεσβυτέρους) and overseer (ἐπίσκοπον).</p>
Formal Roles and Offices: Deacons		

⁶² BDAG, “ἀπόστολος,” 122. Regarding ἀπόστολος, BDAG notes, “of messengers with extraordinary status, especially of God’s *messenger, envoy*” and “predominately in the NT of a group of highly honored believers with a special function as God’s envoys.” Concerning Paul’s use in 1 Timothy 1:1, the entry continues, “In Christian circles, at first ἀπόστολος denoted one who proclaimed the gospel, and was not strictly limited: Paul frequently calls himself an ἀπόστολος.”

⁶³ BDAG, “πρεσβύτερος,” 862.

⁶⁴ BDAG, “ἐπισκοπή,” 379. The office of overseers entails, according to BDAG, “engagement in oversight, *supervision*,” and is related to or “of leaders of Christian communities.”

⁶⁵ BDAG, “ἐπίσκοπος,” 379-80. The entry for ἐπίσκοπος includes some of the following: “In the Greco-Roman world ἐπίσκοπος frequently refers to one who has a definite function or fixed office of guardianship and related activity within a group . . . , including a religious group The term was taken over in Christian communities in reference to one who served as *overseer* or *supervisor*, with special interest in guarding the apostolic tradition.”

Category: Roles	Biblical Text	Summary Analysis
<p>Informal Roles: Preacher and Teacher</p>	<p>1:3 “and at the proper time manifested in his word through the preaching with which I have been entrusted by the command of God our Savior” τὸν λόγον αὐτοῦ ἐν κηρύγματι ὃ ἐπιστεύθη ἐγὼ κατ’ ἐπιταγὴν τοῦ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν θεοῦ</p> <p>1:9 “[An overseer] must hold firm to the trustworthy word as taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to rebuke those who contradict it.” ἀντεχόμενον τοῦ κατὰ τὴν διδασκαλίαν πιστοῦ λόγου, ἵνα δυνατὸς ᾦ καὶ παρακαλεῖν ἐν τῇ διδασκαλίᾳ τῇ ὑγιαίνουσῃ καὶ τοὺς ἀντιλέγοντας ἐλέγχειν</p> <p>2:1 “But as for you teach what accords with sound doctrine.” Σὺ δὲ λάλει ἃ πρέπει τῇ ὑγιαίνουσῃ διδασκαλίᾳ</p> <p>2:3-4 “Older women . . . are to teach what is good and so train the young women to love their husbands and children” Πρεσβυτιδας . . . καλοδιδασκάλους ἵνα σωφρονίζωσι τὰς νέας φιλόανδρους εἶναι, φιλοτέκνους</p>	<p>Paul indicates that he has been “entrusted” by God’s directive with a “preaching” (κηρύγματι) role.⁶⁶</p> <p>Paul reminds Titus in 1:9 that overseers must “be able to give instruction” (παρακαλεῖν⁶⁷). Said teaching is to be grounded in the in the “word” as the overseer learned and be in accord with sound doctrine. This suggests overseers were to have an ongoing teaching role within the church—a role that involves instructing others from God’s Word.</p> <p>In 2:1, Paul issues an imperative to Titus: “teach” (λάλει⁶⁸). Titus is to ensure that the content of his instruction comports with “sound doctrine” (γιαίνουσα διδασκαλία).</p> <p>Older women within the church are to teach (καλοδιδασκάλους⁶⁹) younger women. Thus, they are to have an instructional role aimed at helping younger women conduct themselves in specific ways.</p>

⁶⁶ BDAG, “κήρυγμα,” 543.

⁶⁷ BDAG, “παρακαλέω,” 764-65. Interestingly, παρακαλέω connotes the idea of instilling “someone with courage or cheer.” Concerning Titus 1:9 and παρακαλέω, BDAG includes the following entry: “παρακαλεῖν ἐν τῇ διδασκαλίᾳ *encourage (others) with the teaching*” (765).

⁶⁸ BDAG, “λάλει,” 582-3. Of the range of possible meanings of λαλέω listed in BDAG, “to utter words, *talk, speak*,” specifically “with reference to what is expressed,” seems most likely given the emphasis in verse one on “sound doctrine.”

⁶⁹ BDAG, “καλοδιδάσκαλος,” 504.

