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DEVELOPING DISCIPLE-MAKERS AT CHRIST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
IN GEORGETOWN, TEXAS

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A Project  
Presented to  
the Faculty of  
The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

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Doctor of Education Ministry

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by  
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**APPROVAL SHEET**

DEVELOPING DISCIPLE-MAKERS AT CHRIST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
IN GEORGETOWN, TEXAS

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I dedicate this project to my family, who would not be without my wife, Lori's, cooperation for the gospel. Lori, you have taught me more in my adult life about cooperation for the gospel than anyone. Everything that you do with intentionality is rooted in Scripture for purpose of gospel relationship. Your joining me in life has helped me to change and grow together in Christ. Thank you for living with me through those difficult days of Southern Seminary equipping. Thank you for our two sons, who led us to our two daughters through their marriages, and now grandchildren. My life is so full of life! I am so glad that I had ten good reasons why you should have gone out with me on our first date so many years ago when I learned of my desire to live in an understanding way with you for each day between that day, today, and all days to come.

I love you.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

|   | Page |
|---|------|
| PREFACE.....  | viii |
| Chapter   |      |
| 1. INTRODUCTION .....   | 1    |
| Purpose.....  | 1    |
| Goals .....   | 1    |
| Context.....  | 5    |
| Rationale .....   | 11   |
| Definitions and Limitations/Delimitations.....                              | 19   |
| Research Methodology.....   | 21   |
| 2. BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL SUPPORT FOR COOPERATIVE<br>DISCIPLE-MAKING..... | 24   |
| What Is Cooperation in Disciple-Making? .....                               | 25   |
| Authority and Apprenticeship.....   | 27   |
| Facilitation and Negotiation .....  | 28   |
| Flourishing.....  | 30   |
| Cooperative Disciple-Making<br>in the New Testament.....                    | 33   |
| Cooperation Clarified in Corinth’s Church .....                             | 34   |
| Cooperation and Commission.....   | 38   |
| Cooperation to Act.....   | 39   |

| Chapter   | Page      |
|---|-----------|
| Cooperative Disciple-Making in Christ’s<br>Authoritative Pattern of Living .....                              | 43        |
| Jesus is Uniquely Cooperative.....  | 44        |
| Jesus Provides Perspective as being Cooperative.....  | 46        |
| Jesus is Distinctly Cooperative .....   | 47        |
| Cooperative Disciple-Making of the Wandering .....  | 49        |
| Cooperative Disciple-Making of the Wounded .....  | 51        |
| The Pattern of Cooperative Disciple-Making .....  | 57        |
| Abide.....  | 58        |
| Connect .....   | 59        |
| Evangelize.....   | 61        |
| Disciple .....  | 63        |
| Worship.....  | 65        |
| Summary .....   | 66        |
| <b>3. OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR COOPERATIVE<br/>DISCIPLE-MAKING AT CHRIST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.....</b> | <b>68</b> |
| Evangelism as the Third Point of a Five Point Pattern .....   | 69        |
| Is Cooperative Disciple-Making Happening at CPC? .....  | 73        |
| Possible Challenges for Cooperative<br>Disciple-Making at CPC .....   | 75        |
| Intentional Abiding.....  | 76        |
| Connecting to Worship .....   | 81        |
| Discipling Before Evangelizing?.....  | 85        |
| Personalizing.....  | 89        |

| Chapter  | Page       |
|--|------------|
| Immediate Opportunities for Cooperative Disciple-Making within CPC .....             | 92         |
| Boys and Girls Club.....   | 92         |
| Jubilee Prison Ministry .....  | 93         |
| Delaney Senior Living Community.....   | 94         |
| Community Groups .....   | 96         |
| Considerations for the Future.....   | 100        |
| Conclusion.....  | 102        |
| <b>4. PERSONALLY CONNECTING WITH CHRIST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH'S RULING ELDERS.....</b> | <b>103</b> |
| CPC Drama, Teaching Elder Directional Guidance, and Resulting Cooperation .....      | 104        |
| Ruling Elder Interpersonal Interviews .....  | 109        |
| Framing Ruling Elder Identity Distinction .....                                      | 110        |
| Abiding within the Ruling Elders of CPC .....  | 112        |
| Connecting within the Ruling Elders at CPC .....                                     | 114        |
| Evangelizing within the Ruling Elders at CPC.....                                    | 117        |
| Discipling within the Ruling Elders at CPC .....                                     | 119        |
| Worshiping within the Ruling Elders at CPC.....                                      | 126        |
| Tangential Observations.....   | 127        |
| Conclusion.....  | 130        |
| <b>5. IMPLEMENTING LUKE'S FIVE-POINT PATTERN FOR COOPERATIVE DISCIPLESHIP .....</b>  | <b>132</b> |
| Fostering Intentional Abiding for Multiplying .....                                  | 133        |
| Integration of Belief and Behavior to Connect .....                                  | 134        |

| Chapter   | Page |
|---|------|
| <i>Simple Evangelism</i> Training .....                                   | 140  |
| Personal Discipleship Prioritization.....                                 | 145  |
| Clarity between Catechism and Evangelism .....                            | 147  |
| Communicating the Difference between<br>Catechizing and Evangelizing..... | 152  |
| Community Groups Focusing on the Community .....                          | 158  |
| Rebranding Reformed Theology.....   | 166  |
| Georgetown Institute of Christian Formation .....                         | 169  |
| Conclusion.....   | 172  |
| Evaluation .....  | 173  |
| <br>Appendix  |      |
| 1. POSITION DESCRIPTION.....  | 178  |
| 2. SIMPLE EVANGELISM .....  | 181  |
| 3. MEMORANDUM .....   | 187  |
| 4. CURRICULUM .....   | 191  |
| 5. RULING ELDER INTERPERSONAL INTERVIEW .....                             | 200  |
| BIBLIOGRAPHY.....   | 216  |



## PREFACE

This project was the result of circumstance and people. It was a season of life that both benefited and confused the essence of my denominational identity. God as sovereign never questioned, I came to question the way that the men and women of my Baptist church represented Christ to the nations. My Baptist church's doctrine was called into question by the theological education of my Baptist seminary. Why was there seemingly so much discontinuity between the two? What is my responsibility in disagreement among believers? With whom can, do, and may I cooperate for the gospel?

Essentially it was within the Southern Baptist hermeneutic that conflict in my thinking emerged. Scripture, the Word of God, spoke to my heart and I was changed. It is God's very goodness that inspired me to invite my precious wife, Lori, to join me in journeying to Louisville, KY, to pursue theological education. I desired us to be changed together and grow together for the gospel. Throughout, Lori loved me and inspired me.

God brought my sons and their wives into our common Reformed Evangelical doctrine through the influence of Southern Seminary. God's graciousness has placed my wife, sons, their wives, and me on a common trajectory in thought, word, and deed—doctrine. It is to God and the response of my family that I owe gratitude for far more than their cooperating with me in completing this project. I owe thanks for their patience, kindness, and generosity throughout.

I would next like to thank the members of Christ Presbyterian Church. In the pain of God's changing me, they demonstrated love of me as their neighbor. They cooperated with me as I pursued the endeavor of this project. They gave me a place to rest in Reformed doctrine while tolerating my longstanding Evangelicalism.

I give my sincerest thanks to Mac Bineham for introducing me to Southern Seminary, Dan Dumas for accepting the challenge to lead me through the process of my project, the men of my cohort for cooperating with me through the journey, and the leadership at The Village Church who provided me guidance and templates to frame the Reformed Evangelical perspective from which I communicate. Each challenged me along the way and provided means to communicate myself in moving me forward toward completion. Tim Beougher offered to supervise me when there were so many younger men who could have benefited from his wisdom for which I am forever grateful. My neighbor Steve Vickers, who does not believe Jesus is God, joined me for this adventure as my editor. Steve translated the theologizing that goes on in my head to the paper editorially for the understanding of all who might read it. Steve and I spent rich days discussing the identities of God, man, and Jesus to which we each responded as we each most desired to respond to the gospel.

Georgetown, Texas

December, 2020

Michael Thompson

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### **Purpose**

The purpose of this project was to identify and deploy a biblical disciple making pattern for living that is effective in cooperative evangelism and outreach between me as a Southern Baptist and the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA) members of Christ Presbyterian Church (CPC) in Georgetown, Texas, whom I serve.

#### **Goals**

There were five goals for this project. First, I needed to integrate as a Reformed Evangelical into the local Reformed community of CPC without compromising my confessional Baptist identity. Second, CPC leadership and I had to analyze CPC's existing approach to disciple-making together. The third goal was to deduce a plan for change to a biblical pattern for cooperative disciple-making. Fourth, I needed to implement the plan for the desired results. Finally, evaluation of the results was necessary to promote sustainability of the members' change and growth.

The first goal was achieved when CPC leaders and I agreed on a position description for my staff role.<sup>1</sup> I was brought into the organization as the Evangelism and Outreach Leader. The charter for my position defined disciple-making as a cooperative endeavor between me as a Reformed Evangelical and the Reformed people of CPC while sustaining my Southern Baptist Convention membership through my local Baptist church. As two distinct confessional groups, the charter acknowledged me as apprentice

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<sup>1</sup>See appendix 1.

to the authority of CPC’s leadership with us jointly operating in negotiating and facilitating anticipated change.

The second goal, analyzing the status-quo, required time to build relationship with CPC members to promote transparency. I needed members to be candid about the way they behaved in their beliefs specific to Deuteronomy 6:4-9, Matthew 28:18-20, and Acts 1:8. CPC had experienced a seeming “zero-growth-rate by conversion” during the life of the church.<sup>2</sup> This fact, according to Teaching Elder Whit Anderson, evidenced CPC’s ineffective disciple-making behavior. Anderson received me as an opportunity to disciple CPC members for the gospel. Determining why CPC was seemingly not experiencing the multiplying effect of the gospel was critical. We were able to determine why by negotiating the conflicting views of members. It was agreed that Scripture is the ultimate authority to which we conform.<sup>3</sup> I did this by meeting with each CPC Community Group. Leadership and I agreed on an interactive presentation for me and Associate Pastor Woonny Kim to facilitate. A successful outcome was achieved by jointly operating with CPC leadership to produce a white paper with Kim articulating the mutually agreed biblical pattern of disciple-making for members to imitate—*Simple Evangelism*.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Whit Anderson, initial meeting with Michael Thompson to discuss the impetus of my wife and me bringing a couple who appeared to be wandering and who are spiritually wounded to visit CPC to worship. The gospel resulted in Whit’s invitation for us to meet CPC’s Session to interview for the position of Evangelism and Outreach Leader, Georgetown, TX, April 19, 2018.

<sup>3</sup> Timothy J. Keller, *Serving A Movement: Doing Balanced, Gospel-Centered Ministry in Your City* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2016), 14. Tim Keller explains that “both the Bible and church history show us that it is plausible to hold all the correct individual biblical doctrines and yet functionally lose our grasp on the gospel. It is critical, therefore, in every new generation and setting to find ways to *communicate the gospel clearly and strikingly*, distinguishing it from its opposites and counterfeits.”

<sup>4</sup> Coauthored with CPC Associate Pastor Woonny Kim, *Simple Evangelism* is a publication resulting from Kim (PCA) and me as a Southern Baptist cooperating to teach CPC’s members how to deploy a pattern for disciple-making that Luke writes about in his Gospel for the believer to imitate Jesus in *communicating the gospel clearly and strikingly*. See appendix 2.

Next, a plan was achieved during Community Group discussion that fulfilled the third goal. Outlining the plan in a memorandum to leadership, it included three-components: a background summary of events leading up to the memo's production, a go-forward plan for *Simple Evangelism* to be realized in the life of CPC members, and summative assessment of CPC disciple-making.<sup>5</sup> Successful outcome of the third goal was that the Ruling Elder responsible for overseeing me in the functional area of discipleship stated his intent to implement 100 percent of the recommended action.

The fourth goal, implementing the plan, included four concurrent endeavors: broadening *Simple Evangelism* CPC readership, structuring a curriculum for a corresponding adult learning Sunday School experience, implementing a comparable adult learning experience that incorporates members who do not participate in Community Groups or attend Sunday School, and incorporating instruction in the cooperative disciple-making pattern of living in the new member curriculum.<sup>6</sup> With the balance of CPC adult education teachers, the Ruling Elder responsible for discipleship concluded that an inward focus on anxiety, fear, and depression was the priority. Having viewed me an opportunity, gospel productivity would be determined in the Session's receiving my recommendations as strong, weak, or a threat to their collective way of living. In that the plan was affirmed by leadership, the reality of my endeavors is that CPC leadership was inclined to do other. Without leaderships authorization to implement the plan that they themselves affirmed, there was no basis for my continuing in a staff function defined as "evangelism and outreach." I was viewed a threat by Ruling Elders.

Finally, the originally intended evaluation of project results was a pre and post survey of members to substantiate member change and growth. Based on the Teaching Elder's directive, evaluation was negated in leu of one on one interpersonal interviews

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<sup>5</sup> See appendix 3.

<sup>6</sup> See appendix 4.

with the Ruling Elders. In effect, although never stated, this was my exit interview. Interpersonally interviewing the Ruling Elders presented a unique opportunity to assess the plausibility of the member's change and growth for the desired results by conducting one on one interviews with those who oversee CPC orthodoxy and exercise discipline in member orthodoxy. The interpersonal interviews gauged how CPC's Ruling Elders understand, communicate, and prioritize cooperative disciple-making (*Simple Evangelism*) as part of the primary calling to "make disciples of all" in conjunction with the plan implementation (Matt 28:19). This interview was administered individually to Ruling Elders and was composed of categorical questions: How does CPC understand and communicate the relationship between Reformed and Evangelical disciple-making? Does cooperating with Evangelicals in disciple-making necessarily imply compromise in Reformed theology? How does CPC emphasize *Simple Evangelism*? How does CPC understand and communicate the priority of *Simple Evangelism*? How has CPC historically communicated the value of *Simple Evangelism*? Finally, how can CPC improve upon disciple-making toward those who appear to be wanderers and all people who suffer spiritual woundedness?<sup>7</sup> This goal was successfully met when each Ruling Elder completed the interpersonal interview and the results were analyzed with the Teaching Elder, yielding a clearer picture of the direction CPC members are being led in their understanding of *Simple Evangelism* through his and my cooperative disciple-making.

Promotion of sustainable change and growth is predicated by ongoing alignment, or lack thereof, of CPC's disciple-making practices with biblical truth.

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<sup>7</sup> James Estep, Roger White, and Karen Estep, *Mapping Out Curriculum in Your Church: Cartography for Christian Pilgrims* (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing, 2012), 9-10. This question reflects a key presupposition core to the project—all men and women can wander based on the universal condition of sin (spiritual woundedness). Estep, White, and Estep organize a clarity in wandering as related to unfaithfulness (Matt 18:12-14). Tendency to wander from the wisdom of God is implicitly dangerous, "usually with disastrous consequence." Such consequence can affect the genuine believer in varying degrees of rebellion to the same extent as those unregenerate. Sin's affect can result in unfaithfulness in obedience to Jesus' teaching specific to evangelism and outreach in the life of the church.

Alignment is accomplished by analyzing interview results from the aforementioned Community Group interactive discussion and sharing the objective data contrasted with corresponding Scripture with Ruling Elders during one on one interviews. Leadership interview data will be incorporated in submitting a proposal in the form of this dissertation project to the Teaching Elder, who is a member of the South Texas Presbytery responsible for overseeing CPC. This document was presented and discussed incrementally throughout the two years with CPC and in entirety following the conclusion. Action steps to build a comprehensible theology and sustainable model for cooperative disciple-making (*Simple Evangelism*) at CPC are included. This goal was measured by the Teaching Elder representing the regional presbytery who personally invited me into the position at CPC. The Teaching Elder used a rubric for evaluation based on the proposal's adherence to CPC's vision statement, specifically as it equips and enhances members "*to invite every person in Georgetown and every place we serve into a life-changing relationship with Jesus Christ.*"

### **Context**

Among the top five fastest growing communities in the nation, Georgetown, Texas, was established as the county seat of Williamson County thirty-miles north of Austin in 1848.<sup>8</sup> As such, it has served as the county center of epistemology–academic, civic, economic, societal, and theological. The county's theological origin being Methodism is highlighted by its oldest sustaining institution, Southwestern University. Southwestern University was launched in 1835 to promote Methodist belief and practice. It is now the oldest Texas institution of higher education. This being Georgetown's theological past, the two largest congregations today are Roman Catholic and, with Mary Hardin Baylor and Baylor University's Truett Seminary within an hour's drive, Baptist.

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<sup>8</sup> United States Census Bureau, "QuickFacts," accessed January 18, 2019, <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/georgetowncitytexas,US/PST045218>.

Neoliberalism with moral therapeutic deism is recognizable from Georgetown pulpits and Sunday School discourse across congregations.<sup>9</sup>

The localized contemporary idea of modern evangelicalism trends decidedly from historic grace doctrine to current faith doctrine.<sup>10</sup> Christianity in Georgetown today reflects dimensions of ecumenicalism, egalitarianism, and universalism with the first local Unitarian Church being launched across the street from Southwestern University within the past decade. The local Texas Baptist tradition is among those being affected by liberal theology. The Reformed position of the historic particular-Baptist position gave way to culturally philosophical influences warranting revitalization for semblance of generally accepted doctrine within the later twentieth century, post modernism.

Post-modern liberalism the theological landscape of Georgetown, the story of CPC began as a desire within the heart of Whit Anderson, who planted CPC in 2008. Whit came to faith as a college student at Georgetown's Southwestern University and came upon the seed of an idea that “Georgetown was a city in need of a Christ-centered, Gospel-driven church.”<sup>11</sup> After spending his early years of ministry on staff with Campus Crusade for Christ and graduating from Reformed Theological Seminary in Orlando, while he was an associate pastor at CrossPointe Church (PCA) in Austin, that seed of thought grew into a full-fledged mission to reach Georgetown and its neighbors with the message that Jesus Christ saves sinners.

With CrossPointe's blessing, in 2008, CPC was planted. It started as a small group Bible study that met in a downtown Georgetown shoe store. Gradually, CPC grew

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<sup>9</sup> Christian Smith and Melinda Lundquist Denton, *Soul Searching: The Religious and Spiritual Lives of American Teenagers* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2005), 172.

<sup>10</sup> Walter A. Elwell, *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2001), 433. “Liberalism radically psychologized faith, reducing it to a sense of contented harmony with the Infinite through Christ (Schleiermacher), or a fixed resolve to follow Christ’s teaching (Ritschl), or both together.”

<sup>11</sup> Whit Anderson, initial meeting with Michael Thompson, Georgetown, TX, April 19, 2018.



from its original membership of 20 to 160 adult members today. By April of the next year, a Sunday evening worship was established, and by September 2009, CPC began to worship Sunday mornings at Georgetown’s Chamber of Commerce Building. On March 25, 2012, CPC became an “organized church” of the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA) defining its vision as, “*CPC exists to invite every person in Georgetown and every place we serve into a life-changing relationship with Jesus Christ.*”<sup>12</sup>

Becoming “organized” meant that CPC now had its own leadership, membership, and was self-sustaining. Whit was installed as the Teaching Elder, and the first Ruling Elders were ordained and installed—the Session. Individual PCA churches are led by appointed leaders called Ruling Elders with distinct continuity of biblical structure who serve together on a board called the Session. The Session is collectively tasked with the governing and spiritual oversight of the church as described in the New Testament. This group of men believes that the vision is set to lead the congregation as central to CPC’s make-up: moreover, the vision is central to that which Whit commits himself. Whit himself is not a member of CPC. Rather, Whit holds his PCA membership through the South Texas Presbytery that regionally oversees a number of PCA churches.

In February of 2016, after developing a relationship with Georgetown’s school district, CPC began to worship in its current shared space with the local Boys and Girls Club. The county courthouse and jail minutes away, the education and penal systems became core missional context for CPC’s thinking of disciple-making. At-risk children and inmates definitional to CPC’s view of mission in the community, the idea of service to the orphan, widow, and prisoner were established as vehicles of disciple-making identity within the busied lives of this white-collar parenting congregation. Missional leaders emerged from membership early on with focus on at-risk children, later the

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<sup>12</sup> Anderson, April 19, 2018.

incarcerated, and most recently, with Georgetown the largest retirement community in Texas, widows via assisted living center outreach.

Throughout the early stages to date, CPC formulated missional vehicles that aligned with Scripture to provide a means to plug members into mission capability for its busy professional members to “engage its surrounding communities in service and shepherding.”<sup>13</sup> Continuing to recognize itself as being in “its planting phase growing into maturity,” CPC endeavors faithfulness “to bear faithful witness to the life-giving, life-changing gospel of Jesus Christ;” and to have a “permanent presence in Georgetown and all the places members live and serve to that end” as its vision.<sup>14</sup> What leads CPC, asserting that “what a church believes about God will determine how the mission of the church is carried out, how decisions are made, how resources are allocated, and how people are valued. What we believe matters.”<sup>15</sup>

CPC prioritizes belief in the Bible as inerrant, centric to truth, and trustworthy to provide wisdom for faithful living in teaching the doctrine of grace stemming from the Protestant Reformation of the 1500s. Locally, a minority theological position, CPC’s basic tenets of the five “*Solas*,” with summary of doctrines expressed in *The Westminster Standards (Larger and Shorter Catechisms)*, are distinctives that membership celebrates. These attributes, combined with the highest view of God’s providential sovereignty affect all aspects of worship, fellowship, kingdom consciousness, service, and evangelism. This fosters a distinguishing gap in CPC teaching of its historic distinction in the midst of surrounding Christian culture; thus, promoting a notable contrast, a sense of cultural conflict, and a defensive mindset.

CPC’s tenets contrast sharply with the emphasis of man’s enlightenment, goodness, and capacity for self-realization trending in Georgetown’s Christian culture.

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<sup>13</sup> Anderson, April 19, 2018.

<sup>14</sup> Anderson, April 19, 2018.

<sup>15</sup> Anderson, April 19, 2018.

Rarely, if ever, do Georgetown churches provide doctrinal instruction or expository preaching. Specific to Baptist heritage, the Cooperative as an entity is largely unknown along with recognition of the *Baptist Faith and Message 2000* as a confessional biblical summary in some local Baptist churches. This being the case, CPC members can be consternated by any advocacy of commonality in belief among the vast majority of Georgetown Evangelicals.

CPC members view themselves set apart from the balance of local Christianity, they pray openly and specifically for local churches, and they endeavor to maintain an ideological fence between their children and external influence. A local majority of citizens, church-attending and otherwise, would contend the Bible as being the revelation of God's truth (many thinking it infallible and authoritative in all matters of faith and practice). Trinitarianism is a commonly espoused tenet despite unitarian influence. Jesus Christ as the eternal Son of God, who through His perfect life and sacrificial death atoned for the sins of all who will trust in Him alone for salvation would be commonplace (reductionally, leaders of my Baptist church articulate John 3:16 as sufficient for their doctrinal position). Recognition of the Holy Spirit indwelling God's people is not conceptionally foreign, but the idea of cooperating with the person of the Spirit for life change would be an ideological minority. The idea that Jesus will return, bodily and visibly, to judge all mankind and to receive His people to Himself quietly trends in local Christian culture.

Whereas the vast majority of citizens of Georgetown have been given Christian ideas and language, a minority would articulate all aspects of life to be lived to the glory of God under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. Frustrated by the inference of commonality, and striving to guard their children from it, CPC members tend to unintentionally practice

a modern-day monasticism.<sup>16</sup> Members can tend to withdraw to their residences, CPC community, and home or private schools for their children.

As a confessional Baptist, I came to question my own local Baptist church as a biblical church. Having been ordained by the members as a Baptist minister of the gospel in 2014, I became locally disaffected as I began asking questions of belief and practice of my Baptist church relative to my seminary assignments. Recognizing the local Baptist landscape trending with local culture, my Southern Seminary education changed me to see the doctrinal discontinuity occurring in my Baptist church (and the others). A revitalization initiative seemed warranted from my Reformed vantagepoint but without the pulpit my endeavor seemed fruitless. CPC emerged as a local church with whom to cooperate for the gospel. It was my intent to pursue churchwide cooperation for the gospel between my Baptist church and CPC to promote the orthodoxy of CPC's worship among my Baptist family and orthopraxy of evangelism of my Baptist church among CPC.

As I asked questions of my Baptist senior pastor, he distanced himself from me to the extent of annulling our relationship. My place in my local church became unfamiliar after eighteen years of membership. In sustained membership, my Baptist church urged me on to missionally pursue my own personal cooperative endeavor with CPC. Given Southern Baptist cooperation with the PCA (e.g., Together for the Gospel, The Gospel Coalition), I was afforded examples of Southern Baptist Convention leadership forging the way for my endeavor to be locally cooperative. My distinctiveness of being Reformed as an Evangelical distinguished me to a point of alienation among the spectrum of modern Evangelicals comprising my Baptist church. Collin Hansen

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<sup>16</sup> Rob Dreher, *The Benedictine Option: A Strategy for Christians in a Post-Christian Nation* (New York, NY: Penguin Publishing, 2017), 2. Calvinism is by no means monastic. Nor does Calvinism necessarily bring any of the characteristics CPC members attributed to hinderances in their making disciples throughout the years comprising this project.

articulates the status of modern Evangelicalism, which I personally experience affecting the composition of Georgetown Baptist churches:

Simply labeling ourselves evangelical no longer suffices. We are conservative, progressive, post-conservative, and pre-progressive evangelicals. We are traditional, creedal, pietistic, anti-creedal, ecumenical, and fundamentalists. We are “followers of Christ” and “Red Letter Christians.” We are everything, so we are nothing.<sup>17</sup>

In pursuing Southern Baptist theological education, serving the local PCA congregation of CPC to lead evangelism and outreach emerged as invaluable to my own belief and practice. The exercise helped me in recognizing with whom to cooperate for the gospel. In fact, CPC evidenced closer alignment with Southern Baptist doctrine than my Baptist church. As in the case of the Southern Baptist Convention, the PCA is known for, firstly, focusing on the gospel of Jesus Christ as the only pathway to life change, secondly, biblically sound teaching that is faithful to the inerrant word of God, and, thirdly, its commitment to local and international missions. However, there is PCA and Southern Baptist doctrinal deference in two notable non-essential attributes: difference in the applicable definition of baptism (rather than the effective definition) and governance structure for accountability that extends beyond the local congregation.