Table A8. Titus practices-related texts

Category: Practices	Biblical Text	Summary Analysis
Submit to and Depend upon God		
Follow and Set Godly Examples	<p>2:7 “Show yourself in all respects to be a model of good works” περὶ πάντα σεαυτὸν παρεχόμενος τύπον καλῶν ἔργων</p>	<p>Paul exhorts Titus to be a “pattern” or “model” (τύπον) to those around him with respect to his good works or “moral life.”⁷⁰</p>
Endure Suffering		
Defend and Promote Justice	<p>3:1-2 “Remind them to be submissive to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good work, to speak evil of no one, to avoid quarreling, to be gentle, and to show perfect courtesy toward all people.” Note: Space limitations prevent inclusion of Greek text.</p>	<p>By reminding the Cretan church members to be “submissive” (ὑποτάσσεσθαι⁷¹) to political authorities among other things, they contribute to the promotion of justice and restraint of evil. Such behavior contrasts with their pre-Christian lives (3:3).</p>
Proclaim the Word	<p>1:3 “and at the proper time manifested in his word through the preaching with which I have been entrusted by the command of God our Savior” τὸν λόγον αὐτοῦ ἐν κηρύγματι ὃ ἐπιστεύθη ἐγὼ κατ’ ἐπιταγὴν τοῦ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν θεοῦ</p>	<p>Paul recounts that God’s past promises concerning Christ and eternal life were historically preached (κηρύγματι⁷²). He then states that he was “entrusted” by God’s command with the proclamation of the Word. The Christ-centered followership practice of Word-proclamation is clearly in view.</p>

⁷⁰ BDAG, “τύπος,” 1020.

⁷¹ Such submission entails, according to BDAG, “recognition of an ordered structure” and showing proper respect. BDAG, “ὑποτάσσω,” 1042.

⁷² “Proclamation” of the Word of God seems very much in view here.” BDAG, “κήρυγμα,” 543.

Category: Practices	Biblical Text	Summary Analysis
Proclaim the Word (cont')	<p>1:9 “[An overseer] must hold firm to the trustworthy word as taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to rebuke those who contradict it.” ἀντεχόμενον τοῦ κατὰ τὴν διδαχὴν πιστοῦ λόγου, ἵνα δυνατὸς ᾦ καὶ παρακαλεῖν ἐν τῇ διδασκαλίᾳ τῇ ὑγιαίνουσῃ καὶ τοὺς ἀντιλέγοντας ἐλέγχειν</p> <p>2:1 “But as for you, teach what accords with sound doctrine.” Σὺ δὲ λάλει ἃ πρέπει τῇ ὑγιαίνουσῃ διδασκαλίᾳ.</p> <p>2:15 “Declare these things” Ταῦτα λάλει</p> <p>Similarly, 3:8 “and I want you to insist on these things” καὶ περὶ τούτων βούλομαί σε διαβεβαιουῖσθαι</p>	<p>In 1:9, overseers must “be able to give instruction” (παρακαλεῖν⁷³) “in sound doctrine” (ἐν τῇ διδασκαλίᾳ τῇ ὑγιαίνουσῃ⁷⁴). These responsibilities are grounded in the overseer’s commitment to and grasp of “the trustworthy word.” Thus, they appear to be Word-proclamation-related practices.</p> <p>Similar to the instructional responsibility of an overseer, Titus must also “teach” (λάλει⁷⁵) what is consistent with correct or “sound doctrine” (τῇ ὑγιαίνουσῃ διδασκαλίᾳ).</p> <p>The “things” Titus is to “declare” (λάλει) in 2:15 are most likely the content of 2:11-14—God’s saving plan through Christ. Also, another reiteration of God’s saving plan in Jesus informs the directive to Titus to “insist on these things” (διαβεβαιουῖσθαι⁷⁶). Both reflect the practice of Word-proclamation.</p>
Feed, Protect, Equip, and Empower Saints	<p>1:9 “[An overseer] must hold firm to the trustworthy word as taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to rebuke those who contradict it.” ἀντεχόμενον τοῦ κατὰ τὴν διδαχὴν πιστοῦ λόγου, ἵνα δυνατὸς ᾦ καὶ παρακαλεῖν ἐν τῇ διδασκαλίᾳ τῇ ὑγιαίνουσῃ καὶ τοὺς ἀντιλέγοντας ἐλέγχειν</p>	<p>An overseer must, in addition to providing instruction, “rebuke” (ἐλέγχειν⁷⁷) those who speak contrary to sound doctrine. This responsibility seems to be grounded in the overseer’s commitment to and grasp on “the trustworthy word.” Rebuking appears to be a protective exercise for the good of the individual (helping them see their error and cease engaging in it) and also for the entire congregation. The ability to silence erroneous teachers and talkers (1:10) appears grounded in 1:9 as well.</p>

⁷³ BDAG, “παρακαλέω,” 765.

⁷⁴ BDAG, “διδασκαλία,” 240; BDAG, “ὑγιαίνω,” 1023.

⁷⁵ BDAG, “λαλέω,” 582-83.

⁷⁶ Titus is to “*speak confidently, insist*” concerning the matters about Christ and God’s saving plan through him. BDAG, “διαβεβαιόομαι,” 226.

⁷⁷ To rebuke (ἐλέγγω) means “to bring a person to the point of recognizing wrongdoing, *convict, convince* someone or something.” BDAG, “ἐλέγγω,” 315.

Category: Practices	Biblical Text	Summary Analysis
Feed, Protect, Equip, and Empower Saints (cont')	<p>1:13 “Therefore rebuke them sharply that they may be sound in the faith” δι’ ἣν αἰτίαν ἔλεγγε αὐτοὺς ἀποτόμως, ἵνα ὑγιαίνωσιν ἐν τῇ πίστει</p> <p>1:5 “This is why I left you in Crete, so that you might put what remained into order, and appoint elders in every town as I directed you” Τούτου χάριν ἀπέλιπόν σε ἐν Κρήτῃ ἵνα τὰ λείποντα ἐπιδιορθώσῃ, καὶ καταστήσῃς κατὰ πόλιν πρεσβυτέρους, ὡς ἐγὼ σοι διεταξάμην</p> <p>3:3 “Older women . . . are to teach what is good and so train the young women” καλοδιδασκάλους ἵνα σωφρονίζωσι τὰς νέας</p>	<p>Similar to 1:9, Titus is to rebuke (ἐλέγγε⁷⁸) those in error (1:12) such that they “may be sound” (ὑγιαίνωσιν⁷⁹) in the faith (πίστει⁸⁰).</p> <p>The aim of the rebuke is to ensure the purity of their devotion.⁸¹</p> <p>Paul reminds Titus of his task to “appoint” (καταστήσῃς⁸²) elders in every town. Titus’s work in this regard empowers others to led and minister as he delegates responsibilities and assigns roles that possess significant authority and important responsibilities.⁸³</p> <p>In 3:3, Paul’s instructions to Timothy concern the teaching role of older women vis-à-vis younger women and reflect an empowerment of fellow followers (i.e., older women) in the ministry of sound doctrine that results in good works.</p>

⁷⁸ BDAG, “ἐλέγγω,” 315.

⁷⁹ BDAG, “ὑγιαίνω,” 1023.

⁸⁰ BDAG, “πίστις,” 819.

⁸¹ BDAG, “πίστις,” 819.

⁸² BDAG, “καθίστημι,” 492.

⁸³ BDAG, “καθίστημι,” 492.

Table A9. Second Timothy identity-related texts

Category: Identity	Biblical Text	Summary Analysis
<p>Union with Christ</p>	<p>1:1 “by the will of God according to the promise of the life that is in Christ Jesus . . .” διὰ θελήματος θεοῦ κατ’ ἐπαγγελίαν ζωῆς τῆς ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ</p> <p>Similarly 2:1 “by the grace that is in Christ Jesus.” Likewise 2:10 “the salvation that is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.”</p> <p>2:11-13 v.11 “If we have died with him, we will also live with him;” v.12 “if we endure, we will also reign with him; if we deny him, he also will deny us;” v.13 “if we are faithless, he remains faithful—for he cannot deny himself.” v.11 εἰ γὰρ συναπεθάνομεν, καὶ συζήσομεν v.12 εἰ ὑπομένομεν, καὶ συμβασιλεύσομεν εἰ ἀρνησόμεθα, κακεῖνος ἀρνήσεται ἡμᾶς v.13 εἰ ἀπιστοῦμεν, ἐκεῖνος πιστὸς μένει ἀρνήσασθαι ἑαυτὸν οὐ δύναται.</p> <p>2:19 “But God’s firm foundation stands, bearing this seal: ‘The Lord knows those who are his’” ὁ μέντοι στερεὸς θεμέλιος τοῦ θεοῦ ἔστηκεν, ἔχων τὴν σφραγίδα ταύτην· Ἔγνω κύριος τοὺς ὄντας αὐτοῦ</p>	<p>Use of “in Christ Jesus” (ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ) in all three instances (1:1; 2:1; 2:10) would suggest reference to union with Christ. Marshall indicates that in the Pastoral Epistles “in Christ” language expresses union with Christ.⁸⁴</p> <p>Portions of this poetic section (2:11-13) suggest reference to union with Christ: 1) “If we have died with him” (συναπεθάνομεν⁸⁵); 2) “We will live with him” (συνζήσομεν⁸⁶); 3) He remains faithful to the faithless because he “cannot deny” (οὐ δύναται ἀρνήσασθαι⁸⁷) himself. Taken together and with clarity gained through lexical study, these verses appear to be the most robust reference to union with Christ in the Pastoral Epistles. Further research will be necessary to confirm this observation.</p> <p>The Lord “knows” (ἔγνω⁸⁸) those individuals who are his possessions. This verse (2:19) also seems to be another strong reference to the doctrine of union with Christ.</p>

⁸⁴ Marshall, *Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles*, 105-6.