### **Rationale**

During the three-years of his earthly ministry perfectly obeying the Father, Christ made clear that his principle aim was a believer following in his example (Luke 9:23-26). As Jesus returns to the Father, he states what is considered by all who believe in him as his Great Commission (Matt 28:18-20). Regardless of difference among men and women, reconciling needs through the good news of the Kingdom of God in cooperative disciple-making is affirmed for all believers, who are each different, to be as one in Christ (John 17).

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<sup>17</sup> Andrew David Naselli and Collin Hansen, *Four Views on The Spectrum of Evangelicalism* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), 9.

The four Gospels cooperate to provide a cumulative view of Jesus as the disciple-maker to imitate (Luke 3:22). Luke specifies the means by which the believer actualizes what each believer is to model and transfer in his description of imitating Christ (24:49). Given diversity of man's imaging God (and the unifying message of Jesus' directive to "make disciples of all"), insisting that believers achieve a mandate requiring all to work together toward a common end might seem counterintuitive.

While he was popular with the crowds by reconciling their needs, the Gospels record Jesus constantly negotiating conflict among his own small band of brothers in their quest to achieve a state of authority rather than apprenticeship of the One unifying all those who claim to believe. Why did he not just change their minds to a common set of behavior with belief? Or, did he? Why did he not just simplify a standard that mandated a sustainable pattern in gathering believers to worship the one true God? Or, did he? Jesus could set the disciples on a course that required outward uniformity for conveyance of identity, but instead he directed imitators to focus on the central attribute of man for his intended cooperation among all believers—their heart.

When it came to the great diversity of man's being made in the image and likeness of God, Jesus' standard of likeness is centered in the desires of the heart rather than the discernable behaviors that can be observed. Rather than conforming the practices of his people, Jesus staked the priority of his mission on his disciples looking and behaving in diverse patterns of outward behavior while, at the same time, being conformed inwardly to a missional standard of desire affecting motives to cooperate.

Jesus uses marriage as an example of cooperative disciple-making. Cooperation is fostered in relationship of a husband and his wife in fulfilling Jesus' charter of mission with his greatest command. Author Nancy Pearcey observes, "This is how L'Abri grew into a home-based ministry: It was a completely organic process, as

Francis and Edith Schaeffer talked to real people about real questions.”<sup>18</sup> The Schaeffers came together in the name of Jesus. First, they engaged visiting friends of their children with the gospel of Jesus Christ using ideas and language that their friends could understand and believe. Next, as their children’s friends told others about them, they opened their home for gospel conversation and interpersonal exploration of the Son of Man—making disciples to follow Jesus. Yet, it is the organic church, not the family, which is primarily charged with preaching the gospel to a lost world and to fulfill the Great Commission.<sup>19</sup> As a result, the genuine believer must meet culture head-on from his home into the local community to find or plant biblical church (1 Sam 2:35-36).

Jesus did not leave room for the believer to limit the scope of cooperative disciple-making to one’s household. He made it clear that this endeavor must extend to “all” and far beyond the threshold of one’s own home. Albeit a seemingly impossible task, Jesus stated the requisite power of the Spirit in such an endeavor (Luke 24:49). Brian Croft writes, “Herein, Yahweh promised His rebellious and hurting people, who were in exile, that a day would come when Yahweh would make a New Covenant with them that would transform them from the inside out—the indwelling of the person of the Spirit, cleansing from impurity and a new heart.”<sup>20</sup> Roy Zuck adds, “The Spirit and Word work together to produce volitional change in the believer.”<sup>21</sup> As Robert Coleman notably wrote, “Men were his method.”<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Nancy Pearcey, *Total Truth: Liberating Christianity from Its Cultural Captivity* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2004), 376.

<sup>19</sup> Andreas J. Köstenberger, *God, Marriage and Family: Rebuilding the Biblical Foundation*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2010), 258.

<sup>20</sup> Brian Croft, *Biblical Church Revitalization: Solutions for Dying & Divided Churches* (Fearn, Scotland: Christian Focus Publications, 2016), 24.

<sup>21</sup> Roy B. Zuck, *Spirit-Filled Teaching: The Power of the Holy Spirit in Your Ministry* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishing, 1988), 7.

<sup>22</sup> Robert Emerson Coleman, *The Master Plan of Evangelism* (Westwood, NJ: F. H. Revell, 1964), 21.

Each gospel narrative carefully accentuates the premium Jesus placed on the cooperation of his disciples as a critical component for the fulfillment of his mission. Each of the four men in their difference represented a component of what was required as the whole of emulating the life of Christ. Each man's Gospel serves as indicative of the internal heart change required to be counted genuine to the future growing population of those who did not personally encounter Jesus (John 20:29). Given the Spirit's unifying affect in those who believe, cooperation among disciples remained a core axiom to the act of believing (Acts 1:8).

Scripture provides numerous examples of men and women who personally and proactively cooperate with others who, by all outward appearances, are different and in some cases hostile to that person's own personal self-interest. With the welfare of her family in mind, Rahab the prostitute, chosen outside of Israel, cooperated with the attacking army of Joshua that seemed diminished when considering the high walls of her city; yet, the news of God's great works changed her heart to be like those of the two spies (Joshua 2). Moses exhorted mothers and fathers, in working together while coping with gender enmity, to immerse the commandments of God into the lives of their children (Gen 3:15; Deut 11:18-22).

Paul perpetuated the Deuteronomic charge by shaping the life of a young man, Timothy, who is neither ethnically nor biologically related for the purpose of cooperative disciple-making in Roman culture. At CPC, many have the fortunate heritage of parents who cooperated in fostering a legacy by making disciples of their children, but this is certainly not the case for everyone. Nonetheless, members of CPC possess healthy reference points, biblical and experiential, in which they recognize how to jointly operate with others who are different in the negotiation and facilitation of disciple-making to demonstrate what it means to be an imitator of Christ. Yet, worship services at CPC appears void of visiting wanderers and with any newly converted believers or spiritually young Christians limited to the children of adult members. And while the adult members



are certainly equipped by thoughtful spiritual formation endeavors from the pulpit, cooperative disciple-making appears a left shoe on the right foot. There seems no fit for connecting with the world that is required to evangelize the unbelieving in order to disciple for gathering new believers to worship the one true God. The evident exception is that made in the parents' own likeness or who are legally adopted into the member families.

CPC invited me to join its staff as a confessional Baptist because growth had resulted from PCA migration rather than conversion. Church leadership recognized that the congregation was not productively participating in the Great Commission while at the same time being missional. This growing PCA congregation was stayed in a pattern of living in contradiction with its own agreed vision statement.

While CPC certainly longs for meaningful disciple-making in all places served in the organic space of its members' lives, the church's weekly visitor report said something quite to the contrary. Since 2010, CPC has consistently communicated its vision for the gospel, but process for disciple-making at a personal level has been void. CPC's organized endeavors, like Community Groups, have certainly provided a healthy context for disciple-making for many, but one must wonder why the deployment of the concentrated groups of genuine believers concentrate on their fellowship, personal spiritual fulfillment, and that of their own children without evidence of themselves cooperating for the gospel within their social circles.

One cannot disregard the multiplying effect of the gospel when exercised faithfully and fully (Mark 4:20). However, without cooperative disciple-making as a critical value within the congregant's psyche, members don't have a basis for what it actually means to be a maker of disciples (Matt 4:19; Mark 1:17). Converts' needs are only reconciled when the church jointly operates with them, Scripture, and the Spirit in their new-found faith. This involves facilitation and negotiation from a gospel-centric relationship by daily abiding in the Father despite differences with the person.

A healthy model for cooperative disciple-making should forge the kind of member CPC currently articulates and must develop for a faithful future. Paul's commitment to Timothy was predicated on him becoming the kind of man who would invest in others likely different than himself (2 Tim 2:2). One might wonder how far this kind of commitment would go to strengthen CPC member faithfulness to the daily making of disciples in their personal social circles. Along with the missional vehicles provided by CPC's organized endeavors, cooperative disciple-making accentuates what members must come to recognize as being true of their personal calling to overcome the barriers to disciple-making. These barriers are closely observed by Tim Beougher who articulates each barrier with precision for a genuine believer to effectively achieve a pattern of living in personal, family, and congregational fruitfulness.<sup>23</sup>

It is in experiencing an unbeliever's regeneration, and then growing in his belief, that he finds life to be fulfilling. This is the case of Deuteronomy 6 pertaining to parents and children cooperating throughout the day in the Word. The same is the case in Matthew 28 after Jesus recontextualized from his ethnobiological family to his spiritual family who may not all be biologically or ethnically related. Yet, CPC cannot simply be content in bringing someone palatable to them onto the staff to produce the multiplying effect of the gospel. Inward change must occur in the hearts of CPC membership that yields adoption of a new pattern in living. A gospel-centric pattern of living can yield new converts among a vast and diverse local population who is not Reformed nor, in many cases, recognizable as the believers who they literally claim to be.

CPC's correct vision for its own future legitimates the need for a cooperative disciple-making endeavor, and rightly conveys a need for change. In considering the biblical imperative for multiplication, CPC Elders are compelled by the Holy Spirit that all members begin each day abiding in the Father. It is only then that they can connect

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<sup>23</sup> Timothy K. Beougher, *Overcoming Walls to Witnessing* (Charlotte, NC: BGEA, 1993), 7-8.

with the world to evangelize the wanderer, disciple the seeking, and only then, gather for worship.<sup>24</sup> CPC leadership has discerned this as a significant move toward ecclesiological and missiological health but are consternated by the difficulties of change. Each member must grapple with a number of new realities, particularly the costs associated with opening the doors of his or her home to welcome the surrounding culture. In the best way, CPC members will say goodbye to an isolation that has seemingly protected their children from the ambiguity awaiting them in the culture that surrounds them.

Connecting with culture will require skills in asking gospel-intended questions, listening so as to diagnose the desires of wanderers' hearts, and inviting those who are different to come into their lives as both believers and unbelievers in a new intentional pattern of living life by imitating Christ. Jesus' pattern of living is fraught with risk, which culminated in his crucifixion, a story that is believed among CPC members for which they may, in fact, be refusing to sacrifice their own children. While the value for cooperative disciple-making should remain a priority in any church regardless of its doctrinal distinction, CPC members find themselves beguiled at the challenge of doctrinal homogeneity that local Christian culture allows. If their membership is overly reliant on the ideas of John Calvin without introspective consideration of Scripture, the consequence to their own individual growth and growth of their children in Christ will dwarf the consequence of growth by cooperative disciple-making in the community. CPC's membership must grow to become disciples who make disciples in view of the reality that PCA doctrine may not be the only way to heaven and fulfillment in this life.

CPC has clearly identified disciple-making as its primary goal and has launched a healthy organization for its members to grow as imitators of Christ. From its 2008 launch, CPC has also valued the importance of facilitation and negotiation in

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<sup>24</sup> Michael Thompson and Woonny Kim, *Simple Evangelism* (Georgetown, TX: Christ Presbyterian Church, 2019), 1.

context of interpersonal differences within the PCA-ecosystem. Leadership has now affirmed recognition that cooperation can extend beyond the limitation of Calvin and its confession by choosing a more organic approach.<sup>25</sup> But being organic in its approach does not mean it should not have a recognizable framework or pattern by which individuals can imitate. The differentiation between institutional and organic must be CPC's focus to realize its desired vision to be disciple-making. But will CPC cooperate?

Cooperative disciple-making remains something that must happen for culture, but it is not something that just happens. Within the scope of this project is to ask and answer essential questions about CPC's current understanding and priority for cooperative disciple-making. CPC must discern the degree to which its members are themselves abiding. Without this critical act of selflessness, personally connecting with the world is void. Personal evangelism of the wandering is fruitless. Personally discipling the pilgrim is negated and, ultimately, personally gathering those believing to worship the one true God never comes to be. CPC must consider whether its members have a desire to change in how they focus indiscriminately inwardly on their personal and PCA family, and selectively outwardly on those for which they construct missional endeavors to serve, and how to bring further clarity and structure to this all-important charge.

In having invited a confessional Baptist to serve on their staff, CPC (and I) need a pattern of living for cooperative disciple-making that is simple for its members to imitate, particularly for connecting to those who are different in order to effectively communicate the truth that they know to both the unbelieving and believing person outside their nuclear family for gathering those who can believe to worship. One needs only to look to Jesus whose life of "simple evangelism" models the simple pattern

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<sup>25</sup> Keller, *Serving a Movement*, 109-111. Tim Keller differentiates the institutional and organic church by assigning the institutional church attention to "cultural engagement." Herein, "it does so primarily by discipling a community of believers who work as the organic church . . . it should be inspiring and encouraging its members to go into various channels of culture." Keller asserts organics result from the institutional church discipling believers to engage culture (their social circle) with gospel intentionality. "Organic" is as in members' everyday lives and not intended as explicit missional endeavors institutionally defined within the construct of the institutional church (not programmatic).

believers are to imitate. CPC is blessed with faithful members who seek to model the life of Christ. Yet, providing a framework toward the simplicity of gospel living would potentially serve the church to realize its stated vision. This project captures current thought patterns and disciple-making practices within CPC. It attempts to provide direction toward cultivating cooperative disciple-making (*Simple Evangelism*) as a greater value within the church. In doing so, the ultimate hope of this project is to continue the healthy mission and priority of “loving neighbor” and “making disciples of all” at CPC for the gospel.

### **Definitions and Limitations/Delimitations**

*Cooperative Disciple-Making.* Cooperative Disciple-Making is the joint operation of authority and apprenticeship in seeking spiritual harmony through activities of facilitation and negotiation in conscious volition of one’s will in the service of others in Christ who believe differently for mutually desired outcome of flourishing for the gospel by way of mission, education, and benevolence to affect the wandering and spiritually wounded. Here I am influenced by the *Baptist Faith and Message 2000* (Article XIV. Cooperation): “Members of New Testament churches should cooperate with one another in carrying forward the missionary, educational, and benevolent ministries for the extension of Christ’s Kingdom.” “Authority” is employed by way of Andy Crouch’s definition, “the capacity for meaningful action.”<sup>26</sup> “Apprenticeship” corresponds as relationally subordinate to authority in a focused act of detailed endeavor to imitate the specific skills of another, the “Master.” Ultimate judgement of being like, or not like, the “Master” as prodigiously defined by Robert Coleman. I use the word “harmony” in that the basis is peaceful, purposeful in seeking after relationship rooted in one’s commonality, while valuing the other’s distinction, in belief toward a mutually

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<sup>26</sup> Andy Crouch, *Strong and Weak: Embracing a Life of Love, Risk & True Flourishing* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2016), 35-37.

desired end. “Conscious,” distinguished from “unconscious,” emphasizes the motive in relationship with those doctrinally “different” as being rooted in the intentional act of disciple-making together with gospel intent by way of mission, education, and benevolence rather than unintentional, unorganized, or unthoughtful. The term “flourishing” is again influenced by Andy Crouch’s use of the word derived from the idea of John 10:10 wherein Jesus’ own life purpose is defined with what Paul is instructing Timothy to know as “that which is truly life” (1 Tim 6:19). Use of the word “wandering” is inspired in the defined converse, “pilgrim,” as classically presented by John Bunyan. “Spiritually wounded” is incorporated here in a recognition of a universal condition of mankind requiring redress as proposed by Paul David Tripp in his application of Colossians 2:9-15.

One limitation for this project is time. This project exists to gauge the current priority and emphasis placed on cooperative disciple-making, and the degree to which CPC currently participates to this end for as long as the joint operation is fruitful—CPC as PCA and me as Southern Baptist. Membership was an anticipated limitation that was addressed through assigning CPC’s membership language in the position description defining my staff responsibilities. This project was mutually agreed with CPC’s Session at its outset. Together, we recognized the project to be a joint endeavor of faithfulness for the gospel in Georgetown.

While cooperative disciple-making does extend to members’ families (including children), the scope of this project placed emphasis on CPC’s focus external to current membership, into the local community, and specific to the adult members of the congregation. An interpersonal Community Group interactive presentation was conducted. All households participating in Community Groups were included. A delimitation was those households not subscribing to CPC Community Groups not attending and therefore, not attending interpersonal Community Group interactive presentations. Another delimitation was with respect to interpersonally interviewing the

Ruling Elders. At the time in the project when the intended pre and post survey became relevant, I was directed to interview Ruling Elders rather than execute a survey of adult members by the Teaching Elder. All Ruling Elders subscribed to membership, three of the four men subscribed to Community Groups at the origin of this project, and they collectively govern by explicit design as overseers of CPC orthodoxy and discipliners of CPC orthopraxy. Therefore, I did not capture individual member response but who may be independently engaged in cooperative disciple-making.

### **Research Methodology**

The project was executed in three phases.<sup>27</sup> The initial phase was focused on integration; the second focused on defining the “as is” status of cooperative disciple-making within CPC producing recommended changes and; the final phase was intended to implement changes and evaluate for sustainability. The conclusion of the project incorporated an interpersonal interview with each CPC Ruling Elder. The purpose of the interview was to assess cooperative disciple-making practices from CPC’s leadership, who exercise oversight of orthodoxy and discipline of orthopraxy in the life of CPC. Participation was voluntary and interviewees responded to the same thirty questions related to their personal leadership beliefs and behaviors as a disciples.<sup>28</sup> One hundred percent of CPC’s Ruling Elders comprising the Session participated in the interview. Each of the four Ruling Elders subscribe to a CPC Community Group and were each in attendance at one or more of the Community Group interactive presentations. The interactive presentation was to align CPC members and leadership with the common

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<sup>27</sup> All the research instruments used in this project were performed in compliance with and approved by the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary Ethics Committee prior to use in the ministry project.

<sup>28</sup> Interpersonal interviews were conducted with CPC Ruling Elders. The questions and responses are available in their entirety in the appendices section.

value of disciple-making regardless of office, gender, and age in order to foster collective analysis among members and leaders of biblical truth and doctrinal thinking.

In advance of examining aspects of the “as is” state of CPC or forecasting a “to be” outlook of cooperative disciple-making, personal integration into the population of CPC members was required. The initial phase entailed interviewing with CPC’s Session for the staff position. Lori and I participated in CPC’s membership class. I worked with CPC’s Session to define the position for the Evangelism and Outreach Leader position. Ultimately, I integrated into the body of believers at CPC to be accepted as well as esteemed.

The second phase’s goal of this project was to assess the current (“as is”) understanding, priority, and process for cooperative disciple-making within CPC. Herein I established interpersonal and gospel-centric relationship with members to discuss for clarity of understanding our doctrinal differences and sameness to sustain unity and root out prejudice. Those included were individuals in offices of leadership, staff, and adult members. To preserve the interpersonal dynamic of genuine care and concern, the process of relationship with members was deliberately simple in the natural course of life rather than contrived or forced with an intended outcome. I reviewed my status on a monthly basis by email communication with the Session and one on one meetings with the Teaching Elder and the Ruling Elder overseeing discipleship as a function of the church. Work products derived from this phase include a research paper with corresponding white paper, Community Group presentation, research paper on the role of the person of the Spirit in teaching, and curriculum for teaching disciple-making cooperatively.

The research paper was delivered to the Session for defining the purpose and charter of an Evangelism and Outreach Leader for agreement and implementation. The corresponding white paper was coauthored with CPC’s Associate Pastor to articulate a shared position for simplification of disciple-making as a pattern of living the gospel



(*Simple Evangelism*). The Community Group presentation was delivered by teaming with CPC's Associate Pastor. We engaged each Community Group for the purpose of providing an agreed disciple-making model that members could imitate for improving their personal disciple-making experience. The presentation was delivered via multimedia PowerPoint as interactive, conversational, and including inquiry to learn member's practices and prejudices. Whereas the dynamic and dialogue of each Community Group was different, content of the presentation was the same and participants were asked comparable questions that fit the nuance of the group dynamic and interaction. The goal of this phase was reported in a memorandum. Recommendations were affirmed by my overseer who requested a curriculum to be instructed by CPC adult education teachers.

The third phase intended to deliver results by implementing the four-concurrent actions (broadening *Simple Evangelism* CPC readership, structuring a curriculum for a corresponding adult learning Sunday School experience, implementing a comparable adult learning experience that incorporates members who do not participate in Community Groups or attend Sunday School, and incorporating instruction in the cooperative disciple-making pattern of living in the new member curriculum) as a process for change outlined in the recommendation memorandum. When this was interrupted by CPC's leadership, the intended pre and post survey was negated. With no apparent intent by CPC leadership to implement the recommendations that they affirmed, an opportunity to personally interview each Ruling Elder served as the means to gather empirical data for the project, as well as my exit interview from CPC. Evaluation of CPC outlook of cooperative disciple-making was achieved by delivering the results of Ruling Elder Interpersonal Interview with the recommendations detailed in chapter 5 to the Teaching Elder and Ruling Elder overseeing my staff position. The three of us discussed the whole of the project and agreed that the fruitfulness of the endeavor had passed.

## CHAPTER 2

### BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL SUPPORT FOR COOPERATIVE DISCIPLE-MAKING

As a Southern Baptist through membership in my local Baptist church, the purpose of this project was to identify and deploy a biblical disciple-making pattern that is effective in disciple-making with CPC's PCA members. This chapter provides biblical and theological support that qualifies and requires cooperative disciple-making as the unified state of being the organic church.<sup>1</sup> The purpose of this chapter is to show how cooperative disciple-making is evident throughout the New Testament and why it should be a discernable pattern of living in today's church.

The chapter begins with a study on the idea of cooperation, and its unique connotation in the Scripture supporting the biblical ideal from the *Baptist Faith and Message 2000*. It continues by looking at specific examples of disciple-making throughout the New Testament that provide for clarity of how individual believers cooperate. I will also consider Jesus' pattern of disciple-making behavior emphasizing cooperation and how his example is relevant to the denominationally divided church and life pattern for disciple-making today. Herein, cooperation will be examined within the special revelation of Jesus Christ.<sup>2</sup> The readers will see Jesus' pattern in making disciples, particularly in caring for the wandering and those spiritually wounded.

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<sup>1</sup> Gregg R. Allison, *Sojourners and Strangers: The Doctrine of The Church* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012), 281. Gregg Allison presents the organic church as the "connection between Christ and his body, together with the authority that such headship precludes human intermediaries wielding authority over the church," thus, supporting congregationalism with Christ as the single mediator between God and man.

<sup>2</sup> Wayne A. Grudem, *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1994). Wayne Grudem defines special revelation as: "God's words addressed to specific people, including the words of the Bible."

Jesus' pattern of behavior will be derived from Luke's Gospel wherein readers will examine five points (abiding, connecting, evangelizing, discipling, worshiping) that are reflected in the life of Christ according to Luke's Gospel. The five points follow same pattern for living that Christ lived and sought to shape into lives of his disciples. Thus, my hope for this chapter as a Reformed Evangelical is to provide a biblical framework that advances the priority of cooperative disciple-making and particularly clarity to the populations of modern Evangelical and Reformed people groups. The priority is overcoming denominational barriers of prejudice in living the modern Christian life.

### **What Is Cooperation in Disciple-Making?**

Cooperation is a "joint operation." This is familiar to anyone who has shared a desire with another towards a mutual outcome. For Moses, joint operation was realized when receiving both comfort and support toward a mutually desired outcome of a battle (Exod 17:12). He also experienced cooperation through a relative negotiating a preferable solution to a shared problem (Exod 18:17). Cyrus' personal conviction of God's authority led to his proclamation of cooperation to rebuild the temple for Israel's flourishing in their worship of the one true God (Ezra 1:3-4). As the temple was being restored, the heads of Israel's households jointly operated in combining their funds to complete their shared endeavor (Ezra 2:68-69). Sheshbazzar experienced the flourishing that results from cooperation as the looted riches of the temple were restored to their rightful place (Ezra 5:14-15). Whereas all the people were present for Ezra's reading of the Word, some could understand, and some could not. Here, Ezra found encouragement, assurance, and strength in the cooperative posture of his brothers standing in agreement at his side (Neh 8:1-5). To the enemies of God's chosen people, cooperation appeared an impenetrable wall that could not be overcome (Neh 4). Notable in all these stories of "joint operation" is the distinction of men assisting men in fulfilling their God-ordained responsibilities from God's sovereign directive and determinative outcome.

The New Testament brings the fulfillment of prophecy by way of the historic man Jesus Christ. In Christ comes continued directive for men to cooperate, but to a specific commission to all who follow him—the making of disciples (Matt 28:18-20). Jesus' instruction in cooperation is rooted in selfless motive. He tells his disciples to give what they have been given, asking nothing in return. The selflessness negates any acceptability or possibility for prejudice resulting from the potential hostility of other men desiring to jointly operate (Matt 10:5-15). In ordering the “last will be first, and the first last,” Jesus frames the attitudinal condition of his apprentice in cooperatively working with others, particularly in disciple-making (Matt 20:1-16). Jesus initially used a parable to instruct the people of Israel in the predetermined outcome of their hardness of heart. He describes a coming commission to those who could understand his Word. The commission is mandated by way of a new heart desire to jointly operate to fill the King's “wedding hall” with “guests” (Matt 22:1-10). Ultimately, Jesus clarified his parable by simply stating God's Great Commission to all men who could understand requiring their cooperation towards God's predetermined result—for all who believe to make disciples of “all nations” (Matt 28:19-20).