⁸⁵ BDAG, “συναποθνήσκω,” 965. According to BDAG, συναποθνήσκω means to “die with.” With respect to 2 Tim 2:11, the entry notes that “dying and living with Christ” is in view.

⁸⁶ BDAG, “συχάζω,” 954. Here the meaning is to “live with.” With respect to 2 Tim 2:11, BDAG notes, “The Christians die and live with their Lord.” See also BDAG, “δύναμαι,” 261-62.

⁸⁷ The gloss in BDAG for ἀρνέομαι is “deny, repudiate, disown.” The definition stated is as follows: “to disclaim association with a person or event.” BDAG, “ἀρνέομαι,” 132.

⁸⁸ BDAG, “γινώσκω,” 199-201.

Category: Identity	Biblical Text	Summary Analysis
Sonship	<p>2:19 “The Lord knows those who are his” Ἔγνω κύριος τοὺς ὄντας αὐτοῦ</p>	<p>“The Lord knows those who are his” suggests a familial dimension and, thus, reflects a potential reference to sonship. Further study is necessary to confirm observation.</p>
Steward, Slave, or Servant	<p>1:3 “I thank the God whom I serve, as did my ancestors” Χάριν ἔχω τῷ θεῷ, ᾧ λατρεύω ἀπὸ προγόνων</p> <p>1:11 [the gospel] “for which I was appointed” εἰς ὃ ἐτέθην ἐγὼ</p> <p>1:14 “By the Holy Spirit who dwells within us, guard the good deposit entrusted to you.” τὴν καλὴν παραθήκην φύλαξον διὰ πνεύματος ἁγίου τοῦ ἐνοικοῦντος ἐν ἡμῖν</p> <p>*See also 1:12 though it is not entirely clear who is entrusting a deposit to whom.</p> <p>2:2 “and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men” καὶ ἃ ἤκουσας παρ’ ἐμοῦ διὰ πολλῶν μαρτύρων, ταῦτα παράθου πιστοῖς ἀνθρώποις</p>	<p>In 1:3, Paul recognizes that he “serves” (λατρεύω) God. The meaning of λατρεύω is to render religious service, particularly of a cultic nature.⁸⁹ In 1:11, Paul recognizes that he was “appointed” (ἐτέθην) by God to the roles of preacher, apostle, and teacher.⁹⁰ As such, God is the authority to whom Paul is accountable. The steward identity in appears to be in view in these examples.</p> <p>In 1:14, Paul directs Timothy to “guard the good deposit entrusted to you” (παραθήκην φύλαξον⁹¹) Timothy is a steward and, as such, is to keep watch over that which has been given to him.</p> <p>In 2:2, Timothy is directed to find men who can steward the very things Paul has spoken. Timothy is to “entrust” (παράθου⁹²) Paul’s teaching to “trust-worthy” or “dependable” (πιστοῖς ἀνθρώποις⁹³) men. Again, the notion of steward is in view.</p>

⁸⁹ Of λατρεύω, BDAG notes, “serve, in our literature only of the carrying out of religious duties, especially of a cultic nature, by human beings.” BDAG, “λατρεύω,” 587.

⁹⁰ BDAG, “τίθημι,” 1004.

⁹¹ See also 1 Tim 6:20 above. Concerning παραθήκη, BDAG states that it occurs “only in the pastorals and always used with φυλάσσειν, of the spiritual heritage entrusted to the orthodox Christian.” BDAG, “παραθήκη,” 764; BDAG, “φυλάσσω,” 1068.

⁹² In this verse, to entrust means to give for “safekeeping or transmission to others.” BDAG, “παρατίθημι,” 772.

⁹³ The ESV renders πιστοῖς as “faithful,” which BDAG states means “pertaining to being worthy of belief or trust, trustworthy, faithful, dependable, inspiring trust/faithful.” BDAG, “πιστός,” 820.

Category: Identity	Biblical Text	Summary Analysis
Steward, Slave, or Servant (cont')	<p>2:24 “<u>the Lord’s servant</u> must not be quarrelsome” δοῦλον δὲ κυρίου</p> <p>Also, 2:21 “he will be a vessel for honorable use, set apart as holy, <u>useful to the master of the house</u>, ready for every good work.” εὐχρηστον τῷ δεσπότῃ</p> <p>4:1 “I charge you ” Διαμαρτύρομαι</p>	<p>Paul, addressing Timothy, identifies him as the Lord’s “servant” (δοῦλος⁹⁴). Both 1:3 and 2:24 are clear references to servant-slave identity.</p> <p>In 2:21, reference to the usefulness (εὐχρηστον⁹⁵) of a person to the “master” of the house (δεσπότη⁹⁶) is grounded in the idea that God is the master, and he is the “owner of vessel.”⁹⁷ The slave motif may stand in the background. Further research is required to confirm the matter, however.</p> <p>The serious exhortation in 4:1 emphasizes Timothy as steward of significant responsibility.</p>
Shepherd		

⁹⁴ BDAG, “δοῦλος,” 260.

⁹⁵ BDAG, “εὐχρηστος,” 417.

⁹⁶ BDAG notes that with respect to 2 Tim 2:21, δεσπότης is the “one who controls a thing, owner of vessel.” BDAG, “δεσπότης,” 220.

⁹⁷ BDAG, “δεσπότης,” 220.

Table A10. Second Timothy relationships-related texts

Category: Relationships	Biblical Text	Summary Analysis
With God	<p>4:17 “But the Lord stood by me and strengthened me” ὁ δὲ κύριός μοι παρέστη καὶ ἐνεδυνάμωσέν με</p>	<p>Paul recounts an occasion when he faced some sort of legal proceeding alone. Yet, not only was the Lord present with him (παρέστη⁹⁸), but Christ also enabled or “strengthened” (ἐνεδυνάμωσέν⁹⁹) him. Reference is made to the means by which God through Christ relates to his followers—he is faithfully and helpfully present.</p>
With Leaders	<p>1:2 “To Timothy, my beloved child” Τιμοθέῳ ἀγαπητῷ τέκνῳ</p> <p>Also, 2:1 where Paul again refers to Timothy as my “child.” τέκνον</p>	<p>Paul’s references to Timothy as “my beloved child” and “my child” (τέκνον) convey the notion of a close friendship.¹⁰⁰ This language seems to suggest a close and caring relationship between apostle and protégé as well as Paul’s role in Timothy spiritual development. Paul relates to Timothy, a leader he oversees, on this basis.</p>
With Fellow Followers	<p>2:24 “And the Lord’s servant must not be quarrelsome but kind to everyone” δοῦλον δὲ κυρίου οὐ δεῖ μάχεσθαι, ἀλλὰ ἥπιον εἶναι πρὸς πάντα</p>	<p>Paul reminds Timothy that in the discharge of his duties the Lord’s “servant,” must not be combative or “quarrelsome” (μάχεσθαι¹⁰¹) but must be “kind toward” all (ἥπιον¹⁰²). This directive forms the basis of how Timothy relates to those within the church, fellow followers of Christ.</p>

⁹⁸ According to BDAG, *παρίστημι* means “to be present in any way” and, in the case of 2 Tim 4:17, conveys the idea of “*come to the aid of, help, stand by.*” BDAG, “*παρίστημι*,” 778.

⁹⁹ BDAG, “*ἐνδυναμώω*,” 333.

¹⁰⁰ BDAG, “*τέκνον*,” 994. Paul’s use of “child” speaks to both a close friendship as well as spiritual parentage. The BDAG entry for *τέκνον* states, “one who is dear to another without genetic relationship and without distinction in age,” and that 1 Tim 3:5 has in view the notion “of a spiritual child in relation to master, apostle, or teacher.”

¹⁰¹ BDAG, “*μάχομαι*,” 622.

¹⁰² BDAG, “*ἥπιος*,” 439.

Table A11. Second Timothy roles-related texts

Category: Roles	Biblical Text	Summary and Analysis
Formal Roles and Offices: Apostle	<p>1:1 “Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus” Παῦλος ἀπόστολος Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ See also 1:11.</p>	<p>Paul references his apostolic role in the letter’s greeting and again a short time later (1:11). As noted above, ἀπόστολος means “messenger” and can either refer to Paul’s apostolic office or role as gospel envoy.¹⁰³ Which is in view must be established with further investigation.</p>
Informal Roles: Preacher and Teacher	<p>1:11[the gospel] “for which I was appointed a preacher, and apostle and teacher” εἰς ὃ ἐτέθην ἐγὼ κήρυξ καὶ ἀπόστολος καὶ διδάσκαλος</p> <p>4:14-15 “But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings” σὺ δὲ μένε ἐν οἷς ἔμαθες καὶ ἐπιστώθης, εἰδὼς παρὰ τίνων ἔμαθες, καὶ ὅτι ἀπὸ βρέφους ἱερὰ γράμματα οἶδας,</p>	<p>Paul indicates that he was appointed by God to the roles of “preacher,” (κήρυξ¹⁰⁴) “apostle,” (ἀπόστολος¹⁰⁵) and “teacher” (διδάσκαλος¹⁰⁶). In the cases of “preacher” and “teacher,” Paul seems to understand these roles as informal in nature rather than as specific church offices (e.g., elder). See 1:1 and 1:11 above for a discussion concerning whether Paul has a formal office or informal role in view.</p> <p>While Paul seems to have himself in view here, he seems to be stressing the point that Timothy’s mother and grandmother instructed him during his childhood in the Scriptures. Thus, they assumed the informal teaching role for many years.</p>