Five men provide life example of what men do in cooperating in Jesus' clarified commission. Believing in Jesus' capacity to reconcile the need of all men for the forgiveness of sin, four men deliver a fifth man to Jesus (Mark 2:3). Unique of the fifth man is his helplessness. He is a paralytic unable to come to Jesus in his own strength. Instead, his “friends” endeavor through all obstacles to bring him where he can be healed. They bring him to Jesus. Detail of this historic moment does not define the four men's believing on the fifth man's behalf, the fifth man's urging the four to assist based on his belief, or the five men all believing together. Yet, it is the believing in Jesus that resulted in the healing, which could not have been realized without the four men jointly operating to bring the fifth man to Christ. Later, Jesus appoints seventy-two and “sent them on ahead of him, two by two, into every town and place where he himself was about to go”

(Luke 10:1). These were those who could understand and therefore believe in who Jesus is. In believing, “two by two,” they cooperated with one another to be intentional in a shared desire to make men and women disciples of Jesus Christ.

The explicit connection between cooperation and disciple-making will now be explored specific to critical words defining what is intentional in the act of disciple-making—authority and apprenticeship, facilitation and negotiation, and the outcome of flourishing.

### **Authority and Apprenticeship**

The Creator is perfectly cooperative. This is evidenced in what can be known of the Creator. Christianity confesses the one true God who is monotheistic and trinitarian (three Persons as singularly being the “I AM”). Augustine recognized joint operation in the coexistence of Father, Son, and Spirit as the Trinity. He famously stated, “the Father is not the Son or Spirit, the Son is not the Father or Spirit, and the Spirit is not the Father or the Son.”<sup>3</sup> Among the three, authority and apprenticeship are demonstrated in their joint operation as Creator according to Moses in Genesis 1.<sup>4</sup> Chaos apprentices the Spirit’s peace (Gen 1:2-3; John 1:9). John articulates the deity of Christ as being purposefully present with the Father and the Spirit in their joint operation. Darkness apprentices the Son in His being the light of the Word (Gen 1:3; John 1:5). Each of the Trinitarian Persons cooperating in creating as the monotheistic Godhead makes what is real from *ex nihilo*. The Creator perfectly cooperates in His being holy (1 Pet 1:15). Man is told, “You shall be holy as I am holy” (1 Pet 1:16). In God’s being holy is cooperation.

Apprenticing the Creator is conforming to the ultimate authority of His will (Ps 8:5-8). Godliness is then discernable in man for purpose of man’s good in glorifying the

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<sup>3</sup> Philip Schaff, *Augustine, Christian Doctrine, Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, First Series ed. (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1995), 1-5.

<sup>4</sup> Bruce A. Ware, *Father, Son, and Holy Spirit: Relationships, Roles, and Relevance* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2005), 21.

Creator. The genuinely believing man is on a predestined course with the person of the Son in the space of eternity pursuing holiness.<sup>5</sup> Being in the likeness of the Creator as His moral creature requires operating jointly. This cooperation can be apparent or not but is a reality (Rom 8:26-30). An apprentice does not choose the Creator's authority to which he is apprenticed. The Master chooses His apprentice. Man's reality is to facilitate and negotiate the predetermined pattern provided by his Creator (Rom 8:28; Eph 2:10).

### **Facilitation and Negotiation**

Man's capacity to cooperate was negated early in the Creation story. Man failed to cooperate with the Creator who provided a pattern for him to apprentice. Anthony Hoekema provides clarity of this failing having led to cooperative failure with others and even within himself.<sup>6</sup> Where John articulates foundational perspective of the Trinity's joint operation in the Creation event, Luke articulates man's joint operation with Father, Son, and Spirit residing in the new creation. The new creation results from the authorial work of the Son. Jesus, as fully God and fully man, is resurrected from the dead yielding a new pattern for man's entrance to the Father. Luke explains this for the purpose of describing disciples in training. The training is in apprenticing the holiness that God requires for being in His presence, stated by Peter (1 Pet 1:15-16). Bruce Ware emphasizes that this holiness standard that Adam failed, the Great Triune God recovers and invites His race of man to come into through Jesus Christ.<sup>7</sup> The Creator gave Adam a pattern to apprentice in his joint operation as a vicegerent (Gen 1:26-28; 2:16-17). Failure to fulfill the life pattern provided by the Creator for Adam's facilitation and negotiation

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<sup>5</sup> Donald S. Whitney, *How Can I Be Sure "I'm a Christian?": The Satisfying Certainty of Eternal Life* (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 2019), 52. Don Whitney defines a genuine believer as one "who has a deep awareness of his sin against the Word and deep love of God."

<sup>6</sup> Anthony A. Hoekema, *Created in God's Image* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1994), 169.

<sup>7</sup> Bruce A. Ware, *The Man Christ Jesus: Theological Reflections on the Humanity of Christ* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012), 16.

yielded the cataclysmic catastrophe of sin and death. In his perfectly apprenticing the Father, Jesus facilitates and negotiates life in the fullness of the Spirit as the “Master,” affirms Robert Coleman (Matt 14:36; Luke 12:12; John 3:8; 6:63; 14:17).<sup>8</sup>

The atoning blood of Christ is sufficient to cover the failed cooperation of Adam with God—the *Fall of man* (Gen 3; Mark 14:24). The Westminster Confession declares that it is through Christ’s atoning blood that the chief end of man to enjoy and worship God forever is fulfilled (Rom 11:36; 1 Cor 10:31).<sup>9</sup> Luke articulates apprenticing Jesus in his pattern of living (Luke 14:27). The pattern of Jesus’ living was distinct from all other men in that he operated jointly with the Father in fully and completely apprenticing God’s indisputable authority.<sup>10</sup> As Jesus lived out a pattern of life doing the Father’s will, the believer is told to do the same in joint operation with the Word by the power of the Spirit for the gospel of Jesus Christ (Acts 1:8). Perfectly apprenticed to the Father, the Father extends His ultimate authority over creation to the Son in His redemptive ministry of man (Luke 5:17-25; John 3:35). The Son then extends authority to those whom the Father gives him as His apprentice (John 3:37, 6:37). Pursuant to His dispatching the “Helper,” the Son facilitates the Father’s ultimate command for apprenticeship to fully love both God and neighbor (Matt 22:37-40; Mark 12:29-33; Luke 10:27). In joint operation with the Living Word and the coming Spirit, Jesus tells man to go and make “disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you” (Matt 28:18-20).

Fulfilling the Great Commission is not left to the uncooperative thinking, feeling, or traditions of man affected by Adam’s failure to cooperate with the Creator’s

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<sup>8</sup> Robert E. Coleman, *The Master Plan of Evangelism* (Grand Rapids, MI: Revell, 1993), 34.

<sup>9</sup> *The Westminster Larger Catechism*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (Lawrenceville, GA: Committee for Christian Education & Publication, 1909), 3. “Q: What is the chief and highest end of man? A: Man’s chief and highest end is to glorify God, and fully enjoy him forever.”

<sup>10</sup> *The Westminster Larger Catechism*, 133.

defined pattern of behavior. Rather, Jesus specifically instructed the criticality of the person of the Spirit to help man in apprenticeship to be like Christ (Acts 1:8). John is helpful in how he articulates the organic church's reliance on the person of the Spirit in order to fulfill the Great Commission (John 14:16, 26; 15:26; 16:7). He informs that neither theological knowledge, moralistic intent, nor social reform is sufficient to achieve what is the ultimate endeavor of the church—disciple-making. Luke is clear that it is the Spirit who teaches the believing person what to say when coming before the authorities of the world to substantiate the reality of Jesus' being and resulting requirement of regeneration.<sup>11</sup> This being the case, the organic church must rely on the Holy Spirit to change and validate the genuine belief of each woman and man apprenticing Christ (Rom 8:16-17).

### **Flourishing**

What is “that which is truly life” (1 Tim 6:19)? Prior to pursuing results of disciple-making through joint operation with CPC for members to experience simplicity in evangelism, it was necessary to negotiate the life pattern Jesus demonstrates to facilitate mutual understanding. Francis Schaeffer's reasoning demonstrates that anyone attempting to define a pattern for the purpose of disciple-making must be careful to not arbitrarily isolate an aspect of Jesus' life pattern, particularly to the exclusion of other characteristics.<sup>12</sup> Such basic formulas cannot be intended, but for the directional apprenticing of those personally cooperating with the person of the Spirit. Cooperating with the Spirit requires personal spiritual disciplines inseparable from studying the Bible to change. The resulting change facilitates God's predetermined authority (Rom 8:28-30; Eph 2:10). It is in this case that Luke gives direction to the reader who believes that one

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<sup>11</sup> Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 699. Grudem defines regeneration as “a secret act of God in which He imparts new spiritual life to us; sometimes called being ‘being born again.’”

<sup>12</sup> Francis A. Schaeffer, *The Francis A. Schaeffer Trilogy. The God Who Is There, Escape from Reason, He Is There and He Is Not Silent* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 1990), 185.



must apprentice Christ's authorial living pattern. For Luke, it is a presupposition that Jesus' life is patterned to be apprenticed. Apprenticeship is imitating the ultimate Authority. In doing the Father's will in every moment of his being, Jesus is the ultimate Authority of the glory of God. Formulating a pattern of behavior must be pursued cautiously so it negotiates from truth a correct facilitation of correct behavior, rather than present itself conclusively formulaic of definitive outcome (Isa 44:25). Men cannot pattern their lives after Jesus without the indwelling of the Spirit (Acts 1:8). This is "that which is truly life," being like Jesus who is God.

Being his apprentice is to follow Christ by the power of the Spirit, not to simply emulate historically recorded values or principles in how Jesus behaved as a man (Luke 9:23). To conduct oneself as Christ, attests Francis Schaeffer, being Christian, is to be completely reliant on the work of the Spirit to produce characteristics of Christ in one's pattern of living (2 Cor 3:18).<sup>13</sup> This is, in and of itself, a joint operation of the believing person and the person of the Spirit's authority as Creator.<sup>14</sup> Luke concludes that imitating Christ is not plausible apart from the Word of God. He states his intention at the outset of his Gospel to "compile a narrative of the things that have been accomplished among us . . . so that [Theophilus] might have certainty concerning the things that have been taught (Luke 1:4)."<sup>15</sup> The major emphasis of his compilation "seems to have been the everyday matter of Christian disciple-making. Luke is setting out for his readers the self-consciousness that one should have and the manner in which one should live as a follower of Christ."<sup>16</sup> Thus, cooperation in disciple-making is tethered to the ultimate

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<sup>13</sup> Schaeffer, *The Francis A. Schaeffer Trilogy*, 182.

<sup>14</sup> Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 746. Grudem defines sanctification as "a progressive work of God and man that makes us more and more free from sin and like Christ in our actual lives."

<sup>15</sup> Richard N. Longenecker, *Patterns of Discipleship in the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1996), 74.

<sup>16</sup> Longenecker, *Patterns of Discipleship in the New Testament*, 74.

authority of the Father's Word. It is adjoined to attitudinal apprenticeship; which Luke demonstrates in his jointly operating with Paul in ministering the Word. This can dually serve as authority given by the Son to facilitate and negotiate obstacles toward a shared predetermined destination (Rom 8:28-30; Eph 2:8-10). Humility as an apprentice to another is formative of jointly acting with another in any common operation (Eph 4:2; Phil 2:3; Col 3:12).

Luke wrote his Gospel, with Acts as sequel, to demonstrate by historical account that one must personally be in joint operation with the Creator before joint operation with other moral creatures for the gospel to even be plausible (even now at CPC or any church). Bruce Ware avers that Jesus himself is the portrait.<sup>17</sup> With this said, the New Testament clearly shows Jesus' intent to cooperate with the Father's Word, the person of the Spirit, and man in order for future men, who do not see his behavioral pattern, to find faith in it (John 20:29; 1 Pet 1:8; 2 Cor 5:7 ). Numerous examples are available in Scripture for the modern believer to consider. A few will be provided for the purpose of qualifying how to move forward in patterning the life of Christ in jointly operating with those who apprentice Jesus Christ in seemingly different patterns for the gospel. The effort to do so is essential to how the world is to experience the church as being reasonable (Phil 4:5). The reward of doing so is to "flourish" in enjoying the abundant life stated by Jesus, which is my desire for the people of CPC in my serving them for the gospel (John 10:10).<sup>18</sup>

### **Cooperative Disciple-Making in the New Testament**

Paul acknowledged a joint operation with the Philippian church resulting from their faithful support of his ministry (Phil 4:14-18). He desired the Philippians to flourish

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<sup>17</sup> Ware, *The Man Christ Jesus*, 27.

<sup>18</sup> Andy Crouch, *Strong and Weak: Embracing a Life of Love, Risk & True Flourishing* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2016), 27.

(Phil 4:19). Troublesome were the patterns of living being introduced from outside the church, as well as within their own hearts, that were precluding the desired result (Phil 3:2; 2:14). Paul's instruction was the necessity of humiliation "to the point of death" (Phil 2:5-8). In his love for the Philippians, Paul tells them the necessity of sacrificing significantly (Phil 2:8). In delivering this difficult instruction, the Philippians are assured that a reward awaits their faithfulness (Phil 2:9-11). Tactically, it requires that two women with differences negotiate their preferences and cooperate (Phil 4:2). His urging is not that these two are to agree with one another, but to "agree in the Lord." Ultimately, Paul affirms the fulfilling pattern to entail putting self aside to be one in Christ through common thinking (Phil 4:8). In this common pattern of thinking, Paul said, "For to live is Christ, and to die gain (Phil 1:21)." In knowing death as "gain," the apprentice gives his life to the authority of Christ who he understands as the central point of cooperation.

Paul gives meaning to death as being in Christ alone. Confidence of an assured meaning to man's existence is in and through Christ. Passing through the person of the Son by the power of the Spirit is the only point of entry to be in the Father's presence for eternity. All cultural standards of structure ultimately resolve to a single point of narrowed entry (Luke 18:25). All must conform regardless of their innovative thinking, empathetic feeling, and ideological tradition to a predetermined standard for passage (1 Cor 1:18-25). It is in cooperation with the predetermined standard that people ultimately gain entry to where they most desire to be. It requires mutual recognition of the predetermined destination with agreement of pattern to follow in the shared journey. Jonathan Leeman's thinking on the difference between those wandering and those in common pilgrimage is that the Christian apprentice desires church membership.<sup>19</sup> The believer apprentices Christ in order to be saved, and Christ saves him in order to exercise

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<sup>19</sup> Jonathan Leeman, *Church Membership: How the World Knows Who Represents Jesus* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012), 15.

the authority over the believer due Him as the Creator. The desire of the man who apprentices the authority of the Creator is membership with those commonly agreed in a defined pattern of life for their shared journey—the church.<sup>20</sup>

### **Cooperation Clarified in Corinth’s Church**

Paul calls those wandering to apprentice Christ alone as their common pilgrimage in the Church at Corinth (1 Cor 1:10-17). The men and women of the church at Corinth did not seem to acknowledge anything was amiss prior to Paul’s arrival. Paul identified blatant disregard for imitating Jesus in his defined pattern for their shared journey. Paul did not react unkindly to even the fact a male church member was engaged in sexual relations with his father’s wife (1 Cor 5:1). There were those who were asserting their old thinking, feelings, and traditions rather than conforming to the standards of entry established in Jesus’ life pattern and instruction.<sup>21</sup> Leon Morris comments that, “Paul was troubled by the ‘tendency on part of some members to make the break with pagan society as indefinite as possible. . . . The Church was in the world, as it had to be, but the world was in the Church, as ought not to be.’”<sup>22</sup> The conflicting patterns in individual behavior are further documented by Paul as being acts of apprenticeship to other men rather than the person of the Son. Divisiveness was perpetuated by the men and women Paul connected who adhered to the personalities of men rather than the person of Christ (1 Cor 1:12). Paul does not disaffirm their belief in Jesus. Rather, Paul calls all who claim membership in the Corinthian church to come

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<sup>20</sup> Leeman, *Church Membership*, 26.

<sup>21</sup> Michael Lawrence, *Conversion: How God Creates a People* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2017), 112-19. In exploring the topic of conversion through Paul’s epistle, Michael Lawrence identifies from 1 Corinthians a segmentation of those who are genuine believers and can wander from faithfulness as being the (1) Immature, (2) Imperfect, (3) Weak, and (4) Wounded, all of whom are articulated by Paul as acceptable within church membership, as well as the fifth segment who is not acceptable within church membership; (5) the Scandalous.

<sup>22</sup> Leon Morris, *1 Corinthians*. Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (Leicester, UK: InterVarsity Press, 1999), 26.

under the single Lordship of Jesus Christ in both frame of mind and opinion (2 Cor 10:5-6). Paul is calling for behavioral change. When Paul tells the Corinthians to apprentice him as he had apprenticed Christ, it is an exhortation to place Christ first, not him (1 Cor 4:15). This must be the frame of mind and opinion of today's doctrinally divided church so as to pursue cooperation for mission, education, and benevolence.

Corinthian men and women were assembling in Jesus' name, but not according to Jesus' pattern of living. The word translated "church" in the New Testament is *ekklesia*, meaning "those who are called out."<sup>23</sup> Paul is distinguishing two ideas of the church as he addresses the Corinthians. First, he is articulating the church as the group of people that God has called unto Himself from everywhere and from all time.<sup>24</sup> Gregg Allison articulates this the one universal church.<sup>25</sup> The church is "one body of believers that God has called unto Himself. This body of believers are both living and dead in any part of the world."<sup>26</sup>

The New Testament also uses the word *churches* (plural), as in "the churches in the province of Asia send you greetings. Aquila and Priscilla greet you warmly in the Lord, and so does the church that meets at their house" and "he went through Syria and Cilicia, strengthening the churches" (1 Cor 16:19; Acts 15:17). In these examples, the word refers to local bodies of believers meeting in a particular location.<sup>27</sup> In this sense, as is the case today, there are many churches. Today, whether Reformed or modern Evangelical, each is constituted of people with differing thoughts, feelings, and traditions.

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<sup>23</sup> Morris, *1 Corinthians*, 26.

<sup>24</sup> Allison, *Sojourners and Strangers*, 63.

<sup>25</sup> Allison, *Sojourners and Strangers*, 467.

<sup>26</sup> Allison, *Sojourners and Strangers*, 148.

<sup>27</sup> Allison, *Sojourners and Strangers*.

Paul's ministry to the Corinthian Church therefore not only models cooperative discipling but also helps to clarify its definition. Paul writes,

<sup>6</sup>I have applied all these things to myself and Apollos for your benefit, brothers, that you may learn by us not to go beyond what is written, *that none of you may be puffed up in favor of one against another.* <sup>7</sup>For who sees anything different in you? What do you have that you did not receive? If then you received it, why do you boast as if you did not receive it? <sup>8</sup>Already you have all you want! Already you have become rich! Without us you have become kings! And would that you did reign, so that we might share the rule with you! <sup>9</sup>For I think that God has exhibited us apostles as last of all, like men sentenced to death, because we have become a spectacle to the world, to angels, and to men. <sup>10</sup>We are fools for Christ's sake, but you are wise in Christ. We are weak, but you are strong. You are held in honor, but we in disrepute. <sup>11</sup>To the present hour we hunger and thirst, we are poorly dressed and buffeted and homeless, <sup>12</sup>and we labor, working with our own hands. When reviled, *we bless*; when persecuted, *we endure*; <sup>13</sup>when slandered, *we entreat*. We have become, and are still, like the scum of the world, the refuse of all things. (1 Cor 4:6-13)

The church in Corinth was comprised of a breadth of pagan converts who resided in a thriving cosmopolitan center “intellectually alert, materially prosperous, but morally corrupt.”<sup>28</sup>

Paul is coming into the Corinthian Church with his own thoughts, feelings, and traditions. Like Georgetown's prestige among the balance of Williamson County, Corinth functioned “as a centre from which the gospel could radiate out to the surrounding districts. Anything preached in Corinth would be sure of wide dissemination.”<sup>29</sup> Paul entered their church to bring the gospel according to his apostolic authority providing example of joint operation for those apprenticing Jesus. He conducts a joint operation of authority and apprenticeship in seeking spiritual harmony. Paul's activities of facilitation and negotiation are in conscious volition of his will in the service of others in Christ who believe differently for mutually desired outcome of flourishing for the gospel by way of mission, education, and benevolence.

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<sup>28</sup> Morris, *1 Corinthians*, 19.

<sup>29</sup> Morris, *1 Corinthians*.

As Paul makes critical distinction to the Corinthians between pagan from church culture, and wandering behavior from genuine belief in Jesus, he calls for the Corinthians to unify in the name of Jesus Christ by using an interesting word that correlates with Matthew's description of mending nets (4:21).<sup>30</sup> Nets have a distinct place in Jesus' life and ministry and will be an important analogy in chapter 3. In Luke's example, Jesus walks by a lake and gets onto a boat that belongs to the man from whose home he ministered, Simon (Peter). Having connected with him by reconciling his needs (teaching and healing), Jesus told Simon to put the boat out into deep water and to let down the nets for a catch. Described as having been hard worked and exhausted, Simon cooperated in his existing relationship with Jesus by saying, "At your word I'll let down the nets" (Luke 5:1-5). They proceed to catch an unimaginable amount of fish.

To Luke, this catch represents the multiplying effect of teaching the Father's Word (2 Cor 9:10-15). It is in the "net" of catching men (disciple-making) that Jesus has called all in Christ to cooperate for the multiplicity of the catch. Man has been cosmically apprenticed to the authority of Christ's fishing for men to be His net. For all who apprentice Jesus, irrespective of their local body of believers meeting in a particular location, cooperation comes in, through, and for the gospel. Each local church may have differing tradition fostered in thinking and feeling of doctrine but are universally woven together as a net for the catching of men by the Spirit and Word.

### **Cooperation and Commission**

In Jesus' reallocating men from catching fish to facilitating and negotiating the catching of men, the Great Commission is his directive. Jesus stipulates for cooperative disciple-making among all those who follow him. The contrast of the catch is in facilitating and negotiating the gospel with "all" in the social circle of those apprenticing

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<sup>30</sup> Morris, *1 Corinthians*, 39.

Christ. This is to be done to the extent that the content of dialog is to include “all” that Christ commands. It is all that Christ commands that defines standard for entry through Jesus to access the Father. Matthew writes, “And Jesus came and said to them, ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age’” (Matt 28:18-20). The impetus of this passage is a command from Jesus as being the Authority (as God) to his disciples who are his apprentices (as men) to live out the same pattern of life that Jesus lived to form the one true church (1 Peter 2:5). The Son is calling His disciples to operate jointly in facilitating and negotiating their differences to come together as one for the gospel.

In this description of unifying directive, a pattern is demonstrated to apprentice. “Jesus’ directive in the biblical story line is the climax and conclusion of Matthew, passing the torch to his disciples . . . and issuing to his followers their marching orders.”<sup>31</sup> Those who follow “going,” “baptizing,” and “teaching” serve the text’s main emphasis. The imperative is to “make disciples.”<sup>32</sup> While making disciples is clearly the primary objective, each task likely gains some imperative. The importance of “going” clearly has all nations in view, but Jesus’ focus is for those who apprentice him to connect with those in their social sphere to facilitate and negotiate a common apprenticing to Jesus without exception. As subordinate tasks, “baptizing” and “teaching” demonstrate tactical action within a pattern of behavior.<sup>33</sup> Scripture is never separated in facilitating the good news of Jesus Christ for another to respond. The former “(baptize)

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<sup>31</sup> Craig L. Blomberg, *Matthew*, The New American Commentary (Nashville, TN: Broadman and Holman, 1992), 431.

<sup>32</sup> D. A. Carson, *Matthew*, in vol 8 of The Expositor’s Bible Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1984), 595. Cf. Blomberg, *Matthew*, 431.

<sup>33</sup> Carson, *Matthew*, 595. Cf. Donald A. Hagner, *Matthew 1-13*, Word Biblical Commentary (Waco, TX: Word Thomas Nelson, 1993), 886.



will be a once-for-all, decisive initiation into Christian community. The latter (teach) proves a perennially incomplete life-long task.”<sup>34</sup> Baptism corresponds with God’s act of salvation and teaching with God’s subsequent act of sanctifying the one He has saved. Donald Hagner adds, “The emphasis in the commission thus falls not in the initial proclamation of the gospel, but more on the arduous task of nurturing into the experience of discipleship.”<sup>35</sup>

As CPC resides in Christian culture, cooperative disciple-making seeks to facilitate and negotiate the life of Christ to *all*, leading others into the community of God through baptism and teaching them to obey *all* that he commanded. This includes connecting with those who actually attend church within the aimlessness of their wandering. Rather than assembling for single purpose of worshiping the one true God, wanderers pass from church to church aimlessly in the culture of consumerism. As Paul observed in Corinth, mending the net includes entering a local church of unique thinkers, feelers, and their traditions who must hear the gospel anew. It is in subscribing to Jesus’ life pattern that the specific revelation of Jesus Christ evokes God’s effective call for the purpose of distinguishing wanderers from pilgrims.

### **Cooperation to Act**

Luke’s sequel to his Gospel is explicit in demonstrating the outcomes of patterning one’s behavior and words after Christ by the power of the Spirit. Following Jesus’ ascension, committed to their common pilgrimage, those apprenticing Jesus assembled to abide in prayer (Acts 1: 13-14). Luke relays that in this historical moment of Pentecost, “they were all together in one place” (Acts 2:1). From the Great Commission, Peter jointly operates with the Spirit as he reconciles the need of the crowd,

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<sup>34</sup> R. T. France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, The New International Commentary of The New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2007), 1116. Cf. Blomberg, 431.

<sup>35</sup> Carson, *Matthew*, 595. Cf. Hagner, *Matthew*, 887.

Luke tells in Acts 2. Having been the man that overtly denied his apprenticeship to Christ, Peter now does exactly what he observed Jesus doing in the way Jesus modeled with result. The Spirit facilitating and negotiating the heart desire of all hearing who could understand, Peter identified Jesus to the gathered crowd (Acts 2:36-37). In their ability to believe who Jesus is, Peter called for each to do what Jesus did (Acts 2:38). They apprenticed to Christ in joint operation with the Spirit, Word, and Peter.

In no way does Luke assert that this will be the case on every occasion. Personality or preferences that established individuality among the thinking, feeling, and traditions of believers were subordinated to a commonality that came with Pentecost (Acts 4: 31-37). All those who were Spirit-filled believed in order to jointly operate in the Great Commission. “Great grace was upon them.” The Spirit provided, and continues to provide today, understanding of when believers jointly operate and when believers separate for distinct purpose of being in Christ (Acts 13: 2-3). The Spirit also provides keen awareness of when cooperation is requisite to address what is untrue, corrupting, and malicious to the unity the Spirit brings as God’s created reality of the universal church (Acts 15:1-35). Men have been debunked by God at every turn when endeavoring to take on His sovereignty in asserting a faith doctrine in the context of their disciple-making responsibility according to grace doctrine. Men cannot just decide to be Christian. Luke provides consistent patterns of speaking the Word and doing good deeds that are instructive to the generations of believers to come. If Jesus gave authoritative directive to make disciples of “*all*,” then Jesus is going to provide instructive tutorial. Luke describes this repeatable and scalable pattern of behavior to follow.

The New Testament communicates Jesus’ legacy for cooperative disciple-making as a model worthy of apprenticing, both for the direction to those wandering in life and for the healing of those spiritually wounded as they live in the world. To the wandering, yet beloved congregation in Corinth, he encourages, exhorts, and challenges them to follow his own example (1 Cor 11:1). In Paul’s apostolic directive to imitate

what he does, there is a cooperative connection to the Book of Acts. Luke apprentices Paul in ministry. His apprenticeship is simply imitating the ultimate Authority of Christ. Luke writes what he has learned from Paul.

“The book of Acts flows from the gospel of Luke” emphasizing the power of the Spirit.<sup>36</sup> This is unique of the four gospels indicating an intentionality of the two combined. Luke writes to address the long-awaited end-times salvation predicted by the prophets (Luke 1:32-33). He is stating all foreseen in the Father’s redemptive pursuit of man now realized in the person of Jesus–Messiah. Luke announces that the anticipated salvation has arrived through the one in whom Yahweh is pleased, not limited to Israel, but to all (Luke 2:30-32). Luke understands from the Father’s pronouncement that disciple-making is simply apprenticing the Messiah–Jesus (Luke 3:22). Luke further contends the necessity of the indwelling Holy Spirit to cooperate (Luke 24:49). Acts portrays the disciples apprenticing Jesus’ words and actions in Luke’s Gospel.

Timothy Laniak points to the cooperative attribute of Luke’s text in that it reflects evident apprenticeship of Paul who is in turn apprenticing Jesus.<sup>37</sup> Having not been a witness to Jesus’ ministry, Luke draws from source material to formulate his thesis of the leader he apprentices (Luke 1:1). Affecting Luke’s apprenticeship of Jesus is Paul who trains Luke by apprenticing Jesus himself (2 Tim 4:11). In John 20:21, Jesus said, “As the Father has sent me, I also send you.” Then in 1 Corinthians 11:1, Paul says, “Imitate me, just as I also imitate Christ.” This demonstrates the continuity between Christ and his followers, denotes Mark Strauss.<sup>38</sup> Luke represents Jesus as Messiah, the Savior of the world, so his disciples can lead others to follow Jesus by apprenticing him

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<sup>36</sup> Mark L. Strauss, *Four Portraits One Jesus: A Survey of Jesus and the Gospels* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2007), 261.

<sup>37</sup> Timothy S. Laniak, *Shepherds After My Own Heart: Pastoral Traditions and Leadership in the Bible* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006), 195.

<sup>38</sup> Strauss, *Four Portraits One Jesus*, 262.

(Luke 14:27). Luke's Gospel narrative is that Jesus demonstrates through his pattern of living. This pattern is later demonstrated in the disciple's behavior in Acts. Jesus' pattern in disciple-making, according to Luke, is to abide, connect, evangelize, disciple, and worship, exhorts Thompson and Kim for CPC's edification.<sup>39</sup> Jesus' life pattern is defined by Jesus modeling cooperative disciple-making to train his disciples for them to apprentice.

As Paul travels from church to church, he lives and communicates the apostolic standard of Jesus Christ for all who hear to be changed. Specifically, to become like Christ in heart, mind, and hand (1 Cor 7:22-24). It is to give a singular direction to those wandering through life and bring healing to those wounded in how their life is lived. As Jesus had provided the Father's Word as life directive and healed the wounds incurred in worldly living, Paul does the same. He proposes imitating Jesus as the singular duty of each believer in each individual church regardless of the cultural characteristics surrounding it (2 Cor 11:23). Culture and the church are the single point of separation in the race of man.

The authors of the Hebrew canon acknowledged this as reality, as does Paul (Col 3:12). This bifurcated reality is articulated in the final judgement of man by God in Jesus' description of sheep and goats (Matt 25:32). Paul teaches contrast between the law of the flesh and the law of the Spirit (Rom 8:2-8). In emphasizing the Spirit, Paul makes clear to the hearer that the Christian life is not comprised of the individual, but the body. Each individually created vessel occupied by God's Spirit is no longer conformed to the standards of culture. Anthony Hoekema provides the clear illustration that a man is changed to be unified within self, with others, and with God by the single person of the Spirit.<sup>40</sup> It is the Spirit who claims a man until the end of his life for the purpose of

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<sup>39</sup> Thompson and Kim, *Simple Evangelism*, 5.

<sup>40</sup> Hoekema, *Created in God's Image*, 94.

eternal worship of the Creator (Mark 1:8; John 3:34-36). Conflict inside a church, as well as between churches, occurs in those who say that they believe and behave differently than did Jesus. For the Corinthians, this discontinuity came in several forms. All of the forms negated their capacity to be recognizable as apprentices of Christ.

### **Cooperative Disciple-Making in Christ's Authoritative Pattern of Living**

Cooperative disciple-making evident in the New Testament implies Jesus is cooperative in his making of his disciples. This must be substantiated. As one considers the prejudices Jesus experienced, his commitment to cooperative disciple-making was extraordinary. Why did Jesus, who was rejected by the people of his hometown and knowingly betrayed by one of his disciples, insist on cooperating with anyone who did not oppose him (Luke 9:49-50)? His strategy toward the disobedient to the Father is counterintuitive to anyone troubled by fear. The New Testament compels one to see that Jesus' priority for this kind of acceptance and love is catalyzed by the multiplying effect of the gospel (Acts 6:7; 2 Cor 9:10; Heb 6:14). All contemporary churches should remember that cooperative disciple-making remains critical to their own mission. In fact, Jesus warns of a time that his disciples will come under pressure from within due to a church in decline (Matt 24:9-12).<sup>41</sup> R. T. France points out that it is in a fractured condition that disciples persevere to bring the gospel to all nations (Matt 24:14).<sup>42</sup> It is from such circumstance as the denominationally divided church that the genuine love of disciples is extended to the wandering, as well as one another.

CPC faces many of the same demands that Jesus and his disciples experienced during their early ministry, oddly exacerbated by a Christian culture. A minority church encompassed by a confusing and dismissive culture, CPC has the daily challenge of

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<sup>41</sup> R. T. France, *Matthew*, Tyndale New Testament Commentary, 338-40.

<sup>42</sup> France, *Matthew*, Tyndale, 1985, 338-40.

demonstrating itself relevant while facing the reality of ever-growing demands for its limited time and resources. Cooperation toward common destination is critical to such limitation. Jesus certainly faced comparable challenges, but he did not simply resign himself to reacting in fear. While there were always needs in front of him and those apprenticing, Jesus often opted to connect with the unfamiliar and unfriendly world (Luke 4:16-30). In doing so, he gives a sense of priority to making new disciples. Apprenticing Jesus' pattern brings our minds to think right, our hearts to feel right, with our hands to serve right for gospel effect of wandering and wounded people.

### **Jesus is Uniquely Cooperative**

Jesus' innate difference from all others is the reality of his deity. Did Jesus have to forfeit his identity as God to reconcile the need of man? Did Jesus apprentice himself to man by way of jointly operating with man to fulfill the Father's will of redemption? Brace Ware affirms that the idea of Jesus' apprenticeship to man's authority is implausible in context of Creator and creature identity, but not in context of means by which Jesus fulfilled his aim.<sup>43</sup> The whole fact that God became man is counterintuitive to the mind of man (Rom 9:32-33). This holy God delivered himself into the unholy hands of man for the purpose of man's salvation as the ultimate apprentice beyond a slave; a sacrifice (1 Pet 2:24). The Son didn't enslave Himself to the ways of man. He sacrificed Himself for the salvation of man. Breaking the bonds of sin and death for all time! Therefore, "So if the Son sets you free, you are free indeed" (John 8:36).

The freedom Jesus secures for all those who apprentice him is for the purpose of life in him to love. Jesus' authority was exercised in the Jewish culture of the synagogue that had been overrun by conquering pagan forces. When the disciples complained that those not following them in that confused culture were doing as Jesus

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<sup>43</sup> Ware, *The Man Christ Jesus*, 56.

did, Jesus responded, “Do not stop him, for the one who is not against you is for you” (Luke 9:50). His disciples’ wish was to quash rather than cooperate with the similar pattern of behavior they observed. Their confusion stemmed from what they thought to be true and right. This had become traditional to their experience. The result was prejudice. Jesus was not prejudiced.

Georgetown Christian culture can be wrought with distortion of Jesus’ teaching. To avert the trend of prejudice among the modern divided local church, a “theological triage” approach of deduction has been suggested by Al Mohler.<sup>44</sup> He outlines “first, second, and third-level” priorities for determining how one should consider the different thoughts, feelings and traditions of the local church. Herein, “first-level” is defined as theological issues “most central and essential to the Christian faith.” An absence of any one of these, (e.g., Trinity) immediately qualifies that “church” as being un-Christian wherein cooperation for the gospel is impossible.<sup>45</sup>

“Second-level” qualifications are subsequently assessed to determine the extent to which cooperation is quite possible. Mohler specifically references the difference between Baptists and Presbyterians in their observance of baptism.<sup>46</sup> Both local churches meet the criteria of “first-level” qualification. Yet, this difference is an inhibitor of “fellowship within the same congregation.” This does not mean alienation, but the very opposite. It means a helpfulness to do what Paul did in Corinth. Apply one informed view of right belief to another informed view of right belief in order to deduce a right behavior–apprenticeship. The two can definitively work together for purpose of the gospel across the community to help one another fulfill the authorial commands of their shared leader Jesus Christ.

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<sup>44</sup> Naselli and Hansen, *Four Views on the Spectrum of Evangelicalism*, 77-80.

<sup>45</sup> Naselli and Hansen, *Four Views*, 78-79.

<sup>46</sup> Nasseli and Hansen, *Four Views*, 79-80.

Within a local church, “third-level” differences may exist but have no bearing on individual member’s fellowship. This includes issues like eschatology wherein Christendom agrees to a historical breadth of possibilities (four) and do not need to agree; in this case, because Jesus states that he does not even know in order to teach (Mark 13:32).

### **Jesus Provides Perspective as being Cooperative**

Jesus was navigating hostilities that are foreign to the perspective of an American Bible-belt believer. By no means does this negate the relevance of pattern to his approach. It is explicitly stated that the believer recognizes the common enemy to be operating in the realm of the supernatural rather than the senses (Luke 10:19-20). Just because there is a cultural climate that appears friendly to the ideas of Jesus in the claiming of spirituality, does not mean comparable hostility is not present (James 4:4-10). If this is the case, Christ was explicitly cooperative with those that expressed themselves differently in thinking, feeling, and tradition. This facilitates and navigates toward his desired outcome.<sup>47</sup> His commitment to cooperative disciple-making was not preferential but rooted in His authority.

Jesus walked among all the wandering and wounded people in that place and time reconciling needs. Luke emphasizes Jesus’ regional popularity in the first minutes of his public ministry resulting from his behavioral pattern. Having just returned from abiding in the Father through the temptation in the wilderness, Luke writes that the crowds were “amazed,” in Jesus’ teaching saying, “What is this word? For with authority and power he commands the unclean spirits and they come out. And reports about him went out into every place in the surrounding region” (Luke 4:36-37). Those experiencing

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<sup>47</sup> Naselli and Hansen, *Four Views*, 133.



the pattern of Jesus are struck by the reconciliation of needs that they witness. Yes, there is miraculous healing, but it is in the teaching of the Word that change is realized.

Wanderers gathered around for the notoriety of his healings. Some of whom apprenticed Jesus by responding to his teaching. Emulating Jesus' life in good deeds is insufficient to being Christian and requires the explicit teaching of the Father's Word to evoke the effectual call.<sup>48</sup> Luke describes massive crowds gathered around Christ. They were to Jesus as sheep without a shepherd, and his attitude toward them was one of compassion (Matt 9:36). Distinguishing one population from the other was at times indistinguishable; there were some among the wandering throng who were able to clearly distinguish Jesus. Luke is distinguishing in his language, "[He] was being glorified by all" (4:15). The verb *doxazo* (to glorify) is almost always used exclusively for God, and only here does Luke use it to describe Jesus.<sup>49</sup> All were amazed by Jesus, but recognizing the requirement to apprentice Jesus to change, the wanderers continued to wander.

### **Jesus is Distinctly Cooperative**

Jesus' identity brings the spectrum of modern Evangelicalism into focus of distinction. Whether modern Evangelical or Reformed, it is only through Jesus that men can pass into eternity to be with the Father (John 10:1-5). How are the men and women apprenticing Jesus distinguished? The distinguishing factor is serving Christ alone, not men (Gal 1:6-10). This is only achieved by the same commitment to abiding in Christ that was demonstrated by those apprenticing Jesus at the historical opening of Acts. Acknowledged by all as a great teacher, it is interesting that Scripture records only a single specific teaching request of Jesus, "Lord, teach us to pray" (Luke 11:1). An

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<sup>48</sup> Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 692. Grudem defines the effectual calling as "an act of God the Father, speaking through the human proclamation of the gospel, in which he summons people to himself in such a way that they respond in saving faith."

<sup>49</sup> Darrell L. Bock, *Luke*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1994), 392-93.

apprentice must have capacity to communicate with the authority he follows to know his Master's will. Jesus facilitates all his disciples praying to the Father in a unified pattern. In their differences, Jesus facilitates a pattern of prayer for those apprenticing him to cooperate by demonstrating his prayer (Luke 11:2-4). He also prays for their ongoing cooperation beyond his incarnate presence in the world (John 17:11). It is in the apprentice's own personal spiritual discipline of abiding in the Father as his Master that the reality of apprenticeship is distinguished (2 Pet 1:5-8).

When abiding in the Father's Word, the disciples actively engaged in what Jesus was doing (Deut 6:4-9). When not abiding, they did not. They often looked foolish; as we can today. Apprenticeship to Jesus is not an easy task. It begins in abiding, requiring prayer and the Father's Word. Taking on the pattern of another's life requires the apprentice to think like the one he imitates. There must be motivation rooted in the heart of the apprentice to put aside his own desires, dreams, and determination, to instead live out those of another. Eugene Peterson describes the unique relationship of the master and apprentice:

The apprentice observes the master as the master learns; the master observes the apprentice as the apprentice learns. The learning develops through relationships expressed in gestures, imitation, posture, rhythm, emotions, affection, admiration. And all this take place in a sea of orality—voices and silences.<sup>50</sup>

Prayer is always the response to the Father's Word. The Father changes the desire of the apprentice through the work of the Spirit. The will of the apprentice is changed becoming the Father's will. The apprentice's hands then do the work of the Father. If one does not have the distinction of the Spirit dwelling within him, then he only apprentices an idea of Jesus (Matt 7:21; Luke 10:21).

Because this project sought to foster disciple-making initiative in a culture of

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<sup>50</sup> Eugene H. Peterson, *Working the Angles: The Shape of Pastoral Integrity* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1987), 93.

wandering people who self-identify as Christians, but have not conformed to Jesus' pattern of living, and the spiritually wounded who are victims to the words and deeds of those who they mistake for Jesus followers, consideration is now given to how Jesus devoted his time missionally, educationally, and benevolently engaging the wandering and spiritually wounded.

### **Cooperative Disciple-Making of the Wandering**

For Jesus, cooperative disciple-making was centric to abiding in the Father. He was confident to make disciples of those wandering through life consumed in selfish ambition and fear. Jesus did this to the point of discipling a wanderer that he knew would be his betrayer—Judas. Following this example, CPC should base its conversations about bolstering the priority of disciple-making on the most comprehensive definition of discipleship. This should include the understanding that evangelism is part of, and not separate from, disciple-making. Schaeffer's Oxford University seminar dialog clarifies discipleship to begin prior to conversion by way of "pre-evangelism."<sup>51</sup> According to Schaeffer, "A proper understanding of truth is required before one can enter into Christ." Twentieth-century "thought-forms" mean that conversion will be part of the journey and will often require years of participation in a local congregation before a person genuinely adopts the Christian worldview as reality.<sup>52</sup> This fosters the dilemma in a Christian culture of the reality that all Christians are disciples; yet, not all disciples are Christians. Without diminishing the salvific moment of justification, the church should see that disciple-making is often a process that begins before regeneration, and that one's

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<sup>51</sup> Schaeffer, *Trilogy*, 155.

<sup>52</sup> Schaeffer is effective in addressing reality as being the singular work of the Creator. "Thought forms" is his language for addressing the difference between an individual's thinking, feeling, and traditions and God's intended creation. Moral Therapeutic Deism (chapter 1) is a defined "thought form" prevalent in Georgetown today, among others.

conversion to Christ might only be discerned over time.<sup>53</sup> Tom Schreiner observes that, with the exception of Judas, each disciple had the blessing of an effectual call, yet their apprenticeship to Christ's authority were not immediately evident, and at times, difficult to discern.<sup>54</sup> Jesus' active pursuit of the Samaritan woman, along with Judas, shows firsthand how disciple-making should include a vision for the wanderers in our Christian culture. This is a commitment that CPC should prioritize to realize its vision.

CPC's vision must include a passion toward reaching those wandering as a primary focus in cooperative disciple-making by apprenticing Jesus' pattern of disciple-making behavior within the community. Passivity can result in the Reformed position of God's Sovereignty leaning into ambivalence rather than disciple-making. Man's negating, by commission or omission, a component of the discernable pattern in Scripture is as degenerate as adding to the pattern that is not there. A correct view of CPC commitment to cooperate is evidenced in the deployment of a Reformed Evangelical (confessional Baptist) to lead evangelism and outreach. CPC's efficacy yields effective opportunity for facilitation and negotiating relationship with the wandering. Paul demonstrates that disciple-making is a process, often beginning with an invitation to follow the disciple as they follow Christ (1 Cor 11:1). J. Ramsey Michael's commentary on discipleship as a process in John's Gospel provides rationale for man's responsibility in disciple-making:

Jesus offers the disciples (and us) an important caution about religious conversion, and perhaps about water baptism in particular. "Conversion" (if there is such a thing in the gospel of John) is a complex process, not a single event in a moment of time. Those who "come to the Light" are those who already "do the truth," and by their coming they reveal that their works have been "wrought in God" (3:21). A variety of factors have brought to Jesus, and no one person can claim credit for

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<sup>53</sup> Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 121. Grudem defines justification as "an instantaneous legal act of God in which he (1) thinks of our sins as forgiven and Christ's righteousness as belonging to us, and (2) declares us to be righteous in his sight."

<sup>54</sup> Thomas R. Schreiner, *New Testament Theology: Magnifying God in Christ* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Publishing Group, 2008), 286.

“converting” them or “winning them to Christ.” There are no ‘soul winners’ in this Gospel, only harvesters.<sup>55</sup>

Given Jesus’ patient disposition with those wandering, conversion was not prerequisite to discipleship. The hopelessness that resides in liberal theologies dominating the culture surrounding CPC is rationale for comparable patience. As Schaeffer demonstrated to modern man, it requires entrance into one’s home and access to one’s children for the wanderer to know genuine connection to the disciple-maker.<sup>56</sup> It is in the fullness of life together that the wanderer can trust the genuineness of life change accompanying apprenticeship of the ultimate Authority. It is common that those entering the doors of CPC as local visitors are wandering about in a state of hopelessness. It is these men and women that CPC members can encourage by interpersonally connecting and learning their views before asserting the doctrines of the Reformed Church in America. This cooperative approach to disciple-making is particularly relevant in Christianized culture to facilitate and negotiate the prospective believer apologetically because they are likely already spiritually wounded from encountering the misidentification of Creator, man, and Jesus.

### **Cooperative Disciple-Making of the Wounded**

Jesus’ pattern for cooperative disciple-making emphasized those spiritually wounded. One of the greater takeaways from Jesus’ life pattern is his emphasis of reconciling needs, particularly facilitating healing and exercising authority over the demonic. At several points in his narrative, Luke is explicit about this routine in Jesus’ pattern of life. Jesus heals a man with an unclean demon at the outset of his ministry and then goes on a healing spree of many (4:31-41). Jesus cleanses a leper and paralytic (5:12-26). He heals a man with a withered hand (6:6-11). He heals a centurion’s servant

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<sup>55</sup> J. Ramsey Michaels, *The Gospel of John* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2010), 150.

<sup>56</sup> Schaeffer, *Trilogy*, 257. Schaeffer demonstrates modern liberal theology to be placement of “the sphere of faith in the nonrational and nonlogical, as opposed to the rational and logical, the unverifiable as opposed to the verifiable” and “using connotation words rather than defined words—words as symbols without definition in contrast to scientific symbol that are carefully defined.”

(7:1-10). Jesus casts a “legion” of demons out of a man and into a herd of swine (8:26-39). The immense capacity for healing was effective in a woman’s act of faith and restoring life to a man’s daughter from afar (8:40-56). Another man’s son is affected by Jesus’ healing capacity witnessed by a crowd assembled to hear him teach (9:37-43). In fact, Jesus’ healing is always accompanied by his teaching the Father’s Word.

As CPC seeks to commit toward cooperative disciple-making, let us learn from Jesus as he connects with those who are spiritually wounded by interpersonally and lovingly endeavoring to reconcile their need. All people need the full gospel for reconciliation of all their needs.<sup>57</sup> Cooperative Presbyterian and Baptist leaders, DeYoung and Gilbert, explore this specific to Paul’s mission. They noted a three-fold purpose in his mission, which should be: first, “initial evangelism,” second, “guarding against error and grounding in faith,” and third, “establish a healthy congregation through the full exposition of the gospel and appoint local leadership.” Without expository teaching of Scripture, spiritual health is negated, and the inevitable result is spiritually wounded people who require teaching of the Word with healing. The combination of their three points demonstrates that evangelism with the gospel is primary, applying doctrine for correction follows, and the endpoint is the healing of worship.

Sin is the moral condition that spiritually wounds the single race of man following the fall and to which Jesus offers healing. It is a universal condition for which all need the gospel to reconcile need. True hope comes by way of Paul in Colossians. He “argues that we are full in Christ, made alive in Christ, and set free in Christ” (Col 9-15).<sup>58</sup> It is in dealing with the wounded that differentiation can be discerned between cooperative and noncooperative disciple-making. Jesus led cooperatively by negotiating

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<sup>57</sup> Kevin DeYoung and Greg Gilbert, *What is the Mission of the Church? Making Sense of Social Justice, Shalom, and the Great Commission* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2011), 62.

<sup>58</sup> Timothy S. Lane and Paul David Tripp, *How People Change* (Greensboro, NC: New Growth Press, 2008), 25-28.

the intercultural and interpersonal differences among his disciples. In his authority, Jesus did not mandate forfeiture of personality and preferences. CPC demonstrated this same cooperative capacity in their inviting a confessional Baptist to lead evangelism and outreach apprenticed to the authority of the CPC Session. Jesus disciplined men who did not always act or think like him or others within the group. In his renowned account of Jesus' disciple-making, Alexander Balmain Bruce asserts that the selection of both Matthew (Levi) and Simon the Zealot demonstrates Jesus' willingness to bring very different men into his life (Luke 6:15).<sup>59</sup> Simon had walked away from extreme political associations to follow Jesus. The Zealots were strongly opposed to the merger of Judea and Samaria under Roman rule and the high taxation that came with the Empire.<sup>60</sup> Even after he defected, Simon would still have been associated with a political group that desired the full overthrow of the Roman Empire.<sup>61</sup> For Jesus, whose primary concern was to establish a cosmic kingdom, one finds it interesting that he would take on apprentices whose ideology, ethnicity, and even belief could compromise his own mission.<sup>62</sup> This diverse state of man is the condition of Jesus' apprenticeship to fulfill the will of the Father negating prejudice.