¹⁰³ BDAG, “ἀπόστολος,” 122. Regarding ἀπόστολος, BDAG notes “of messengers with extraordinary status, especially of God’s *messenger, envoy*” and “predominately in the NT of a group of highly honored believers with a special function as God’s envoys.” Concerning Paul’s use in 1 Tim 1:1, the entry continues, “In Christian circles, at first ἀπόστολος denoted one who proclaimed the gospel, and was not strictly limited: Paul frequently calls himself an ἀπόστολος.”

¹⁰⁴ BDAG, “κήρυξ,” 543. A preacher is described as “one who makes public declarations, especially of a transcendent nature, *herald, proclaimer*.”

¹⁰⁵ See analysis and summary for 1 Tim 1:1 for a discussion concerning ἀπόστολος.

¹⁰⁶ BDAG, “διδάσκαλος,” 241.

Table A12. Second Timothy practices-related texts

Category: Practices	Biblical Text	Summary and Analysis
<p>Submit to and Depend upon God</p>	<p>1:8 but share in suffering for the gospel by the power of God” ἀλλὰ συγκακοπάθησον τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ κατὰ δύναμιν θεοῦ</p> <p>1:14 “By the Holy Spirit who dwells within us, guard the good deposit entrusted to you.” τὴν καλὴν παραθήκην φύλαξον διὰ πνεύματος ἁγίου τοῦ ἐνοικοῦντος ἐν ἡμῖν.</p>	<p>Paul directs Timothy to join with him in suffering for the gospel and to do so my means of God’s power (δύναμιν¹⁰⁷). See also 1:6-7 where Paul mentions the availability of divine power. Timothy must depend upon God’s divine enablement to enduring suffering.</p> <p>Paul directs Timothy in 1:14 to “guard the good deposit entrusted to you” by means of the Holy Spirit who “makes its home in people” or “dwells” (ἐνοικοῦντος) within them.¹⁰⁸</p> <p>According to these verses, dependence upon divine power and the resident Holy Spirit is necessary if one is to submit to God’s will by sharing in suffering for the gospel and guarding what God gives to steward.</p>
<p>Follow and Set Godly Examples</p>	<p>1:13 “Follow the pattern of the sound words that you have heard from me, in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus.” ὑποτύπωσιν ἔχε ὑγιαίνοντων λόγων ὧν παρ’ ἐμοῦ ἤκουσας ἐν πίστει καὶ ἀγάπῃ τῇ ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ</p>	<p>Paul issues an imperative to Timothy to “follow” (ἔχε¹⁰⁹) the standard or “pattern” (ὑποτύπωσιν¹¹⁰) of the “correct” or “sound” (ὑγιαίνοντων¹¹¹) words he has spoken and that Timothy has heard. Paul understands his instruction to be an example for Timothy to replicate.</p>

¹⁰⁷ BDAG, “δύναμις,” 262.

¹⁰⁸ BDAG, “ἐνοικέω,” 338.

¹⁰⁹ Concerning ἔχε in 2 Tim 1:13, BDAG states, “To take a hold on something, *have, hold (to), grip*” and then provides the following notation: “of hold fast to matters of transcendent importance . . . , an example of sound teaching 2 Tim 1:13.” BDAG, “ἔχω,” 420-21.

¹¹⁰ BDAG, “ὑποτύπωσις,” 1042.

¹¹¹ BDAG, “ὑγιαίνω,” 1023.