With whom then is Jesus unwilling to cooperate? Brace Ware contends that the demonic and the religious leaders both clearly collide with Jesus' authority.<sup>63</sup> The demonic, understanding his identity, and the religious leaders, spiritually blind to who Jesus is, are the two populations with whom Jesus refused cooperation.<sup>64</sup> On every

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<sup>59</sup> Alexander Balmain Bruce, *The Training of the Twelve: Exhibiting the Twelve Disciples of Jesus Under Discipline for the Apostleship* (New York, NY: A.C. Armstrong and Son, 1889), 35-36.

<sup>60</sup> Bruce, *The Training of the Twelve*.

<sup>61</sup> Bruce, *The Training of the Twelve*.

<sup>62</sup> Bruce, *The Training of the Twelve*.

<sup>63</sup> Ware, *The Man Christ Jesus*, 115.

<sup>64</sup> Walter A. Elwell, *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2001), 436. Elwell delineates the difference between the condition of the demonic and man in

occasion, those demons encountering the authority of the Father through the Son were dispatched from wherever Jesus forbade them. Morris assesses the common deficiency of demonic belief in Jesus to be faith, hope, or charity.<sup>65</sup> Whereas demons evidently believed the identity of Jesus (thus obeying His authority), what they exhibited was an informed belief that does not determine eternal status with the Father. They were affected by Jesus' power yet lived eternally apart from the Father. Jesus makes clear that the Father chooses who may have one of the many rooms in His house (John 14:2-3). These fallen angels, and the religious leaders of that day, were comparably struggling with the same attributes suggested by Morris.<sup>66</sup> He suggests that faith, hope, and charity are absent from each group to the extent that they rejected the identity of the Son of Man all together (Matt 26:65-68).

Spiritual wounding of men and women does originate in the unseen battle beyond the natural world; man is culpable (Eph 6:12). The religious leaders of Jesus' day rejected apprenticeship to Jesus as the Living Word. They refused jointly operating with him to the extent that they accused him of being a devil (Matt 22-32; Mark:22-30). Then they saw him tortured and murdered in his innocence. In Georgetown, this culpability trends with what G. K. Chesterton speculated. Chesterton asserted in his day that future historians would look back and write that hundreds and thousands of young men and women "were subject to horrible religious torture. They were forbidden . . . to indulge in wine or tobacco during certain arbitrarily fixed periods, before certain brutal fights and

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that "Humankind after the fall suffers extensive spiritual deprivation. Although the image of God in man survives (Gen 9:6), reason has lost its soundness (2 Cor 4:4), the will no longer is free to choose God and the good (John 8:34), and sinners are spiritually blind (1 Cor 2:14) and dead (Eph 2:1, 5)." Even then, the Creator pursues a redemptive ministry to man that is not afforded the historically fallen angels.

<sup>65</sup> Leon Morris, *Luke*, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (Leicester, UK: InterVarsity Press, 1999), 120.

<sup>66</sup> Elwell, *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, 331. Elwell clarifies demons as subjected to a prior conclusive judgment by God delineating their status from man's, demons being "those angelic beings who were carried away with Satan's apostasy." Having already been judged, demons knew to believe in Jesus.



festivals. Bigots insisted on their rising at unearthly hours and running violently around fields.”<sup>67</sup>

When the religious in a Christian culture deviate from unique apprenticeship of Christ, the result is torture of those around them. It is a religious torture that leaves enduring wounds of confused thinking, hurt feelings, and perverse traditions. Whenever a person was spiritually wounded, Jesus responded in truth and love by either casting out the demonic intruder or asking a question. Only when encountering the belligerent religious leaders does Jesus make assertions of truth. Pride quashes the pattern necessary to realize cooperation. When encountering the humble, Jesus inquires the truth others have capacity to understand. He does not begin the conversation with the woman at the well by identifying her sin of adultery but asks her for “a drink” (John 4:7). Rather than chastise her, Jesus engages in dialog learning the condition of her heart and openness to apprentice his pattern of life.

Jesus’ own commitment to the wandering and wounded should remind, embolden, and revive a value for cooperative disciple-making at CPC. CPC hopes that visitors will return. In CPC’s stated vision, their social circle is recognized for purpose of evangelism and outreach. It is those who are in an individual’s social circle that trend receptive to his care and ideas of truth. Donald McGavran observes that, in their apprenticing Jesus, at no time does one see the Apostles leaving a receptive person to focus on a non-receptive person.<sup>68</sup> It is within a person’s social circle where the gospel can be most prolific. In recognizing wanderers and the spiritually wounded, CPC may benefit from the example Jesus provides in cultural connectedness, relational intentionality, and personal commitment to bring others into worship of the Father while abiding in Him through all circumstances.

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<sup>67</sup> G. K. Chesterton, *Twelve Types* (London, UK: Arthur Humphrey’s, 1920), 67-68.

<sup>68</sup> Donald A. McGavran, *How Churches Grow: The New Frontiers of Mission* (London, UK: World Dominion Press, 1959), 65.

CPC is bringing others into worship by their accepting into membership a husband and wife who had self-identified Catholic. Although accepting the couple into membership, corresponding capacity of members to personally engage the couple with gospel intentionality has been nominal. This appears to be a result of members' cultural isolation, relational limitation, and conflicting personal priority. These three factors are not unique of CPC members. This is the sort of challenge in cooperative disciple-making that Schaeffer helpfully describes in the idea of "realism in exhibition":

We must look to the Son of God, moment by moment, for these things; such things cannot be done in our own strength. We must allow Him to bear His fruit through us. We can proclaim "orthodoxy" in the flesh, and we can compromise in the flesh. But our calling is a different calling: it is to exhibit God and His character, by His grace, in this generation.<sup>69</sup>

Cultural isolation, relational limitation, and conflicting personal priority are three common signs of unbelief that can affect any church's members from the gospel-centered life. We must then look at Jesus' pattern of living to find belief that leads to right behavior.

What was the discernable pattern that Jesus demonstrated with the Samaritan woman and sought to cultivate into the lives of his disciples? In other words, what was the pattern of faithful disciple-making? At this point, it has only been shown that cooperative disciple-making was employed by Jesus to make disciples, and that he spent significant time interacting with the wandering and wounded, many who would become disciple-makers themselves. However, it is prudent to highlight the pattern that he specifically sought to live out for his disciples to follow. The pattern that Luke describes in his assertion to apprentice Jesus forms an agreed life pattern for CPC members to apprentice for the required intentionality of cooperative disciple-making. In apprenticing Jesus' life pattern, there is cultural emancipation, relational abundance, and harmonious personal priority—flourishing!

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<sup>69</sup> Schaeffer, *Trilogy*, 167.

## The Pattern of Cooperative Disciple-Making

To capture the pattern of Jesus' disciple-making as to be instructive, CPC has negotiated the text of *Simple Evangelism*. Herein, five-points of distinction from Scripture communicate how believers are to apprentice him according to Luke in his Gospel: abide, connect, evangelize, disciple, and worship (Isa 1:18).<sup>70</sup> Because this project sought to facilitate joint operation of disciple-making between PCA and Southern Baptist doctrinal positions, it was necessary to negotiate agreement of Jesus' example with CPC's leadership to cooperate in disciple-making. In his analysis of Billy Graham's evangelistic ministry, Robert Ferm acknowledges, "Separation is Scriptural, but an unreasonable and unscriptural application of separation places a restriction upon evangelism."<sup>71</sup>

As the Creator provided life pattern for Adam to enjoy and worship Him forever, Jesus provides life pattern for his disciples to follow in behaving the belief of all he commanded. "Sin" is the distance of departure from the perfect apprenticeship of Christ in the believer's life. As each point is exemplified in Christ's behavior, they therefore constitute a recognizable pattern that Jesus behaved to model for his disciples to apprentice irrespective of denominational separation. Disciple-making is the unifying Christian endeavor that Jesus assigned to man for man's cooperation. Yet, an operable pattern is necessary to answer the critical question that goes beyond believing and to the point of behaving. CPC recognizes Jesus' commitment to worship from a pure heart while engaging in discipleship of the regenerate and connecting with those wandering and wounded to evangelize. This is only possible when abiding in the Father. Thus, CPC's vision statement must seek to fulfill the Great Commission by incorporating these

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<sup>70</sup> Thompson and Kim, *Simple Evangelism*, 5.

<sup>71</sup> Robert O. Ferm, *Cooperative Evangelism: Is Billy Graham Right or Wrong?* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1958), 21.

five disciple-making behaviors into the lives of the church members. Each of the five behaviors will now be addressed, particularly with regard to how Jesus modeled and sought to build these interconnected qualities into his disciples for them to apprentice.

### **Abide**

According to Luke, in order to obey the Father, disciple-making for the believer must be a Trinitarian enterprise to abide, concludes Bruce Ware.<sup>72</sup> In other words, you need to trust in the Father, the Son, and the Spirit to make disciples. Disciple-making stems from obedience to the Father, which for Jesus began as a child in the synagogue (Luke 2:49). After being baptized, the Holy Spirit descends upon Jesus, and the Father speaks from heaven saying, “You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased” (Luke 3:21-22). Before Jesus’ public ministry begins, the Holy Spirit “comes upon” him. The Father, Son, and Spirit are unified in their singular purpose of restoring man to God. Abiding for Jesus is requisite for all else as it is for his apprentice.

In Luke 3, Jesus’ disciple-making begins with what Paul describes in Galatians, “If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit” (Gal 5:25). Man’s condition apart from God requires the Spirit (2 Cor 5:7). Jesus is “full of the Holy Spirit” as Luke 4 opens (4:1). Jesus is led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by Satan (Luke 4:1-2). After forty days, Luke tells the reader that Jesus came out of the desert in the “power of the Spirit” (Luke 4:14). Jesus is not living according to his own strength in dealing with the trials set before him in the desert, but he is demonstrating the power of the Spirit to overcome. Likewise, for us it is the Spirit that is effective in disciple-making. To apprentice Jesus’ pattern requires trust and cooperation with the person of the Spirit to be like Christ.

Having overcome the temptations presented him in the desert by walking in the Spirit, Jesus begins his ministry (Luke 4:14). He returns to his hometown of Nazareth

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<sup>72</sup> Ware, *Father, Son, and Holy Spirit*, 17.

where the people have knowledge of him prior to the Spirit coming upon him and his desert trials (Luke 4:21). Teaching in the synagogue, Jesus reads from Isaiah 61:12 to identify himself as the promised Anointed. In the desert, Jesus did not look to his circumstance to define his identity. Now in his hometown, Jesus does not allow the people to define him. Rather than being affected by circumstance and the people surrounding him, Jesus trusts the Word for his true identity. Jesus knew, spoke, and did the Word (and in fact, *was* the Word [John 1:14]), such that he completely obeyed the Father to overcome the world (1 John 5:3-5). Jesus recognizes his identity, assigned by the Father in salvation, is *the* Word (John 7:16-18). Jesus provides the truth in which all men and women would need to abide. CPC members must pursue spiritually directed personal spiritual disciplines that cooperate with the person of the Spirit in order to realize their stated visions statement.<sup>73</sup>

## **Connect**

Jesus reconciles needs to connect with the wandering and wounded. It involves two stated behaviors that Jesus reads in Isaiah—*proclaiming* and *healing* (Luke 4:18-19). Tim Beougher reads from Jesus' example that the apprentice is to both speak the Word and do good deeds.<sup>74</sup> Both are required, even if the results can be mixed with rejection. Sometimes Jesus must avert those who are hostile to the gospel, and Luke's story teaches us that we should anticipate opposition from those who identify Jesus in a way that does not match the way his Father identifies him (Luke 4:30). Some people will connect with Jesus and other people will reject him. Nevertheless, Jesus demonstrates that one purpose

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<sup>73</sup> Peterson, *Working the Angles*, 150. Eugene Peterson defines three underpinnings of spiritual direction for two people to “give their full attention to what God is doing in one (or both) of their lives to seek to respond in faith: (1) God is always doing something: an active grace is shaping this life into mature salvation; (2) responding to God is not sheer guesswork: the Christian community has acquired wisdom through the centuries that provides guidance; (3) each soul is unique: no wisdom can simply be applied without discerning the particulars of this life, this situation.”

<sup>74</sup> Beougher, *Overcoming Walls to Witnessing*, 49-53.

of being Spirit-filled is to reconcile needs in order to connect with the world around him. In this consistency the surrounding culture knows Jesus as one who meets needs (Luke 4:37).

Simon Peter hosts Jesus in his home having trusted him by witnessing his reconciliation of people's needs. His home then serves as a base of ministry for Jesus in the town. Jesus' reputation as one who meets needs (healer) results in Simon Peter inviting Jesus into his home to heal his mother-in-law because Jesus had built trust (Luke 4:38). As a result of repeated success, Jesus builds trust so that the sick people of the town come to Simon Peter's home to be healed (Luke 4:38-40). Luke understands that it is in the two-fold tactics Jesus employs in meeting needs (doing good and speaking truth) that builds trust to follow him.

In his book, *Dangerous Calling*, Paul David Tripp emphasizes that diagnosing hearts enables us to know people's needs.<sup>75</sup> While Jesus is praying, people are looking for him because of his reputation as a man who reconciles needs. He tells them, "I must preach the good news of the kingdom of God to the other towns as well; for I was sent for this purpose" (Luke 4:43). We can understand what motivates others by asking them questions, listening to their answers, and contrasting their desires with the desires of the Father. Our mission to meet needs is not dictated by cultural boundaries, desires, or expectations, or by the motives of man (Luke 14:1-6). Asking questions, rather than making statements, gets the other person talking; thus, conveying information to diagnose their motives (heart desires). Greg Koukl outlines his effective method by which asking questions is the key tactic for diagnosis rather than asserting our judgments of others (Luke 6:37).<sup>76</sup> Schaeffer defines that it is in the formulation of response that women and

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<sup>75</sup> Paul David Tripp, *Dangerous Calling: Confronting the Unique Challenges of Pastoral Ministry* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012), 74.

<sup>76</sup> Gregory Koukl, *Tactics: A Game Plan for Discussing Your Christian Convictions* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2009), 49.

men might form their sphere of faith from the “nonrational and nonlogical” to the “rational and logical.” When faith takes hold, the “unverifiable is deemed verifiable” and “connotation words” become “defined words”—“words as symbols without definition” emerge as “scientific symbol that are carefully defined.”<sup>77</sup> CPC members must interpersonally connect with people in their social circles to the extent that they are welcome to ask questions that go deeper and deeper into the heart of wanderers and those spiritually wounded. Tom Schreiner draws the vital conclusion that Christian identity is both in the authority of stating what is true and in apprenticing oneself to Christ for the purpose of reconciling need.<sup>78</sup> Without relational consideration resulting from vulnerability in listening, needs cannot be known.

### **Evangelize**

Simon recognized his unworthiness upon his realization of what he was experiencing in his fishing nets, “Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!” Simon responded in contrite repentance correctly identifying Yahweh’s holiness (Luke 5:8). It is apparent that Simon also correctly identifies Jesus, since he acknowledges him as “Lord” and regards him with reverent fear. Jesus responded to Simon’s confession of sin, saying, “Do not be afraid, from now on you will be catching men.”<sup>79</sup> More directly stated in Mark’s Gospel, “Follow Me, and I will make you become fishers of men” (5:10). Simon Peter left his nets to follow Jesus. In turn, Jesus establishes his new identity, redefining Simon the fish catcher to a catcher of men—Peter.

Jesus models speaking the truth in love rather than judgment (Luke 6:37-38). He further defines truth by defining what is due his Father and what is due man (Luke 20:19-26). Jesus says, “Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those

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<sup>77</sup> Schaeffer, *Trilogy*, 257.

<sup>78</sup> Peterson, *Working the Angles*, 167.

<sup>79</sup> Schreiner, *New Testament Theology*, 522-23.

who curse you, pray for those who abuse you,” treating well both those who love and those who hate him (Luke 6:27-28). Before Peter left Capernaum, he abided in the Father, connected with those around him by meeting their needs, and impacted those in his path by speaking and doing what Jesus had said and done. Peter sought response from his social circle because he had a clear understanding of their heart condition due to the time he had invested in relationship with them. Greg Gilbert emphasizes that response is required when hearing and seeing the identities of the Father, man, and Jesus.<sup>80</sup> The resurrection ultimately validates Jesus’ identity as the Son who then calls for man’s response as his disciples (Luke 24:47). Jesus makes clear that no man can be his disciple by doing anything other than apprenticing him (Luke 14:27). CPC members must know and apply the Father’s Word in prayer, conversation, and counseling those wandering and wounded to evoke the effectual call.

It is in our individuality and the individuality of those comprising our social circle that we can be effective in evangelism because we live life together. Speaking Scripture to those whom we know and love as friends should be commonplace in the life of a Christian. The fundamental spiritual identity of man makes him prone to seek out spiritual directive. Eugene Peterson articulates this sort of Christian friend is—a spiritual director.<sup>81</sup> Members of CPC need to closely assess themselves if they are lacking friends who are wandering outside the church, or if their relationships lack sufficient transparency to know the spiritual wounds of those they call friend. Sitting next to the neighbors, colleagues, and mutual hobbyists of CPC members on Sunday morning should be commonplace after eight years since inception. Not necessarily because they believe, but because they are engaged in life with a member of CPC. Like the children of CPC members, they are included on Sunday morning based on loving relationship.

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<sup>80</sup> Greg Gilbert, *What is the Gospel?* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2010), 28-31.

<sup>81</sup> Peterson, *Working the Angles*, 165.



Whereas CPC members articulate themselves to be shy and socially awkward, they have command of Scripture to know their responsibility. They know that God's design of them is with intentional purpose to engage in the Great Commission. The "parable of the sower" is critical to CPC behavior reflecting belief (Matt 13:1-23; Mark 4:1-20; Luke 8:4-15). Speaking of the heart as the soil receiving seeds of faith, remembering the Father can result in abundance or famine depending on the condition of the heart of the receiver. The Father fulfills his responsibility of preparing the soil (heart) and the sower fulfills his responsibility of sowing (speaking and doing the Father's Word in remembrance). At times, when a disciple sows the Father's Word, even following much prayer and faithful speaking and doing, the results can be disappointing (Ps 40:14). Jesus is setting the expectation that the heart condition determines what a disciple should expect to happen. He tells his audience that there are four kinds of heart responses to the gospel: the hard path, rocky soil, thorny soil, and good soil. The good soil yields multiplicity (Matt 13:1-9). In Jesus' parable, the disciple understands that not all who follow are genuine. As CPC builds the church one heart at a time, the Bible conveys that some will fall away (Ps 101:3). Still others will return to worship and celebrate what the Lord has done. Enjoying the multiplying effect of the gospel, CPC members will have to intentionally make disciples.

## **Disciple**

Jesus' model requires obeying the Father and being a vessel of the Spirit (Rom. 9:21-23). Jesus intends for his disciples to repeat what he's been doing by apprenticing his pattern of speech and behavior. Cultivating faith in Luke happens by forsaking all things for the sake of following Jesus. Jesus' assertion is shocking when his mother, Mary, and his brothers come looking for him. Jesus redefines family stating that "My mother and my brothers are those who hear the word of God and do it" (Luke 8:21). Family to Jesus comprises those who hear the Father's word and obey it! It is when one

responds to the gospel in faith and repentance that seeds of discipleship bloom in the relationship between the evangelist and the evangelized.

In Luke 7, John the Baptist, the man who obeyed God, met needs, and preceded Jesus to prepare his way, faces execution for his faithfulness to the Father. Understandably discouraged, John sends his disciples to Jesus for affirmation that Jesus is who John thought he was—the Messiah (Luke 7:18). Jesus' answer seems indirect. Instead, Jesus instructs them to tell John what they have seen Jesus do. By seeing Jesus meeting people's needs, the disciples are given what John desires to know, thus cultivating John's faith and deepening his obedience. It turns out Jesus is showing John how he has been fulfilling Isaiah 61, affirming for him that he truly is the Messiah. John follows Jesus by dying at the deepest point of John's obedience (Luke 9:9).

In John's death, Luke teaches something about control. As we become more honest and secure in the doctrine of God's grace, we stop trying to control people and circumstances, and in faith and obedience. The urge to manipulate results is diminished. In place of control, we trust God has the power to do what He wills. Jesus intentionally chose twelve men to obey him and model Jesus' example. Luke 6 exhibits a crucial activity of discipleship—speaking to the Father in prayer. Later in Luke, his disciples ask Jesus explicitly to teach them to pray (Luke 11:1-13). As Jesus teaches about the prayers of the religious leader and the tax collector (Luke 18:9-14), he subverts the social order that leads people to treat others better and worse based on their own value judgments and sets the expectation that the Father regards humble repentance and impartial compassion. Jesus teaches his disciples in that parable to be unmoved and unimpressed by anything but the Father's will, because that alone is how we find grace and peace in relationships with others and bring them into abiding relationships with the Father.

The basic requirement for providing spiritual direction “is simply to take seriously what we already know are serious matters—a sign of grace here, a desire for prayer there—and shape the agenda of our work from the souls of people we meet, not

from the demands to which they give voice.”<sup>82</sup> CPC members must be committed to those with whom they connect and evangelize, to invite them into their homes while their children watch them personally study Scripture to promote change. Functioning as a “spiritual director” in the lives of friends does not mean demanding or manipulating but responding in love. Like children, when friends commit to apprenticing Christ, catechism is critical. As is the case with parents and their children, catechism is the personal responsibility of the one apprenticing Jesus. CPC’s view of the covenantal community is so helpful with regard to catechization. CPC parents take on a responsibility to usher their children in faith and repentance beautifully. Transference of this competence to those outside member households has potential for extraordinary gospel affect.

## **Worship**

As wanderers gain direction and the spiritually wounded heal, they desire to worship the Authority they know their direction and healing is derived. Luke 8 opens by summarizing that Jesus was traveling with his twelve disciples from town to town speaking (proclaiming the good news) about the kingdom, and those who were healed were with him. Jesus gathered the twelve disciples together giving them the authority to proclaim the Father’s kingdom and to heal the sick and find houses of peace (Luke 9:1). He gave them specific instructions and sends them out to abide, connect, engage, disciple, and worship. Luke tells us that they went out and traveled from village to village “preaching the gospel and healing everywhere” (Luke 9:1-6). They were apprenticing Jesus. For CPC, this is connecting with one’s social circle, personally speaking the Word that directs and heals, opening the Bible to bring clarity to the way, and gathering those who recognize Jesus’ direction and healing to worship.

The Father is always in relationship. Whether urging the use of earthly means to build human relationships (The Parable of the Dishonest Manager, Luke 16:1-13) or

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<sup>82</sup> Peterson, *Working the Angles*, 155.

teaching about the commitments of marriage (Luke 16:18), Jesus clearly regards the relationships we hold with one another as reflecting and impacting our relationship with the Father. All Jesus' directives are rooted in relationship—loving both Father and man. The condition of man's heart is requisite for worshiping the Father (Ps 107:12-22).

Worshiping together is the final step in the pattern of disciple-making because genuine faith is expressed by delighting in the object of faith. The good theology that undergirds the prior steps, if it is genuinely believed and applied, ought to lead to doxology—a rich and robust praise of God. Not only does that provide the period to end the sentence in disciple-making, in worship we find the mission of God compelling us to the next sentence God would utter through his disciples—to go out in abiding to connect, evangelize, disciple, and return with yet more souls to worship God.

### **Summary**

This chapter has sought to provide a biblical framework that advances the priority of cooperative disciple-making toward those that are wandering in spiritual aimlessness and those who have been wounded in their belief and need healing within the church. This chapter showed that cooperative disciple-making is evident in the general revelation of natural world. It also provided explicit example of cooperation in the special revelation of Jesus Christ—his life pattern and resulting ministry. Throughout the New Testament cooperation serves as an operational imperative for the denominationally separated church today. Cooperative disciple-making is seeking to facilitate and negotiate a joint operation for the purpose of apprenticing Christ for gospel effect of change in the lives of all who observe. One must apprentice Jesus' personal pattern of behavior toward diverse individuals and make disciples apart from just those who are family. Moreover, that Jesus gave particular attention to the wandering and spiritually wounded, over and above biological connection, specifically to see them take on the pattern of his life, should remind and embolden CPC to follow Christ toward these same kind of

relationships as well. As CPC understands Jesus' pattern of living and emulates his efforts, it will continue to catalyze the energy and expansion of the kingdom of God "*in Georgetown and every place we serve into a life-changing relationship with Jesus Christ.*"

## CHAPTER 3

### OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR COOPERATIVE DISCIPLE-MAKING AT CHRIST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

The purpose of this project was to define and implement a pattern for living the gospel-centric life of Jesus Christ—abiding, connecting, evangelizing, discipling, and worshiping. The defined pattern of *Simple Evangelism* yields personal value for the believer in cooperative disciple-making (PCA and Southern Baptist) at CPC. The purpose of cooperative disciple-making is to address the needs of wanderers and to offer healing to those spiritually wounded. The previous chapter spoke to the theological and biblical imperatives for cooperative disciple-making. This chapter considers potential challenges and prospective opportunities for cooperative disciple-making at CPC. The four potential challenges this chapter will consider are CPC’s intentional abiding, connecting to worship, discipling before evangelizing, and personalization. These four potential challenges might currently inhibit CPC’s membership from more faithful participation in this joint operation. In doing so, we will consider the degree to which CPC’s members are actively engaging wanderers and those spiritually wounded and the degree to which CPC has faithfully equipped its membership to this end.

With regard to current opportunities, I will first establish how a vision for cooperative disciple-making fits within the larger mission of the church. I will show how disciples are made according to Luke in his Gospel for the purpose of the believer apprenticing Christ. The four opportunities that will be considered in this chapter for consideration are the Boys and Girls Club, Jubilee Prison Ministry, the Delaney Senior Living Community, and Community Groups. Lastly, I will briefly consider why the act of cooperative disciple-making has significant implications for the future of CPC. I will

start in the middle of Jesus' five-point pattern of disciple-making. Let us begin by considering how engaging in cooperative disciple-making is the correct attitude and action of the organic church by focusing on what the third point of evangelism is in the pattern of cooperative behavior.

### **Evangelism is the Third Point of a Five Point Pattern in Disciple-Making**

In his autobiography, Billy Graham draws a critical distinction in the behavior that was fostered by his belief by responsibly distinguishing the sequence of evangelism and resulting requirement of personal discipleship when a person who is being evangelized repents and believes. The combination produced the planning exercise leading up to the 1954 rally in Amsterdam's Olympic Stadium. Graham, the leading modern Evangelical, visited the twentieth-century land of Calvin where Graham was disdained in the press by numerous theologians critical of his position that the Bible was "The Word of God." Coming to Graham's defense was the professor of systematic theology at the Free University of Amsterdam, G. C. Berkouwer. Berkouwer, a highly esteemed Reformed minded thinker, affirmed the modern Evangelical's zealous defense of the Bible's inerrancy. In their joint operation for the gospel, the forty-thousand-seat stadium was filled to capacity to hear Graham's message on June 22, 1954. What Graham chose to stress in his recounting the saga is exceedingly helpful to the idea of evangelism as the third point of a five-point pattern in disciple-making:

Dan Piatt, European director of The Navigators, had trained 1,000 counselors. (The Navigators is an American organization started by Dawson Trotman during World War II to work with American service personnel in *both evangelism and* discipleship training. The methods they developed in training people to do evangelism *and* in helping new Christians to grow spiritually greatly influenced our own counselor-training and follow-up programs in the years to come.) But even after the training, the counselors were still unprepared for the overwhelming response. Nevertheless, they pressed on, doing what they could, encouraging those

who made commitments to grow in their faith through prayer and Bible study, as well as involvement in a Christian church.<sup>1</sup>

Graham distinguishes the third from the fourth point in Jesus' pattern of disciple-making—evangelizing and then discipling. There is no difference in Graham's Southern Baptist thinking, which is affirmed by Berkouwer's PCA thinking, together facilitated by The Navigators' planning, in how to do disciple-making cooperatively. Graham is recounting the regulative pattern for disciple-making on this specific historic occasion.

Thirty-two years later in Amsterdam, Presbyterian Don Hoke stood at Graham's side at the closing ceremony of that momentous gospel rally. Graham closed with these words, Hoke nodding in enthused agreement, "Our primary motive is the command of our Great Commander and Chief, the Lord Jesus Christ. . . . We are under orders. Our Lord has commanded us to go to preach, to make disciples and that should be enough for us." Whether PCA or Southern Baptist, it is enough for us because Jesus gave a Great Commission and a pattern of behavior to complete it in the five-point behavioral pattern outlined in chapter 2.

Paul sets the missional standard in disciple-making. Even so, he acknowledges what every believing person experiences when disclosing, "So I find it to be a law that when I want to do right, evil lies close at hand. For I delight in the law of God, in my inner being, but I see in my members another law waging war against the law my mind and making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members" (Rom 7:21-23). As those who have received faith gravitate to the Father, through the Son, by the power of the Spirit, Christ's Commission is to bring others to enjoying and worshiping God forever with us. Yet, what we know in our belief must be rightly conditioned in our "members," as Paul admits, for us to conform what we believe to how we behave. To this end, evangelism is made confusing when Reformed people and modern Evangelical people share their idea of doing "what is right."

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<sup>1</sup> Billy Graham, *Just as I Am: The Autobiography of Billy Graham* (San Francisco, CA: Zondervan, 1977), 242. Italics added for emphasis.



The seeming discontinuity has resulted in name calling that highlights an underlying prejudice toward one another. Modern Evangelicals call the Reformed the “frozen chosen.” Reformed people view the mass of modern Evangelicals as “confused and unorthodox.”<sup>2</sup> A CPC RE commented my lack of being “enlightened” when I disclosed my Reformed Evangelical position in our interview for the role ultimately defined as “Evangelism and Outreach Leader.” The challenge in the facilitation and negotiation required in cooperation is that there is truth in these sorts of accusations on both sides. Gregg Allison then asserts that doctrine must be placed under the scrutiny of Scripture to deduce the reality of peace and grace that the organic catholic church has been given in the unifying effect of the Holy Spirit.<sup>3</sup>

J. I. Packer has poignantly addressed the tension existing specific to the idea of evangelism between the Reformed and modern Evangelical people. In doing so, Packer himself unintentionally and truthfully fosters the evangelism confusion prevailing in the Christian culture of the Bible belt. Packer makes a truthful statement that opens his text and is subsequently interwoven through the pattern of his text, “Always and everywhere the servants of Christ are under orders to evangelize, and what I shall say now will act as an incentive to this task.”<sup>4</sup> Evangelicals enthusiastically pick up Packer’s book because he provides a clarity to man’s responsibility. Reformed people read the book for affirmation of God’s sovereignty to validate their confidence in His predetermined pull on the heart of the chosen. The disparity in Packer’s thesis is that Jesus did not commission His church to evangelize, but to “make disciples of all.” Are Packer’s and Jesus’ words simply synonymous? I contend that the two are not, and this trending idea

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<sup>2</sup> Andrew David Naselli and Collin Hansen, *Four Views on The Spectrum of Evangelicalism* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), 128.

<sup>3</sup> Gregg R. Allison, *Sojourners and Strangers: The Doctrine of the Church* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012), 168-178.

<sup>4</sup> J. I. Packer, *Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2001), 13.

possess a major problem in the church today that tears the net for the catching of men that Jesus instructed and Paul recounts to the Corinthians.

Evangelism, as Packer rightly defines it to be, is the third point of a five-point pattern in disciple-making. Graham correctly characterizes it as precursor to discipling. The entirety of Packer's text is correct. Nonetheless, the reader can misappropriate the act of evangelism as being the Great Commission uniformly a complete and stand-alone endeavor. Recognizing the two points to be separate and distinct *mends the net* of disciple-making for effectively catching men for Christ. Rather, evangelism is only a single point in what Jesus tells those who apprentice him to do in disciple-making. As a result of the reductionist view on the part of both Reformed and modern Evangelical peoples, the healthy tension that should exist between the two yields other than loving thoughts and behavior toward one another. When understood as a part of the whole, the positions of the Reformed and modern Evangelical churches become so closely aligned that the two appear inseparable.

The Reformed position of Schaeffer affirms how essential the pre-evangelism of abiding and connecting is. The modern Evangelical (e.g., Billy Graham) contends distinction of evangelism and discipleship, and Packer's definition of evangelism is the bridge of inseparability that a disciple and disciple-maker cross together. The crossing is at the single, narrow, point of entry the Christian knows as conversion.<sup>5</sup> "The aim of Jesus' disciples, therefore, is to make disciples of all men everywhere, without distinction."<sup>6</sup> Yes, "Always and everywhere the servants of Christ are under orders to

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<sup>5</sup> Wayne A. Grudem, *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1994), 709. Grudem defines conversion as, "'turning'—here it represents a spiritual turn, a turning *from* sin *to* Christ. The turning from sin is called repentance, and the turning to Christ is called faith."

<sup>6</sup>D. A. Carson, *Matthew*, in vol. 8 of *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, ed. Frank E. Gaebelsein and J. D. Douglas (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1984), 596-97.

evangelize” in abiding to connect, disciple, and ultimately come together in worshipping as a joint operation for man’s good and God’s glory.<sup>7</sup>

### **Is Cooperative Disciple-Making Happening at CPC?**

The mere fact the CPC leaders have invited a Reformed Evangelical into CPC with gospel intentionality affirms the reality of cooperative disciple-making as happening. The challenge comes in light of the resulting change for personal growth. This change comes by way of the reciprocating authority and apprenticing relationship attributed to the joint operation. In other words, how each of the two parties (in this case PCA Church and Southern Baptist Intern) facilitate and negotiate their mutual trajectory towards Christ. Each party’s motive will foster either cooperation or conflict as the two travel together toward their common goal. In this reality, CPC could face a growing awareness of deficiencies in and greater opportunities for affecting the wandering and those wounded for the gospel.

Historically, cooperation has been difficult for Presbyterian separatism. Commitment to orthodoxy led to the 1973 separation of the PCA and PC(USA). Willingness to be set apart is consistent from Presbyterianism’s earliest days. In fact, separatism was so ingrained in Presbyterianism that the renowned evangelist George Whitefield found his endeavor to jointly operate with the Church of Scotland implausible. Having been disaffected from the Anglican Church’s liberalized theology, Presbyterians initially agreed to support Whitefield’s efforts to settle churches in America, appointing two men to assist him in the endeavor. Whitefield writes,

They were satisfied with the account I then gave of my experiences, and also of the validity of my mission; only, when they found I would preach the Gospel promiscuously to all, and for every minister that would invite me, and not adhere only to them, one of them, particularly, said “They were satisfied with all the other

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<sup>7</sup> Graham, *Just as I Am*, 242.

accounts which I gave of myself, except of my call to Scotland at the time.” . . . I thought their foundation too narrow for any high house to be built upon.<sup>8</sup>

If these men found it too difficult to cooperate with the historic ministry of George Whitfield resulting from Anglican church disaffection, then my disaffection from my Baptist church in Georgetown must be considerably perplexing to the men of CPC. Evangelicalism without a point of centrality and corresponding boundaries can be confusing for an onlooker.

Is it not stereo-typical that the modern Evangelical would point to a world of wandering and wounded people chanting, “Let’s go, let’s go, let’s go!” How exhausting that must be for the uniquely Reformed ear, confident in God’s sovereign rule, to listen to the exhortation of modern Evangelical charisma. Jointly operating in Georgetown’s Christian culture, the sorts of things that such charisma could be mistaken for spiral into a realm of heresy. Regardless, Scripture supporting the evangelistic thinking toward gospel change and growth in the life pattern of members brings a regulative clarity. In its appreciation for the truth of Scripture, CPC knows that their stated vision will only be realized to the degree that its members are actively seeking to make disciples who have less “Christian know-how.”<sup>9</sup>

Kevin Vanhoozer answers the question of why evangelism is critical. He argues that disciples best learn how to practice doctrinal truth through *paideia*, an apprentice-based pedagogy that involves following the examples of (i.e., imitating, apprenticing) others who are further along.<sup>10</sup> Vanhoozer’s point goes to his principle concern that believers evidence the “mind of Christ” through their behavior.<sup>11</sup> Believers need believers who are more capable in every aspect of life to apprentice. As Elder

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<sup>8</sup> Robert O. Ferm, *Cooperative Evangelism: Is Billy Graham Right or Wrong?* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1958), 56.

<sup>9</sup> Kevin J. Vanhoozer, *Faith Speaking Understanding: Performing the Drama of Doctrine* (Louisville, KY: John Knox Press, 2014), 204.

<sup>10</sup> Vanhoozer, *Faith Speaking Understanding*, 9.

<sup>11</sup> Vanhoozer, *Faith Speaking Understanding*, 3.

authority cooperates in disciple-making through paideia of the five-point life pattern, those who apprentice will be more likely to imitate all that Christ commands. In their informed belief, CPC members are well instructed. Let us now consider four challenges that might hinder or impede CPC members from apprenticing Jesus in the five-point pattern of disciple-making necessary to being cooperative. These challenges are not exhaustive. They are not indicative of a holistic failing in disciple-making. Hopefully upon consideration, CPC will clarify and enhance its efforts for effectiveness in cooperative disciple-making.

### **Possible Challenges for Cooperative Disciple-Making at CPC**

The effect of culture, especially Christian culture, requires believers to continuously inquire of themselves the continuity and discontinuity of church life, family life, and personal life to ensure Scripture validates what is believed. The organic local church provides the pattern of a liturgy intended to help all members to live according to the Word of God. The ordinances of baptism and communion remind the believer of God's sovereign work in predetermining the perseverance of the saints by doing what Jesus told those who follow him to do. The same is true of disciple-making. Jesus told each individual believer to "*make disciples of all*" and he lived a pattern of behavior for each believer to apprentice.

Corporately, we should encourage one another in the full five-point pattern of disciple-making with the same sort of discipline that we encourage baptism and communion. We share in each corporately, but it is ultimately the individual's apprenticing the person of the Spirit in each of the three that matters. The individual regards baptism, communion, and disciple-making for the faithfulness of his heart in each. Corporately, believers are also to recognize that *the spectrum of denominations is more a net for catching men* than a nuisance to debate in an attitude of intolerance. Similarities in Trinitarianism, as a Christian distinction, far outweigh differences.

Prejudice towards those who are different lives or dies in the individual's heart. Just as there is a critical corporate and individual component in the ordinances across denominations, the same is true of disciple-making. There is a corporate responsibility and individual responsibility. We see this of parenting in Deuteronomy and beyond in the Great Commission. Ministries will likely appear different between Reformed and modern Evangelical churches, as each nuances its approach to consider the historic tradition it emulates. Regardless, the church in both its organizational and organic pattern remains God's intended pattern for believes to imitate.

It is in the shared pattern of *Simple Evangelism* that wanderers can see individual disciples live out the gospel. Each apprentices the authority of Jesus by expressing the pattern uniquely. Combined apprenticeship is the church—the *net of the gospel to catch men*. It is in this life-pattern that Luke articulates the behavior required by Jesus to lead others to do the same. Whatever the historical and current failings of the church may be to cooperate, and there are many, misunderstanding the application of evangelism in disciple-making at a cost to their joint operation for the gospel requires operable resolution. Four potential challenges that might currently inhibit CPC's membership from more faithful participation in the joint operation involved in the life pattern of cooperative disciple-making are considered next.

### **Intentional Abiding**

When the Reformed ear hears, "Missions are not the ultimate goal of the church. Missions exist because worship doesn't. Worship is ultimate, not missions, because God is ultimate, not man," the Reformed mouth utters, Amen!<sup>12</sup> Interestingly, John Piper's statement is a subset of an entire text asserting necessity of the believer's faithful fulfillment of the Great Commission. Apprenticing requires intentionality of

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<sup>12</sup> John Piper, *Let the Nations be Glad! The Supremacy of God in Missions* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academics, 2010), 227.

abiding in order to conform to the necessary pattern. Apprenticeship starts in abiding. Without abiding, doctrine can override Scripture as truth to believe and behave. All who apprentice Jesus must abide in the Father's Word to distinguish doctrines of man—in this case John Calvin. CPC's Reformed view of worship may impede member evangelism. Beginning with the end in mind is critical of any operation. In the operation of the Christian life, the desired end is enjoying and worshipping God forever as John defines in Revelation 7:4. Worship of the Father is always where Jesus was leading. It is the common destination of all who genuinely apprentice Christ by the power of the Spirit. With such concentration on worship, intentional abiding at CPC is critical to get the balance right.

For the Reformed, Calvin's view of worship shapes their belief, values, and behavior. Robert Godfrey writes of Calvin's view:

For Calvin, worship was not a means to an end. Worship was not a means to evangelize or entertain or even educate. Worship was an end in itself. Worship was not to be arranged by pragmatic considerations but was rather to be determined by theological principles derived from the Scriptures. The most basic realities of the Christian life were involved. In worship God meets with His people to bless them.<sup>13</sup>

Worship is the center of Calvin's existence. Evangelism, apart from the formal calling of the evangelist, is absent from Calvin's Institutes. In thinking so, Calvin's view may actually inhibit the CPC member to a role of sending for purpose of evangelism. They may view their responsibility limited to "outreach."<sup>14</sup> Such thinking affects members' views of their own identity in context of the Great Commission. Calvin's language diminishes the necessity of each individual connecting with the world to call people into decision for Christ. The corporate identity in Calvin's view of worship can carry into every other aspect of Christian living because Calvin's intent was for worship to consume the believer. It does not eliminate their responsibility, but it could have a negating effect

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<sup>13</sup> W. Robert Godfrey, *John Calvin: Pilgrim and Pastor* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2009), 80.

<sup>14</sup> Outreach and evangelism are distinct operations and will be defined and distinguished when addressing the potential challenge of personalizing the gospel at CPC.

on personalization of evangelism. Rather than feeling compelled to lean into the aimlessness of the wandering and pain of the wounded for interpersonal connection, the Reformed might opt to think it better to leave the one seemingly lost or in despair in the hands of God's sovereignty for preferable outcome. For Calvin, this would be grace with knowledge of perseverance. It could also be rationalized within the idea of double predestination affirmed by the PCA.<sup>15</sup>

In their Calvinistic contrast with the surrounding culture, CPC men will confess a self-identification as “nerds” who routinely fail to connect with the world.<sup>16</sup> This idea that is confessed in their desire to do other is that CPC exists as a collective of commonly shy and socially awkward people who lack savvy for interpersonal relationship. Whereas the high view of God and man's worship of Him alone is vitally correct, the corresponding Great Commission elevates each believer's responsibility regardless of personality. CPC “nerds” must simply be nice to connect with their social circle, which for those who believe, “nice” translates to love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (Gal 5:22-23). This is identifying themselves from the Father's Word rather than Calvin's doctrine.<sup>17</sup> In behaving according to these nine characteristics, the believer's responsibility is to make disciples of “all.” Berkeley Mickelsen refers to this endeavor between the believer, the

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<sup>15</sup> Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 670. Whereas CPC leadership training material explicitly advocates “double-predestination (95),” both the Evangelical Dictionary of Theology and Grudem stress the language as confusing and therefore divisive in Christendom and unhelpful in communicating with non-Christians. Grudem states, “The term double-predestination will not be used in this book to refer to election and reprobation, since it blurs the distinctions between them and does not give an accurate indication of what is actually being taught.”

<sup>16</sup> Woonny Kim, Shawn Horrall, and David Moore. CPC Men's Ministry discussion specific to CPC evangelism and outreach when asked of the possibility that the behavior being acknowledged is a product of theological Fundamentalism (Georgetown, Texas, March 16, 2019).

<sup>17</sup> The term “nerd” and any derivative of the word was applied by Associate Pastor Woonny Kim to explain his asserted personality hindrance of CPC members whose interpersonal orientation precludes disciple-making endeavor. It was not used then, or now, as a distinguishing characteristic of Calvin's doctrine, the PCA, or even CPC as a whole.



Scripture, the person of the Spirit, and the wanderer as “actualization.”<sup>18</sup> By a member of CPC apprenticing the full five-pattern of disciple-making by intentionally abiding, he can connect, evangelize, and disciple. The illumination of the Spirit can actually take place in the life of a wandering or wounded person when we speak and live the Father’s Word. “The Holy Spirit repersonalizes the Bible across different world views.”<sup>19</sup>

We who share the common worldview of apprenticing Jesus need *Simple Evangelism* one to another. It conditions the apprentice in speaking the Word and doing good; combined, reconciling the needs of others. Loving our neighbor, being truly nice, is required of the gospel. In doing so, the believer is cooperative. The believer aligns in joint operation of fulfilling the Great Commission. Jesus is, in fact, who Billy Graham said him to be, the “Great Commander and Chief” who directs and heals all whom he is given by the Father. So, with worship a distinct center point, the Reformed minded might genuinely ask himself, why get in the Chief’s way?

For the modern Evangelical, getting in the way is The Way—Jesus Christ. It is not the act of meeting needs through befriending the wandering or wounded for the Reformed Evangelical, but the teaching of the Word to which he is committed. Calvin did not place this burden on the member, but the Elder.<sup>20</sup> Evangelizing of the wandering and wounded comes before discipleship for the individual modern Evangelical. From his perspective, the Bible is the final authority in everything. This has deep personal implication to each individual modern Evangelical, which can be lived out differently. The spectrum of diversity among modern Evangelicals is genuinely confusing to all.

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<sup>18</sup> Berkeley Mickelsen, *Interpreting the Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1963), 175.

<sup>19</sup> Harvie M. Conn, *Evangelism: Doing Justice and Preaching Grace* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 1982), 15.

<sup>20</sup> Jean Calvin, *Calvin's Institutes*, Abridged Edition (Louisville, KY: John Knox Press, 2001), 133.

The reason the PCA and Southern Baptist Convention have a relatively high degree of clarity in their cooperative disciple-making is the comparably Reformed perspective of their theology. Steve Childers brilliantly articulates the outcome of intentional abiding leading to right worship, “God loves to manifest His presence and pour out His power on those who dare to align their purposes more with His.”<sup>21</sup> Jesus called all who follow him into the Great Commission to “make disciples of all,” as far as a modern Evangelical is concerned. Reconciling needs brings healing and teaching the Father’s Word. This translates into a missiological view connecting worship directly to the making of disciples according to what modern Evangelicals “believe God has revealed to us in His Word about the things He regards as essential for us to know regarding the ultimate questions of life.”<sup>22</sup> Thus, worship is life through abiding in Christ, which includes connecting with the world, evangelizing the wandering and wounded, and discipling those who have the capacity to hear God’s effectual call. This is disciple-making.

The challenge before me with CPC was doing *Simple Evangelism* as a joint operation with a population of genuine believers whose thinking was aligned with sixteenth-century Calvin and mine blended with twentieth-century Graham. Specifically, CPC believed it appropriate to baptize their children as infants and organize their church under the oversight of a presbytery. Without compromising their Reformed position, the joint operation to make disciples required that I understand how the two work together for the gospel while acknowledging that cooperation was in fact limited by biblical parameters to which we must each submit to retain our distinction. After all, this project was in no way an exercise in ecumenicalism, but cooperation.

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<sup>21</sup> Steven L. Childers, *Global Church Advancement* (Winter Park, CO: Global Church Advancement, 2013), ii.

<sup>22</sup> Zane Pratt, M. David Sills, and Jeff K. Walters, *Introduction to Global Missions* (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2014), 67.

## Connecting to Worship

For Christians, connecting to worship begins in the baptism of the Holy Spirit (John 3:5; Rom 6:4; Eph 4:5; 1 Pet 3:21; Col 2:12-13). This factual statement affects man differently by way of a gauntlet of thinking and feeling having led to a myriad of tradition. Tradition results in differences among men. Such diversity in modern Evangelical churches causes culture to be hard to distinguish from worship. It is in these sorts of modern temples unregenerate people can congregate to affirm themselves. It is in repurposed sports arenas that masses collect to a message of God's love without man's required repentance for sin. What we believe matters because it informs our being.<sup>23</sup> It affects actions and therefore outcomes. When outcomes affect the worship of the one true God, the apprentice returns to the Father's Word for directive to connect with the world.

For Reformed Evangelicals and Reformed people, the proverbial white elephant in the room, baptism, must be considered in that it is the most noted difference between modern Evangelical and Reformed believers. Here, this difference is considered specifically in context of disciple-making and the joint operation of doing the Great Commission together. This is not an argument for doctrinal change of historic positions, but a rationale for operative challenge in the endeavor. How did the difference in baptism shape CPC's practice of disciple-making that would function to facilitate or hinder cooperation? From this venture, I am confident that the people of CPC baptize their infants based in confidence that the Bible teaches this behavior. Different than the bulk of modern Evangelicals, the PCA takes extortionary confidence in covenantal thinking rooted in the story of Abraham. As such, the covenant sign of circumcision is equated with the New Testament observance of baptism. Bryan Chapell humbly writes of Presbyterians,

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<sup>23</sup> Pratt, Sills, and Walters, *Introduction to Global Missions*, 2.

We must confess that some bring their children for this sacrament because of the sweetness of the ceremony, or because of the traditions of family and church, or even with the misguided expectation that somehow “holy water” will magically protect their child from hell. Yet, neither sentiment, nor tradition, nor superstition is sufficient reason for believers to bring their children to be baptized. And, thankfully, such reasons are not the basis of our church’s practice.<sup>24</sup>

Chappell goes on to state clearly why Presbyterians baptize children, “because we believe that the Bible teaches us to do so.” In fact, PCA and Southern Baptist Convention rationale incorporate the identical Scriptural and extra-biblical data interpreting the same facts to separate conclusion.

Statistically, Southern Baptist Convention membership dwarfs that of the PCA thirty-eight to one (PCA 384,793 and Southern Baptist Convention 14,813,234 by end of 2018).<sup>25</sup> This is not intended as a quantitative argument of one over the other, but a statement of fact to consider, why? We must acknowledge in Christian culture with Chappell that some of these on each side of the equation (baptism by birth, or belief) are Christianized rather than Christian. The difference between the two is determinative of residing in an affirming culture.

In a culture where Christianity is socially rewarded, some are inclined to engage in the act of Christianity with a script provided by the church, and even by his family. Jesus himself acknowledges his organic church to be surrounded and infiltrated by pretenders in the same way that his own chosen disciples were by Judas (Matt 7:21-23). Neither the PCA nor Southern Baptist Convention is free of this factor. Historically, we know John Knox to have had a national view for disciple-making in his words, “Give me Scotland or I die.”<sup>26</sup> Yet, today, the Scots are considered an unreached people by

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<sup>24</sup> Bryan Chapell, *Why Do We Baptize Infants? Basics of the Faith* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 2006), 5.

<sup>25</sup> Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee, *Fast Facts About The Southern Baptist Convention* (Nashville, TN: Southern Baptist Convention, 2019).

<sup>26</sup> Conn, *Evangelism*, 27.

missional definition of Operation World.<sup>27</sup> So, how might the tradition of baptism have effect on the multiplying effect of the gospel that both PCA and Southern Baptist Convention know to be true? To explore this, let's consider a missionary of the nineteenth century who experienced disciple-making through the baptism of infants. Then, he changed to the limiting view of believer baptism. Through the contrast, we can see how the shift affected his missional life's pattern.