Category: Practices	Biblical Text	Summary and Analysis
<p>Follow and Set Godly Examples (cont')</p>	<p>3:10-11 v.10 “You, however, have followed my teaching, my conduct, my aim in life, my faith, my patience, my love, my steadfastness” v.11 “my persecutions and sufferings” Σὺ δὲ παρηκολούθησάς μου τῆ διδασκαλία, τῆ ἀγωγῆ, τῆ προθέσει, τῆ πίστει, τῆ μακροθυμίᾳ, τῆ ἀγάπῃ, τῆ ὑπομονῇ, τοῖς διωγμοῖς, τοῖς παθήμασιν</p> <p>3:14 “But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it” σὺ δὲ μένε ἐν οἷς ἔμαθες καὶ ἐπιστώθης, εἰδὼς παρὰ τίνων ἔμαθες</p>	<p>Paul notes that Timothy has “followed” (παρηκολούθησάς) the apostle’s teaching, conduct, purpose, faith, patience, love, etc. Concerning the use of παρηκολούθησάς, Paul appears to be acknowledging that Timothy has not only given special attention to these aspects of the apostle’s life but has also shaped his own life by them.¹¹² He understands his teaching and life serve as pattern or model to be emulated and recognizes Timothy’s practice of imitation.</p> <p>In 3:14, Paul calls Timothy to persevere in what he was taught and his belief commitments. Paul’s directive rests on Timothy’s “knowing” (εἰδὼς¹¹³) those who taught him (e.g., Paul and his mother and grandmother). Perhaps something about their lives and Timothy’s knowledge of them aids in his ability to obey Paul’s imperative. The practice of looking to examples seems very much in view, and it is not only Paul who has provided an important, validating example.</p>

¹¹² The BDAG entry for παρακολουθέω, with respect to 2 Tim 3:10, reads as follow: “to conform to someone’s belief or practice by paying special attention, *follow faithfully, follow as a rule.*” BDAG, “παρακολουθέω,” 767.

¹¹³ BDAG, “οἶδα,” 693.

Category: Practices	Biblical Text	Summary and Analysis
Endure Suffering	<p>1:8 “Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord, nor of me his prisoner, <u>but share in suffering for the gospel by the power of God</u>” ἀλλὰ συγκακοπάθησον τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ κατὰ δύναμιν θεοῦ</p> <p>1:12 “which is why I suffer as I do ” δι’ ἣν αἰτίαν καὶ ταῦτα πάσχω</p> <p>2:3 “Share in suffering as a good soldier of Christ Jesus.” συγκακοπάθησον ὡς καλὸς στρατιώτης Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ.</p> <p>2:9 v. 8 “Remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, the offspring of David, as preached in my gospel, v. 9 <u>for which I am suffering, bound with chains as a criminal.</u>” ἐν ᾧ κακοπαθῶ μέχρι δεσμῶν ὡς κακοῦργος</p> <p>3:11 [You have followed . . .] v. 11 my persecutions and sufferings that happened to me at Antioch . . .” τοῖς διωγμοῖς, τοῖς παθήμασιν, οἷά μοι ἐγένετο ἐν Ἀντιοχείᾳ</p>	<p>Paul directs Timothy to “suffer together with” (συγκακοπάθησον¹¹⁴) him for the gospel (rather than be ashamed of it and of Paul, a prisoner). Paul embraced the practice of suffering endurance for the gospel’s sake and invites Timothy to do the same.</p> <p>In 1:12, Paul reminds Timothy that he “suffers” (πάσχω¹¹⁵) because of his devotion to the gospel and gospel ministry.</p> <p>The use of συγκακοπαθέω in 2:3 is the same as in 1:8. BDAG suggests Paul is extending another invitation to Timothy to suffer with him as “a good soldier of Christ Jesus.”¹¹⁶</p> <p>In 2:9, Paul reminds Timothy that he suffers (κακοπαθῶ¹¹⁷) in prison as a criminal for the sake of the gospel and Christ.</p> <p>Paul reminds Timothy in 3:11 how he has observed, among other things, his “persecutions” (διωγμοῖς¹¹⁸) and “sufferings” (παθήμασιν¹¹⁹) throughout his life and ministry.</p>

¹¹⁴ BDAG, “συγκακοπαθέω,” 951.

¹¹⁵ BDAG, “πάσχω,” 785

¹¹⁶ BDAG, “συγκακοπαθέω,” 951.

¹¹⁷ In 2 Tim 2:9, κακοπαθῶ conveys the idea of suffering “*misfortune*.” BDAG, “κακοπαθῶ,” 500.

¹¹⁸ BDAG, “διωγμός,” 253.

¹¹⁹ BDAG, “πάθημα,” 747.

Category: Practices	Biblical Text	Summary and Analysis
Endure Suffering (cont')	<p>3:12 “Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted” καὶ πάντες δὲ οἱ θέλοντες ἕξῃν εὐσεβῶς ἔν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ διωχθήσονται</p> <p>4:5 endure suffering” κακοπάθησον</p>	<p>In 3:12, Paul declares that all who pursue a life of godliness will be “persecuted” (διωχθήσονται¹²⁰).</p> <p>Paul issues in 4:5 an imperative to Timothy: “endure suffering” (κακοπάθησον¹²¹).</p>
Proclaim the Word	<p>2:15 “Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth.” σπουδάσον σεαυτὸν δόκιμον παραστήσαι τῷ θεῷ, ἐργάτην ἀνεπαίσχυντον, ὀρθοτομοῦντα τὸν λόγον τῆς ἀληθείας</p> <p>4:2 “preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching.” κήρυξον τὸν λόγον, ἐπίστηθι εὐκαίρως ἀκαίρως, ἔλεγξον, ἐπιτίμησον, παρακάλεσον, ἐν πάσῃ μακροθυμίᾳ καὶ διδαχῇ</p>	<p>Paul exhorts Timothy to “present” (παραστήσαι¹²²) or show himself as a worker that can correctly handle (ὀρθοτομοῦντα¹²³) “the word of truth” and, thus, need not be ashamed. The accurate and proper proclamation of God’s Word is very much in view.</p> <p>In 4:2, Paul solemnly charges Timothy to “preach” (κήρυξον) the Word of God and to do so at all times. “Preach” entails making “public declarations” that are “divine in origin or relates to divinity.”¹²⁴ Closely related to Word-proclamation and teaching are the practices connected to the terms “reprove” (ἔλεγξον¹²⁵) “rebuke” (ἐπιτίμησον¹²⁶) and “exhort” (παρακάλεσον¹²⁷).</p>

¹²⁰ “Persecuted” (διωχθήσονται) means “to harass someone, especially because of beliefs.” BDAG, “διώκω,” 254.

¹²¹ BDAG notes a slightly nuanced meaning of κακοπάθησον in 2 Tim 4:5 compared to 2:9. In this instance, the meaning is that of “bear hardship patiently.” BDAG, “κακοπαθῶ,” 500.

¹²² The entry for παρίστημι says, “To be present in any way, *be present*.” BDAG, “παρίστημι,” 778.

¹²³ Regarding 2 Tim 2:15, ὀρθοτομέω “would probably mean *guide the word of truth along a straight path* (like a road that goes straight to its goal), without being turned aside by worldly debates or impious talk.” BDAG, “ὀρθοτομέω,” 722.

¹²⁴ BDAG, “κηρύσσω,” 543-44.

¹²⁵ The entry in BDAG reads, “To express strong disapproval of someone’s action, *reprove, correct*.” BDAG, “ἐλέγχω,” 315.

¹²⁶ Concerning ἐπιτίμησον (“rebuke”), the entry in BDAG, referencing 2 Tim 4:2, reads as

Category: Practices	Biblical Text	Summary and Analysis
Proclaim the Word (cont')	4:5 “do the work of an evangelist” ἔργον ποιήσον εὐαγγελιστοῦ	Paul charges Timothy in 4:5 to conduct himself as an “evangelist” (εὐαγγελιστοῦ). This entails the proclamation of the gospel. ¹²⁸
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follows: “to express strong disapproval of someone, *rebuke, reprove, censure* also *speak seriously, warn* in order to prevent an action or bring one to an end.” BDAG, “ἐπιτιμάω,” 384.

¹²⁷ The entry for παρακαλέω, as it pertains to 2 Tim 3:16-17, reads as follows: “to urge strongly, *appeal to, urge, exhort, encourage*.” BDAG, “παρακαλέω,” 764.

¹²⁸ An εὐαγγελιστοῦ is, according to BDAG, a “*proclaimer of the gospel*.” BDAG, “εὐαγγελιστής,” 403.

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ABSTRACT

BE THE EXAMPLE: CHRIST-CENTERED FOLLOWERSHIP IN THE PASTORAL EPISTLES

Christopher Alan Sarver, EdD
The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2020
Chair: Dr. Timothy Paul Jones

The vast majority of the leadership literature the last century concerned itself with the traits, behaviors, and abilities of leaders. Followers and following, in contrast, received scant attention. The burgeoning discipline of followership aims to address that historic neglect by considering the role followers play along with leaders in producing organizational outcomes. Michael S. Wilder and Timothy Paul Jones correct this deficit in *The God Who Goes Before You* by presenting a biblical theology of leadership grounded in an awareness of followership theory and research. Their model, Christ-centered followership as pastoral leadership, asserts that the leaders of God's people are above all followers, "followers of the God who goes before them." This project seeks to validate their paradigm by analyzing the Pastoral Epistles for evidence of its core conceptual components. In addition to affirming their construct, this work aims to adjust it in light of the imitation motif within 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus and apply it to efforts to develop Christian emerging-adult men as spiritual leaders. To that end, I advance a Christ-centered followership as spiritual leadership model and mentor-oriented pedagogy intended to address the challenges and barriers that often hinder emerging-adult men from exercising biblically grounded leadership.

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