On September 12, 1812, Adoniram Judson submitted to believer baptism by immersion after faithfully, and productively, serving Congregationalists in India as a missionary.<sup>28</sup> In short, he became a Baptist. No modern Evangelical or Reformed person would argue with the disciple-making effectiveness of Adoniram Judson's life because it is well documented and profoundly inspiring to anyone who follows Jesus. From one moment to another on that twelfth of September not much changed for Judson's pattern of disciple-making, but for his application of baptism in the transom between the third and fourth points of the five-point disciple-making pattern (abide, connect, evangelize, disciple, worship). He stopped baptizing anyone other than those who could provide a credible profession of faith in Jesus Christ. This alone caused a great divide for all aspects of his life. The missional community of believers whom he held dear disassociated from him. The personal cost was high to Judson and his wife because all whom he jointly operated for the gospel discontinued their affiliation and disassociated their endeavors.<sup>29</sup>

The negotiation ceased and all that was left for Judson to facilitate was his own personal cooperation with the Holy Spirit in God's predestined draw on the hearts of

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<sup>27</sup> Jason Mandryk, *Operation World: The Definitive Prayer Guide to Every Nation*, 7<sup>th</sup> ed. (Colorado Springs, CO: GMI, 2010), 851.

<sup>28</sup> Jason G. Duesing, *Adoniram Judson: A Bicentennial Appreciation of the Pioneer American Missionary* (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2012), 149.

<sup>29</sup> Duesing, *Adoniram Judson*, 161.

believers. This being the case, Judson went on to translate the whole Bible in Burmese and devote himself to the gospel to the end that he is deemed the “father of the American Baptist missionary movement.”<sup>30</sup> In Burma, now Myanmar, Christianity sustains as the second largest religious population since its 1800s introduction.<sup>31</sup> The change in baptism from infant to believer prompted indisputable heart change in Judson from the priority of catechizing the children of a nation to doing so for an entire nation of those who intelligently profess belief to then change in behavior.

Quantitatively, something happens when one commits to only baptizing those who can articulate a convincing testimony of God’s redeeming power in their life far beyond their children. There appears a shifting focus from the few children of members to the masses of wanderers and wounded outside the membership. It appears to generate a compulsion toward being a facilitator of change in “all;” hence, connecting with the world; thus, Billy Graham’s life among the multitude. Baptism of adult believers is exceptionally rare when a people group argue for baptism of their children. It seems to be portrayed as such an exception to the rule that it is not deemed a priority, or, maybe, palatable.

In contrast, modern Evangelical motivation to “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them,” has yielded both mega-churches worldwide and the largest single global missional agency, the International Mission Board. This is not to claim that size matters, but it is worth pointing out that as the masses collected to hear the gospel taught, Graham did not think that preaching the gospel to forty thousand people in Amsterdam to be sufficient. He organized an intentional pattern of follow-up by literally hundreds of thousands of believers over his lifetime for the purpose of discipleship after God’s regenerative work was done through His Living Word being preached. Graham

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<sup>30</sup> Duesing, *Adoniram Judson*, 167.

<sup>31</sup> Mandryk, *Operation World*, 610.

followed in Judson's missional example of believer baptism. Jason Mandryk points out that that infant baptism suggests that those who are baptized as infants believe.<sup>32</sup>

The pattern of those baptizing infants is that baptism of mature professing believers is quite rare. The belief changes the behavior. In short, personal evangelism is left to the few who are identified as evangelists, whereas modern Evangelicals endeavor the task for the masses. Priority is shifted to the catechism of children among those baptizing their infants, which is critical of either position. The PCA excels here and can teach the evangelical spectrum a great deal about faithfulness in living out the principles of Deuteronomy 6. Modern Evangelical believers simply have more hands on the plow of evangelism as an individual personal endeavor, which in turn quantitatively reaps a substantial harvest that exceeds PCA birth rate. CPC must endeavor to maintain its emphasis on catechism while personally connecting with the world to bring worship where it is not. After all, "Worship is ultimate, not missions, because God is ultimate, not man."<sup>33</sup>

### **Discipling Before Evangelizing?**

Doctrine is critical to disciple-making (1 Tim 4:16). Considering Georgetown's heritage of being Arminian (Methodist), CPC's Calvinistic membership understandably views little in the surrounding culture as sympathetic to its mission and with good reason. The unfortunate result can be CPC member proclivity to simply be ready to win a theological debate. Although Christian culture yields confusion that wounds people in the community, the doctrine of CPC is clearly instructed and scripturally sound. In fact, doctrine is CPC's principle, if not singular, educational impetus. The entire education curriculum is organized to affirm and instruct what

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<sup>32</sup> Mandryk, *Operation World*, 156.

<sup>33</sup> Piper, *Let the Nations be Glad!*, 227.

otherwise is totally lacking in Georgetown's ideological mindset—Reformed doctrine. CPC members are vividly aware that those in the community who may think themselves to be believers do not believe as they do. The operable question is why CPC is allowing a Reformed Evangelical on staff. Was CPC Eldership genuinely cooperative, or was my assigned staff role simply a way to negotiate the Evangelical away from this Reformed Evangelical believer?

CPC's disciple-making endeavor is pursued in Calvin's doctrine.<sup>34</sup> What then of the pagan who visits CPC having no experience or knowledge of Reformed theology, ideas, and vocabulary? How is the doctrine of Calvin relevant to the children of the Boys and Girls Club, or those imprisoned? What do those shopping the isles of the grocery store and those living next door to CPC members care about the way a man of the sixteenth century made sense out of God? When acknowledging the pattern Jesus provides for the theist to direct the wandering and offer healing to the wounded, the Reformed and modern Evangelical should be mutually emboldened toward connecting with the world for the gospel. The Christian is not commissioned by Jesus to explain Calvin, but to reconcile needs specific to a gospel living pattern comprised of language and ideals.

Those within CPC self-identifying as “nerdy” do so with a tone of confession. With confession to be followed closely by repentance, “nerdy” simply conflicts with who Scripture tells the believer he is as a disciple of Jesus. Our apologetic is to be scripturally loving in evangelism and doctrinally aligned for clarity in discipleship. Each of us are to connect with those wandering and wounded based on a language of God's love rather

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<sup>34</sup> Whit Anderson, RE: LL, and Michael Thompson dissertation project final review, Georgetown, Texas, May 28, 2020. Whit Anderson requested explicit acknowledgement on this observation that it is not the assertion that CPC brings the historic characteristics of what has been known within the PCA as “Totally Reformed.” This author asserts that CPC brings a biblical doctrine to Georgetown that is distinctly Calvinistic. Anderson contends that CPC members can be “overly theological rather than overly Calvinistic.” Deduction of this question was never intended in context of this project.



than man's division. This comes by way of asking questions and listening. Dietrich

Bonhoeffer puts it this way:

The first service that one owes to others . . . consists in listening to them. . . . Many people are looking for an ear that will listen. They do not find it among Christians, because these Christians are talking when they should be listening. . . . Christians have forgotten that the ministry of listening has been committed to them by Him who is Himself the great listener and whose work they should share. We should listen with the ears of God that we may speak the Word of God.<sup>35</sup>

“Evangelism is in the first place the transmission of God’s question to man. And that question is and remains whether we are willing to accept Jesus Christ as the one and only Lord of Life.”<sup>36</sup> Brad Hambrick’s compilation of Christian Counselors providing guidance for CPC’s caring for the spiritually wounded in the world explains, “Most counseling mistakes do not happen because we ask the right questions and arrive at the wrong conclusions. Most counseling mistakes arise from the questions we don’t ask and, therefore, never consider the possibilities that might need to occur.”<sup>37</sup> When the believer gives even the most basic directional or consoling guidance to another, it is the work of the Great Counselor who changes hearts through believers as His instrument. To be effective, the disciple must connect with those wandering and wounded to have any idea of what questions to ask for the purpose of fulfilling the Great Commission.

CPC Community Groups state their ineffectiveness at bringing wanderers in their social circles into the fellowship of the Community Group for evangelistic purpose. This ineffectiveness appears to be directly related to a lack of desire. Community Groups of those with children use the time to specifically address the interests of their children; most of whom are home or privately schooled in Christian academies. CPC Community Groups appear more private places of familial monasticism than inviting forums for

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<sup>35</sup> Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Life Together* (New York, NY: Harper & Brothers, 1954), 97-99.

<sup>36</sup> Conn, *Evangelism*, 28.

<sup>37</sup> Brad Hambrick, *Becoming a Church that Cares Well for the Abused: Handbook* (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing, 2019), 21.

familial evangelism. To realize CPC's vision, members must invite those wandering and wounded into their homes, ask questions, and listen.

CPC members recognize in twenty-first century Georgetown what twentieth-century British missionary to India, Leslie Newbigin, described upon returning to his native England in the mid 1970's. He found "massive decline of the church and Christian influence" in his homeland.<sup>38</sup> Prior to his departure, "western society's main cultural institutions still Christianized people, and the churches were easily gathering those who came through their doors through social expectation and custom."<sup>39</sup> Today, CPC members seem active in avoiding this cultural trend. Members seem wary of Georgetown's disillusionment toward Christianity, yet their continuing to function as a culture identifying with some Christian beliefs results in Christianized wanderers with familiar behavior and vocabulary.

Newbigin acknowledged the Evangelical Church for much of the innovation and initiative addressing his culture's disillusionment with the church. However, Newbigin never espoused the doctrines of Evangelicalism himself.<sup>40</sup> CPC reacts to Evangelicalism similarly. Recognizing the legitimacy of some Evangelicals, they will dispute the legitimacy of others. Thus, CPC must consider the degree to which it is presently equipping its membership to be effective in connecting with the wanderers of Georgetown and helping the spiritually wounded in the current local era of Christianization. Newbigin contended that the post-Christian church must not separate mission from, but infuse mission into, every aspect of the church's culture.<sup>41</sup> His ideas were formative to Tim Keller, whose ministry in New York City serves as a model to

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<sup>38</sup> Timothy J. Keller, *Center Church: Doing Balanced, Gospel-Centered Ministry in Your City* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2012), 252.

<sup>39</sup> Keller, *Center Church*.

<sup>40</sup> Keller, *Center Church*.

<sup>41</sup> Keller, *Center Church*.

CPC's Session who often reference Keller for how to minister in a confused culture. It is that confusion that slows CPC's adoption of an evangelistic pattern to model as well as their capacity to be cooperative outside of the PCA.

### **Personalizing**

CPC understands evangelism uniquely as "outreach." Formalizing the position of "Evangelism and Outreach Leader" was negotiated at the outset of the cooperative initiative between CPC's leaders and me to be facilitated by the TE, whose membership is with the presbytery, rather than a Ruling Elder of CPC's congregation. When the focus of regeneration is on the children of members, the idea of anything outside membership takes on "outreach" by definition.

Albeit rhetorically agreed, the use of the term "evangelism" was quickly recognized as dualistic in working with CPC leaders. However, the two ideas are different and work together. Outreach implies an action of impersonal openness (e.g., service, doing justice) while evangelism requires depth of interpersonal connectedness (e.g., asking questions to build mutual understanding). Graham's Evangelical approach to the wandering and wounded delineates between evangelism and discipleship requiring a trained individual's personal commitment to follow-up and Bible study. Tim Keller's Reformed description of method is rhetorically different, yet no less correct. Whereas Graham trends toward imploring individual responsibility of the believer, Keller exhorts the listener in terms of the collective:

A missional church will be more deeply and practically committed to deeds of compassion and social justice than traditional and fundamentalist churches and more deeply and practically committed to evangelism and conversion than traditional liberal churches. . . . A church that equips its people in this way will not only be something like a lay seminary in discipleship and training; it will also find ways to strongly support the people in their ministering outside the walls of the church.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> Keller, *Center Church*, 273.

The idea of a pattern in living life that includes personal evangelism is validated by Keller as he describes what is required in the life of a believing person to be modernly missional: firstly, to be a verbal witness to the gospel in their social circles, secondly, to love their neighbors and do justice within their community, and thirdly, to integrate their faith with their work in order to engage culture everywhere they serve (e.g., work).<sup>43</sup>

The making of disciples is the collective responsibility of the church and the responsibility of each individual believing member. This requires training the individual believer, which may be lacking where the emphasis is the collective. It is why Reformed Evangelical churches are currently establishing the means to train their members apart from the Sunday worship and Sunday School experience. CPC must also grow in preparing its membership for post-Christian contexts by equipping for evangelism, apologetics, justice, mercy, etc. One recognizes that Keller's emphasis of demonstrating similarity with unbelievers, expressing ideas in common language, sharing common concern, and living out life in common culture are attributes of the missional church. These markers of a missional church do not distinctly reflect the ethos of CPC's Reformed doctrinal concentration, although there are certainly members in the church who model such behavior. Doctrinal training emphasis can actually create language, concern, and life-style distance from culture that is confusing to those outside CPC. CPC are in no way wholly deficient in cooperative disciple-making and its related five-point pattern because of their commonality—love. Women and men of CPC do love their neighbor as themselves and God foremost.

CPC's plurality of Elders is responsible for structuring the gospel functionality of the church to equip the member for gospel service. Herein lies the challenge. From the Reformed view, "outreach" was originally structured into the silo of Missions where it would have coexisted with the missional endeavors supported by CPC as collectively

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<sup>43</sup> Keller, *Center Church*, 272.

evangelistic. These included joint operations with the Boys and Girls Club of Georgetown and Jubilee Prison Ministry, as well as foreign missionaries for whom CPC provides support in cooperation with other missional agencies. The structure emphasizes the collective responsibility to evangelize into specific missional endeavors and, in doing so, deemphasizes the individual member's personal responsibility for effective evangelism and discipleship. There is an organizational assumption that to be evangelistic, one participates in formally defined missional endeavors. Herein, the activities are evangelistic to the extent that the jointly operating organization (Boys and Girls Club and Jubilee Prison Ministry) architect an evangelistic model. Nowhere in CPC's "ministry driven model" do members receive training in the tactics and strategy of personal evangelism and discipleship required in the life pattern of disciple-making.

Evangelism as an activity is addressed specific to an individual's gifting at CPC (Acts 21:8; Eph 4:11; 2 Tim 4). In doing so, the act of evangelism is designated specific to those called by God to act in this capacity. If CPC is going to realize the full benefit of Tim Keller's missional identity of the church, it will require an all-hands-on-deck approach to reconciliation of Georgetown's wandering and wounded. The need for evangelistic training, particularly in a post-Christian context represents a key challenge within CPC. As mentioned previously, CPC geographically exists in a culture rooted in the juxtaposed ideas of Methodism. The community retains loyalty to Christianity, and this potentially serves to confuse or hinder CPC member response to a post-Christian society. A college educated membership of self-effacing "nerds," CPC members are sociologically aware of post-modern trends. As CPC endeavors Keller's directives with respect to the missional training of its membership, it is necessary to ensure members have a uniform pattern of evangelistic methodology and leaders who model it. A life pattern is necessary to recognize a correct doctrinal view of evangelism. The doctrinal spectrum of the Evangelical circles infiltrating CPC member social circles can be confusing.

Having considered CPC's view of intentional abiding, connecting to worship, discipling before evangelizing, personal connection, evangelism, and discipleship as potential challenges, consideration of four current CPC opportunities will now be explored. These four are conducive for cooperative disciple-making, particularly with respect to the wandering and those spiritually wounded.

### **Immediate Opportunities for Cooperative Disciple-Making Within CPC**

CPC presently offers at least three organizational ministries that are conducive to facilitate and equip for organic cooperative disciple-making. Participation in any one of the three offers conditioning for members to live out the five-point pattern defined by Luke for apprenticing Jesus. Two of the three represent existing cooperative endeavors in and of themselves: The Boys and Girls Club and Jubilee Prison Ministry. The third, Community Groups, is where the greatest opportunity exists for disciple-making and where the majority of time should be focused. Additionally, there is a prospective missional endeavor made possible by CPC's uniform commitment to educating people in Reformed grace doctrine. The suggested endeavor is formation of a Georgetown Institute of Christian Formation.

#### **Boys and Girls Club**

The Boys and Girls Club is an existing cooperative disciple-making venture ideal for the training and conditioning of members in the five-point pattern defined as *Simple Evangelism*. The Georgetown Independent School District as a secular entity provides CPC the space required for Sunday worship and Sunday School, education through cooperation with the Boys and Girls Clubs sharing of the facility. In turn, CPC members engage in volunteerism. This cooperative venture was born out of CPC's requisite need for a facility to host worship and educational activity. As members have exhibited a good standard of facility stewardship, multiple opportunities have arisen for

volunteerism as outreach to serve children and faculty. A handful of members have been faithful in meeting Club needs and identifying opportunities for gospel effectiveness. CPC leadership can use this defined mission as a means by which an increasing number of members can serve on a regular, or occasional, basis. The challenge to CPC is the tendency for parent members to focus on their own biological children and related commitment to home, or private Christian schooling. Children outside of member families have proved to be a lesser priority as the busyness of life takes its toll on adult members of CPC.

### **Jubilee Prison Ministry**

Jubilee Prison Ministry has been led faithfully by a CPC deacon who is prolific in his evangelization of this ecumenical evangelistic parachurch ministry among male members for participation. A well established and subscribed Evangelical ministry with effective model for prison evangelism, several male CPC members have returned from weekend mission trips enthusiastic by what they experienced behind prison bars. Testimonies of volunteers have consistently validated the worthwhile results of CPC jointly operating with Jubilee Prison Ministry's missional model. Recently, opportunity for women to participate has been facilitated by the opening of a women's detention center to Jubilee Prison Ministry, as well as two for youth offenders. Jubilee Prison Ministry's modern evangelical expansionism is benefiting CPC members with a "plug-n-play" missional vehicle. The five-point pattern of *Simple Evangelism* can be exercised by all those who engage in Jubilee Prison Ministry.

The challenge for CPC membership is that the logistics of engaging requires members to withdraw from their busy lives of career and family for various intervals that are clearly outside the member social circles. Members must go far afield from their norm to participate. This is missional and can result in sharpening member life pattern when they come home. CPC has seen male adult members, primarily those retired from

their vocational career, experience fulfillment through Jubilee Prison Ministry participation. The broader expansion of Jubilee Prison Ministry's transferability to individual member and family disciple-making has yet to be seen. To affect CPC member behavior organically, leadership will need to be intentional in helping members find the transferability of their experience behind bars when released into the world. Connecting with those incarcerated has distinguishing characteristics that may not be readily apparent for application with the grocery store cashier. In no way diminishing of Jubilee Prison Ministry value to member disciple-making development, it simply points out that context is relevant in teaching members how to transfer life pattern skills from one context to another. This is a critical component of disciple-making for CPC leaders to institute. Finally, cooperation with the Jubilee organization is driven by a single member whose background and personality exudes modern Evangelical characteristic and not Reformed, which causes the occasional confusion among Reformed members who find discontinuity in the language used to describe the thoughts, feelings, and experiences following a Jubilee Prison Ministry missional excursion. The Jubilee Prison Ministry deacon leader is a helpful case study because it is often unclear which entity he aligns his identity in Christ more closely—CPC or Jubilee Prison Ministry?

### **Delaney Senior Living Community**

With the single largest retirement community in Texas consuming a Georgetown postal code, engaging the elderly with the gospel is an intuitive endeavor for every believing Church in the community. Inspired by a widowed member of the congregation who was the only identifiable Presbyterian consistently bringing visitors from her residential facility to Sunday worship, a retired Presbyterian Minister who is a CPC member began Sunday worship services at the Delaney Senior Living Community earlier this year. The population of the United States is aging at a rate that will soon mean



there will be more citizens over than under fifty-five years old.<sup>44</sup> This is a strategic advantage for CPC in Georgetown because it will facilitate growth of membership. As PCA members migrate to Georgetown for retirement, they will easily find CPC, which stands out as the only local Reformed Church of America when a person is particularly PCA.

As the retired concentrate in Georgetown with their pooled financial resource for sustenance, commerce to serve their growing needs brings the families of employees into Georgetown multiplying the effect of relocation to grow the PCA population. The challenge in this reality is that focusing on the needs of the elderly is right and is limited in duration with their death at hand. Conversions are possible, but do not contribute to sustained and productive membership. In regard to engaging members in reconciling needs of the spiritually wounded, the Delaney Senior Living Community is ideal. Aging fosters many sorts of circumstances that facilitate past wounds to surface in current sufferings. Dying tends to be accompanied by pain, including that of family and friends of those departing this life. Whereas a great training ground for CPC members to develop life-pattern skills to deal with the realities of sin and death, schematics are necessary to deal with such complexities in the life of ministering believers.

Intentionality of training on the part of either CPC or the Delaney Senior Living Community is a cooperative endeavor necessary for member effectiveness similar to JPM's emphasis on training its members. The issue with the Delaney Senior Living Community is that, like the Boys and Girls Club, it is a secular institute which holds a place of agnosticism in the life of those who subscribe. Nonetheless, everything fostering the capacity of the Delaney Senior Living Community being consumed is fostering population growth by migration in Georgetown. Curiously, growth in this circumstance becomes more a hinderance to improve practices in disciple-making for CPC because

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<sup>44</sup> Mark Mather, Linda A. Jacobsen, and Kelvin M. Pollard, "Population Reference Bureau," *Population Reference Bulletin* 70, no. 2 (2015): 4.

membership growth happens without the reality of newly regenerate people. Seats appear filled on Sunday mornings, but without evangelistic outreach in the community. These are Presbyterian migrants rather than the reborn, turning from their idols to worship the one true God. Like the Boys and Girls club and JPM, most members do not include Delaney Senior Living Community residents in their social circle. Time on premise is an exception to member life-pattern.

Exercising the five-point pattern of *Simple Evangelism* inside the Delaney Senior Living Community is absolutely good, possible, and true, yet in no way suggests that CPC members are transferring one evangelistic missional context into the social circle of their everyday life. Clearly, the widow living in the Delaney Senior Living Community is doing so, or is she just inviting people to church?<sup>45</sup> Are those volunteering at her place of residence, engaging her social circle, bringing people from their social circle to introduce to hers on Sundays? It seems, apparently, not.

### **Community Groups**

Of the four, Community Groups likely provide the most meaningful opportunity for cooperative disciple-making to local wanderers and those wounded, largely because they represent the strongest incarnational ministry within CPC. In other words, Community Groups are about living out the Christian life in a way that is culturally familiar to those wandering, as well as people wounded by the prevalent liberal doctrines among Georgetown churches. Participating in Community Groups allow CPC members to reach people in their social circles who might never walk through the doors of the church, don't attend the Boys and Girls Club, and are not incarcerated.

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<sup>45</sup> Jonathan Leeman, *Church Membership: How the World Knows Who Represents Jesus* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012), 69. Jonathan Leeman roots disciple-making from membership in the local church because the local church is the gospel-facing entity to surrounding culture. When a local church's pattern for the making of disciples is not evident it is difficult to discern the heart of individual members in their behavior. The member may be fulfilling their responsibility but ineffectively without the local church's discipling them in a biblical pattern of behavior.

While the Boys and Girls club and Jubilee Prison Ministry are worthwhile missional ventures, the two take members into transactional scenarios. CPC's joint operation with the two agencies is necessary, but every encounter is both limited in scope and sustainability. In both cases, CPC members function in positions of authority in the facilitation and negotiation process of cooperation. Children and prisoners are subjected to apprenticing capacity by design of the corresponding missional social structure. Unlike evangelistic rallies or even church, CPC members functioning in these two missional endeavors have captive audiences who are required to connect by submission.

CPC employs Community Groups as a critical context for disciple-making. Each group consists of twelve to eighteen people and meets on average around four times a month. Groups are currently focused around those who are married. Singles and those widowed are encouraged to find a place among the married members. Although CPC prioritizes intergenerational ministry throughout its ministry structure, a Community Group has recently been launched for young marrieds and has been fully subscribed. Encouraging marriage and the mandate to multiply is core to PCA growth. CPC has historically placed a high emphasis on Community Groups because they sustain the social structure of the members, establishing more selective processes for group leaders, and providing regular training and direct oversight by a lay coach as well as a full-time Groups minister. The purpose of the Community Group ministry is to cultivate the value of gospel-centered community within the members of each group.

Reformed doctrinal beliefs are thoroughly instructed at CPC through the Sunday morning education program. Additionally, structured leadership training for prospective Ruling Elders has been opened to church membership to audit. Community Groups might serve as a training venue for CPC member's behavior—particularly disciple-making behavior. Behavioral modification away from unintended monasticism toward intentional evangelism and discipleship in context of Community Groups would be instructive to CPC families. Community Groups serve as a key function in CPC's

functional endeavor to instruct member behavior to be consistent with doctrinal belief. As a result, CPC stresses the importance of member participation and sustains a good member subscription rate to Community Groups. It is the Community Group leader that is principle candidate for future Ruling Elder candidates and places a perpetual premium on developing capable lay leaders who are able to quickly meet the needs of those looking to join a group. In that the only Associate Pastor has Community Groups as his primary point of responsibility, the urgent prioritization of Community Groups for CPC community and church health is understood. Community Groups provide platform for the development of new leaders. Methodology is critical for identifying those who seem competent to shepherd as CPC grows through cooperative disciple-making.

Opportunities fostering continuity and consistency in living a fulfilling life pattern as a Jesus follower abound in Community Groups. Community Groups have the most consistency of any ministry opportunity and scalability at CPC. They are not bound by seasonal time constraints, and many groups will remain together for several years. Community Groups provide a context to model a more encompassing portrait of Christian discipleship through prayer, service, Bible reading, confession, and teaching. All are done within the comfortable space of member homes. Community Groups are geographically based so that participants can serve and identify with their social circle, making Community Groups most conducive for missionally deploying the five-point pattern *Simple Evangelism* conveys for members to live.

Theoretically, Community Groups have the fewest natural limitations for cooperative disciple-making of the wandering and those spiritually wounded. Thus, Community Groups represent a critical opportunity to think more strategically about how to engage member social circles. Regardless of one's spiritual maturity, researchers confirm that groups provide a healthy context for the formation of disciples. It has been determined that those who participated in a group at least four times a month demonstrate significantly more health with regard to "behavior that is characteristic of a growing

disciple” (e.g., church attendance, Bible reading and memorization, service, prayer, financial giving, volunteer church leadership) than those who were not part of a discipleship group.<sup>46</sup> However, this research also found that two out of three pastors believe discipleship happens best in groups of one to five.<sup>47</sup> Prior to my arrival, CPC members were concerned about the lack of outreach within the Community Groups. Additionally, Community Groups are geographically dispersed reflecting the distribution of PCA members relocating to the greater Williamson County area. Relocation to the area has been CPCs single means of growth. Without the benefit of social circle conversions, fellowship is challenging because of the distance between member homes.

Leaders articulate that Community Groups exist to cultivate the value of gospel-centered community for disciple-making. Community Group value is recognized for those who are decidedly converted to Christ and others who are being invited to witness the gospel in action among the people of God. However, there are few examples of members using the Community Group platform as a means to initiate disciple-making apart from their own children. The best example of this is in the Community Group located in a large retirement community where a social structure of neighbor cordiality preexists and is required to comfortably reside within its boundaries. Suspiciously, those groups who are parents with children have no examples of gospel outreach specific to their Community Group. How could this change? Foremost, individuals need to learn the Scriptural definition of disciple-making to include personal evangelism and how to do it in a way that they find simple to their life pattern and their children’s. They need to take confidence in God’s sovereignty and goodness in order to not be afraid. They need to find that the Christian life is only fulfilling to the extent of abiding in obedience to the Father. The beauty of Community Groups is that it is a collective that allows these faithful

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<sup>46</sup> Ed Stetzer and Eric Geiger, *Transformational Groups: Creating a New Scorecard for Groups* (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing, 2014), 45.

<sup>47</sup> Stetzer and Geiger, *Transformational Groups*.

parents to take measurable action together for the gospel in cooperation with the person of the Spirit and one another. For example, a Community Group leader could get to know their neighbor who hosts a similar group in their home on a recurring basis from the neighbor's church. In applying the five-point pattern of *Simple Evangelism*, the CPC Community Group leader could facilitate and negotiate a missional endeavor with non-member believers in his community. The two groups could come together for the gospel and demonstrate an effective endeavor to engage the wandering and those wounded, which might be aligned with a larger recurring missional endeavor sponsored by one of their two churches (e.g., feeding and teaching the homeless, volunteering together at the Boys and Girls Club).

Most recently introduced to the Care Methodology of a Reformed Evangelical Church, The Village Church (TVC), CPC leaders intend to model Community Group leader training to charge them to model Christ, care for and appropriately counsel group members, and mobilize members toward service and multiplication. The Care Methodology of TVC serves as baseline material to use for the purpose of developing front-line Community Group Ministers at CPC, which points to a unique opportunity CPC has in its capacity, growth, and cooperative outlook. Cooperative endeavor could be furthered, and CPC members benefit, by CPC Ruling Elders contacting and jointly operating with TVC Elders in Community Group Leader training initiative.

### **Considerations for the Future**

CPC's prospect for enhanced cooperative disciple-making should only serve to equip its membership for the days ahead. More than ever, CPC members must be equipped to live as disciples who make disciples in an increasingly post-Christian context. CPC's mission field, the historic Arminian bastion of Georgetown, Texas, needs lay ministers who can speak to those who are wandering confused by Christian culture and those who are wounded resulting in gospel apathy and hostility. As part of the

collective in outreach, personal evangelism is necessary because it is each individual as an instrument that God uses in interpersonal relationships to evoke His effectual call. This the desired outcome, individual members will be intentionally abiding for connecting with the world in the precursor to regenerative activity in their social circles to serve Georgetown and everywhere CPC members serve.

Developing personal spiritual discipline in abiding in Christ for the purpose of connecting with in their social circle is the pre-evangelistic requirement CPC members must practice. It is only then that personal evangelism is relevant. Without the skill to connect with those who are different, CPC's Reformed theology that is so true, right, and beautiful, will go unheard. CPC's theology is needed in a Christian culture that is confused by a liberalization in Arminianism that has resulted in wounding many in the community. One should not assume the required change to be drastic, but neither should they assume that everything will stay the same. It is fair to assume that some of CPC's unique and superlative qualities might not translate in productive joint operation with modern Evangelicals.

Orchestrating a warm and welcoming disposition will be potentially uncomfortable to longstanding PCA patriarchs who remember the division that occurred between the PCA and PC(USA) sects. The rewards of that hard-fought battle to defend the faith may at first feel compromised, but Jesus' life of connecting with the world will be apprenticed. Further, being weaned from an unintended and the unwarranted monasticism of Reformed doctrinal centrality might awaken members to the reality of empty seats on Sundays. This realization crystalizes the imperative for cooperative disciple-making toward the wandering lost and those wounded by liberal theologies living among us in Georgetown and all places that we serve.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter has communicated evangelism as the third point of a five-point pattern in disciple-making, showing that priority for cooperative disciple-making should remain an effort within the mission of the local church. We discussed four potential challenges that might explain hindrances with regard to cooperative disciple-making, and how CPC might improve to this end. Additionally, we considered current missional initiatives within CPC where cooperative disciple-making has historically occurred. Lastly, we briefly considered why enhancing the life pattern for cooperative disciple-making is important for the future of CPC. Chapter 4 will examine the Ruling Elder Interpersonal Interviews.



## CHAPTER 4

### INTERPERSONALLY ENGAGING CHRIST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH'S RULING ELDERS

The purpose of this project was to define and deploy a pattern for living the gospel-centric life of Christ for cooperative disciple-making at CPC. The last chapter spoke to opportunities and challenges for cooperative disciple-making at CPC. This chapter explores the events resulting from a noncooperative member's behavior, the resulting directional guidance provided by the Teaching Elder, and the results of interpersonal interviews with CPC's Ruling Elders who, along with the Teaching Elder, comprise CPC's Session.<sup>1</sup> The purpose of the interpersonal interviews with CPC's Ruling Elders was to assess their personal disciple-making patterns both within CPC and outside the church context in their engaging culture. This inquiry measures each Ruling Elder's desire to personally connect with me as a Reformed Evangelical in their congregation for purpose of their personal disciple-making.<sup>2</sup>

This chapter explores what was learned as I pursued the categories of questions defined in chapter 1 with each of the Ruling Elders individually in an interpersonal interview. How does CPC understand and communicate the relationship between

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<sup>1</sup> Ron Rhodes, *The Complete Guide to Christian Denominations: Understanding the History, Beliefs, and Differences* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 2005), 361. Within the Presbyterian Church in America, there is a distinct polity. "Sessions govern the local church, regional presbyteries govern the sessions, and the General Assembly governs the presbyteries and all churches at the national level. The offices of teaching and Ruling Elders can only be held by men." *The definitive and distinct oversight yields a culture of compliance within CPC*. Ruling Elders are role models in every way for members. It is on this basis of authority structure that I focused inquiry to the men comprising CPC's session to learn their priorities and prejudices for purpose of shepherding CPC members in a pattern of gospel-centric disciple-making.

<sup>2</sup> Interpersonally connecting with others who are different is defined as the second point of the five-point pattern of Jesus' disciple-making behavior described by Luke in his Gospel for the believer to apprentice that leads into cooperation and is detailed in chapter 2.

Reformed and Evangelical disciple-making? Does cooperating with Evangelicals in disciple-making necessarily imply compromise in Reformed theology? How does CPC emphasize *Simple Evangelism*?<sup>3</sup> How does CPC understand and communicate the priority of *Simple Evangelism*? How has CPC historically communicated the value of *Simple Evangelism*? Finally, how can CPC improve upon disciple-making toward those who appear to be wanderers and all people who suffer spiritual woundedness? The results of this chapter should help with the final goal of this project: developing a plan to integrate a clearer priority and process for *Simple Evangelism* at CPC. Final recommendations for this goal will be the subject of the next chapter. Before detailing the experience of meeting with CPC's Ruling Elders, the immediate events leading up to their agreeing to be interviewed will be considered; including the episode that threatened to derail this project, the resulting directional guidance of CPC's Teaching Elder, and the personal application of *Simple Evangelism* within the resulting circumstance to yield cooperative disciple-making.

### **CPC Drama, Teaching Elder Directional Guidance, and Resulting Cooperation**

CPC's Teaching Elder (Whit Anderson) served as my project sponsor. Anderson solicited my connecting with CPC's members to foster evangelism and outreach in being deployed as CPC staff and his intern. Upon Lori's and my arriving at CPC, a member of CPC and his wife who had departed to attend a local Baptist church returned from a six-month endeavor to satisfy desires that had gone unfulfilled within CPC membership. We had been greeted into CPC by his daughter and son-in-law who had sustained CPC membership and were the single couple who proactively welcomed us as visitors. Lori and I connected with this young family in the practice of *Simple Evangelism*. The young couple introduced us to their parents as a means of facilitating

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<sup>3</sup> *Simple Evangelism* is detailed in Chapter 2.

their parent's return to CPC from the local Baptist church. The daughter introduced us in anticipation that our friendship might bring about the change that her mother and father desired as CPC's members, which was described as the feeling of being welcomed.<sup>4</sup>

The sequence of events directly affiliated Lori and me with the two returned members who then began their own independent pursuit of ministry within CPC. Lori and I took note that their endeavors were lacking cooperation with CPC members or corporate endeavor sanctioned by CPC's Session.<sup>5</sup> Soon after their return, the wife independently initiated a group for women members fifty-plus years of age without communicating, coordinating, or cooperating with the Women's Ministry leader. We observed that the husband and wife made no explicit endeavor to distinguish their modern Evangelical doctrine from CPC's distinctly Reformed doctrine. Lacking the distinction of clearly stated doctrinal (scriptural) and historical (tradition) belief, while at the same time being invited into CPC membership, the husband and wife's behavior was the impetus of incremental disruption among members.<sup>6</sup>

Incremental contrasting belief prompted confusion among members when the man and his wife would say and do things that didn't fit the scope of CPC's distinctly Reformed theology (PCA) and resulting organizational functions. Attributes of behavior that comes with modern Evangelical thinking were not clarified as such by the man to fellow members (e.g., dispensationalism). Yet, the Ruling Elders invited him to teach in the adult education program based on his membership while he did not participate in CPC's functional endeavors to promote discipleship among members (e.g., Men's or Community Group ministries), nor did he subscribe to the Covenant theology that is

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<sup>4</sup> The teacher, interviewed by Michael Thompson, Georgetown, TX, September 5, 2019.

<sup>5</sup> Cooperation in disciple-making is defined in chapter 1.

<sup>6</sup> Jonathan Leeman, *Church Membership: How the World Knows Who Represents Jesus* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012), 95-102. Jonathan Leeman suggests eight ways members submit to their local church: (1) publicly, (2) physically/geographically, (3) socially, (4) affectionately, (5) financially, (6) vocationally, (7) ethnically, (8) spiritually.

distinguishing of CPC's doctrinal position. Lacking subscription to CPC's foundational doctrine, the points of personal connection critical for members to ask questions of one another to understand heart desires and serve one another lovingly were being averted by not participating in the interpersonal ministries of the church.<sup>7</sup> By being invited into teaching without relationship, the man circumvented personal discipleship in relationship with the Ruling Elders while publicly asserting doctrine in incremental agreement with the Ruling Elders according to an overseen curriculum.

Incremental disruption came to a head with the man and woman asserting that their second return to CPC was void of the feeling of being "welcomed back into CPC membership."<sup>8</sup> They proposed the need for a "Welcoming Ministry."<sup>9</sup> Sponsored by Associate Pastor Kim, CPC Ruling Elders authorized his plan for a defined welcoming endeavor to be structured for him to lead.<sup>10</sup> Session rationale for the newly instituted initiative was in recognition of a low return rate of visitors, as well as resolution of Kim's need for visitor data to use for visitor follow-up.<sup>11</sup> These two factors were assessed by Kim to be a result of CPC member inability to connect with those whom they are unfamiliar.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> It is important to consider Jonathan Leeman's definition of church membership as being "*a formal relationship between a church and a Christian characterized by the church's discipleship and the Christian's submission to living out his or her discipleship in the care of the church*" when considering the interaction between the teacher and CPC Session to recognize the Session's endeavor to disciple and that family's assertion of the Session's failing.

<sup>8</sup> Teacher, September 5, 2019.

<sup>9</sup> Woonny Kim, interviewed by Michael Thompson, Georgetown, TX, October 25, 2019. The Welcome Ministry was proposed and authorized as a unique subset of CPC's membership who would be deployed around Sunday morning worship to connect with visitors and intentionally solicitate data that would be used by leadership in follow-up initiative the following week.

<sup>10</sup> Kim, October 25, 2019.

<sup>11</sup> Kim, October 25, 2019.

<sup>12</sup> Kim, October 25, 2019.

Deploying the agreed ministry plan for welcoming visitors within the quarter, the man and his wife then composed an email to the Session comprised of a myriad of complaints.<sup>13</sup> The couple unceremoniously departed CPC with their daughter and her family to a second local Baptist church.<sup>14</sup> His disruptive behavior inside CPC correlated with the oddities experienced of local modern Evangelicals outside CPC with whom I openly affiliate.<sup>15</sup> My disclosed Southern Baptist affiliation was a detriment to deepening trust with the Session to gain approval for working broadly across the membership.<sup>16</sup> CPC shepherds were standing guard over the flock and Anderson acknowledged my persona amongst them as “intimidating.”<sup>17</sup>

Anderson’s critique of my effect on the balance of leadership was helpful. My endeavor to apprentice Christ in cooperating with CPC’s leaders was challenged by people and circumstance—possibly including my own behavior deemed “intimidating” to men I love in Christ. I was thought to be a threat to the collective CPC way of life. Possibly, my own woundedness resulting in disaffection from my own Baptist church evoked fear of rejection by the members of CPC causing me to sin. The compulsion within me to have faith in God’s sovereignty in these moments was undergirded by a sense of responsibility to intentionally abide in Christ.<sup>18</sup> In doing so, I made it a daily practice to pray for the members of CPC’s Session in a deliberate way.

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<sup>13</sup> Teacher, September 5, 2019.

<sup>14</sup> Teacher, September 5, 2019.

<sup>15</sup> Leeman, *Church Membership*, 102-03. Leeman points out that a principle challenge in membership is submitting to our local church in its “ugliness.” He points to Jesus’ direction for his apprentice to “love one another” just as the one who apprentices Christ has been loved by him (John 13:34). Leeman points out that it is in Christ’s love that the ugliness is transformed into the beautiful (Eph 5:22-31).

<sup>16</sup> Whit Anderson, interviewed by Michael Thompson, Georgetown, TX, September 10, 2019.

<sup>17</sup> Anderson, September 10, 2019.

<sup>18</sup> Abiding is proposed and defined in chapter 2 as the first point of a five-point process described by Luke in his Gospel for those apprenticing Christ to imitate in their intentional endeavor to do as Christ did.

I found myself fearful that the months of work that I had devoted to CPC for this project would come to nothing for the gospel. There were dark moments in the earliest hours of the morning when the fear of failure plagued me. I devoted my prayer and the endeavor of the project to the will of the Father to press on. God was using my endeavor to cooperate with the Reformed members of CPC to discipline me in the act of cooperative disciple-making. I devoted several weeks asking God to search my heart to ensure that my representation of Christ's love in the lives of the Ruling Elders was made evident. God was bringing me to personally and intentionally abide in Him to connect with the Ruling Elders and speak the gospel for purpose of His sovereign change in them (and me) for our gathering to worshiping the One who we knew was the true God. It is the gospel we each served together but differently. In recognizing the authority role that God had placed the Session within my life, I could apprentice Christ in facilitating and negotiating a gospel-centric outcome.<sup>19</sup>

Anderson encouraged CPC membership as a solution to the impending dilemma in completing this project.<sup>20</sup> I reminded Anderson of my status as a Southern Baptist and everything that had led to his introduction of Lori and me to the Session in 2018.<sup>21</sup> In those moments, it was in distinction that we could find cooperation. Our cooperation demonstrates to CPC members and the local community that we apprentice Christ (who is God) together for the gospel.<sup>22</sup> We agreed that I would continue my work

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<sup>19</sup> Kevin J. Vanhoozer, *Faith Speaking Understanding: Performing the Drama of Doctrine* (Louisville, KY: John Knox Press, 2014), 204. The term "apprentice" is used here in context of the definition of Cooperative Disciple-Making provided in chapter 1, wherein Robert Coleman prodigiously defines the "Master" as being Jesus Christ who is the Living Word (John 1:1-5). The apprentice must constantly check his doctrine against the truth of the Living Word-Scripture (1 Tim 4:16). The criticality of the ultimate relationship of imitation of Christ in the believer's live is explored in chapter 3's "Evangelism is the Third Point of a Five Point Pattern in Disciple-Making." Herein, Kevin Vanhoozer's point of imitation goes to his principle concern that believers evidence the "mind of Christ" through their behavior.

<sup>20</sup> Anderson, September 10, 2019.

<sup>21</sup> Anderson, September 10, 2019.

<sup>22</sup> See footnote 19.

through Anderson’s directional guidance. Anderson steered me away from my intended member survey observing that the Session had executed a survey for their purposes around the time of my CPC arrival.<sup>23</sup> A survey for the purpose of this project was now considered duplicitous and untimely. Instead, Anderson sent each of the Ruling Elders a personal text asking each to please “cooperate” with me in my desire to interview them for my dissertation project.<sup>24</sup> Let us now review the findings of Ruling Elder commentary specific to the cooperative disciple-making dynamic of *Simple Evangelism*.

### **Ruling Elder Interpersonal Interviews**

Ruling Elders are the directional shepherds of PCA churches, and CPC is no exception. Significant time and devotion are poured into each man aspiring to the role of Ruling Elder and Deacon at CPC. The role of CPC Ruling Elder is distinguished among the members. The four Ruling Elders and the one Teaching Elder form the directional composition of CPC’s polity and instruction—the Session. CPC’s Ruling Elders organize according to three charters that the Session affirms to be functional pillars of CPC: administration, discipleship, and missions. Worship, as a fourth pillar, is uniquely overseen by the Teaching Elder and member of the presbytery—Whit Anderson.

It is from the Session that every aspect of corporate life is assessed, deliberated, and implemented; hence, *Simple Evangelism* is no exception. It is from the Ruling Elders of CPC that Ruling Elder responsible for discipleship informed me of the conclusion “*Simple Evangelism* is preferable to other assessed evangelistic methodologies.”<sup>25</sup> In engaging interpersonally with the Ruling Elders, participation in the interview dialog was completely voluntary because the dialog was organic within the

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<sup>23</sup> Anderson, September 10, 2019.

<sup>24</sup> Whit Anderson, interviewed by Michael Thompson, Georgetown, TX, October 26, 2019.

<sup>25</sup> RE: LL, *Simple Evangelism* CPC Session approval to Michael Thompson, Georgetown, TX, May 23, 2019.

context of living life and doing ministry together. My desire is to be their friend. Response to thirty questions comprising the Ruling Elder Interpersonal Interview were commonly inquired of each Ruling Elder as it related to their personal practice and CPC experience. The four Ruling Elders who currently comprise CPC's Session were each engaged separately in the commonly themed dialog. In that the Ruling Elders continued to rightly consider me an outsider due to my Southern Baptist Convention membership, Anderson's guidance was to pursue a non-evasive interview method that could not be mistaken for a sort of "diagnostic approach that could be prescriptive in outcome rather than descriptive."<sup>26</sup> Personally connecting with each of the Ruling Elders privately provided a holistic view of each individual's position specific to the five areas being explored (abiding, connecting, evangelizing, discipling, and worshiping).

### **Framing Ruling Elder Identity Distinction**

Interpersonal interviews were conducted with CPC's four REs: JD (administration), SH (missions), LL (discipleship), and JS who is soon to roll off the Session.<sup>27</sup> Each was asked the same questions, and time was allowed for interviewees to nuance their responses as they saw fit. The rest of this chapter will consider Ruling Elder Interpersonal Interview responses from the six aforementioned questions foundational to the project.<sup>28</sup> Specific to the Ruling Elder Interpersonal Interview, the initial questions asked of the Ruling Elders were to establish attributes of their collective identity. These

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<sup>26</sup> The Ruling Elder Interpersonal Interview is available in its entirety in the appendices.

<sup>27</sup> RE: LL, Whit Anderson, and Michael Thompson dissertation project final review, Georgetown, TX, May 28, 2019. RE: LL and Whit Anderson, for purpose of anonymity, directed Ruling Elders be identified in the same way that each man is identified in CPC Session Meeting notes: "RE" with first and last name initial.

<sup>28</sup> How does CPC understand and communicate the relationship between Reformed and Evangelical disciple-making? Does cooperating with Evangelicals in disciple-making necessarily imply compromise in Reformed theology? How does CPC emphasize *Simple Evangelism*? How does CPC understand and communicate the priority of *Simple Evangelism*? How has CPC historically communicated the value of *Simple Evangelism*? Finally, how can CPC improve upon disciple-making toward those who appear to be wanderers and all people who suffer spiritual woundedness?



questions also shaped understanding of how the Ruling Elders viewed orthodoxy and cooperation with modern Evangelicals. Two of the four men had served as a Ruling Elder within a prior PCA church and different presbytery. Each of these two men had been ordained a Ruling Elder for twenty-five years in contrast to their two younger counterparts—one of whom had served CPC for one year and the other for three years. Three of the four had come into the PCA from Evangelical denominations—two Baptist. The fourth, disaffected within the PC(USA), transited to PCA membership in 1984. Their PCA member tenure ranged from five to thirty-five years. Representing two generations, all four of the Ruling Elders are fathers and the older two men are grandfathers.

In each case, their PCA membership was distinguishing of their doctrine. In relation to their understanding of “the three critical demarcations of a true church,” the four men responded commonly. They recognized what I was asking reflected their PCA leadership training material, and it does. The terms “sound” and “proper” were closely aligned in the views of all four men.<sup>29</sup> There was a generational dichotomy with regard to ideas around orthodoxy. The two longstanding PCA men who are grandfathers deemed it necessary that a church’s doctrine be theologically classified “Reformed” to be considered orthodox. The younger two did not, with one immediately responding with his belief that “John and Charles Wesley were genuine believers.”<sup>30</sup> The other stated, “Calvinism does not define orthodoxy. A specific doctrinal position defines orthodoxy.”<sup>31</sup>

None of the four required Reformed Doctrine for purpose of regeneration, salvation, or sanctification, but with varied levels of reservation. Clarifying his hesitation to what was considered a “tough question” to critique orthodoxy, one qualified his

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<sup>29</sup> *Christ Presbyterian Church Officer Training Manual* (Georgetown, TX: Christ Presbyterian Church, May 2019), 106. (1) Sound biblical teaching, (2) Proper administration of the sacraments, and (3) Proper exercise of church discipline are instructed as being the three critical demarcations of a true church in CPC’s leadership training material.

<sup>30</sup> RE: JD, interviewed by Michael Thompson, Georgetown, TX, October 28, 2019.

<sup>31</sup> RE: SH, interviewed by Michael Thompson, Georgetown, TX, October 31, 2019.

response, “Reformed theology is perfect for those who are willing to be abused for the opportunity to challenge culture because *we do not value culture*.”<sup>32</sup> The man’s frustration focused on CPC members’ value of Reformed theology. Specifically referring to the recent episode of the teacher’s family departure for a General Baptist Church, it was observed, “it’s not that we place too high a value on Reformed theology. It’s that we at CPC seem not to value it enough. The teacher and his family are an example of members who claimed orthodoxy in our Reformed theology, but too quickly deserted it when they became uncomfortable, disgruntled, or just upset that they didn’t feel good.”<sup>33</sup> The other twenty-five-year PCA veteran remarked, “Historic theologies align with certain people’s belief. Calvin’s is personally preferable because the five Solas put the entire process of regeneration, salvation, and sanctification back on God’s work and not human’s.”<sup>34</sup> *CPC leadership clearly places trust and confidence in God’s sovereignty as Creator. Ruling Elders each recognize their own person responsibility in disciple-making. Personal positions related to how culture is regarded, both culture within diverse historic traditions of the church, as well as demarcation of the church from culture were expressed within the contextualization of each Ruling Elder’s response. Each of the four men were convergent in God’s sovereignty and divergent in man’s corresponding responsibility in the disciple-making among wanderers and those spiritually wounded.*

### **Abiding within the Ruling Elders of CPC**

Ruling Elders each recognized the essential aspect of abiding as foundational to their own personal capacity to share in the reality of God’s grace. In their personal critique of their current endeavor to personally abide on a scale from *one* (requiring

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<sup>32</sup> RE: JS, interviewed by Michael Thompson, Georgetown, TX, October 29, 2019.

<sup>33</sup> RE: JS, October 29, 2019.

<sup>34</sup> RE: LL, interviewed by Michael Thompson, Georgetown, TX, October 30, 2019.

improvement in through one's personal spiritual discipline) to *five* (flourishing), the younger two Ruling Elders each rated themselves a "three-and-a-half" while the two more experienced men demonstrated a longer and deeper introspection before responding critically "four" and the other "two." It was interesting to note the man most critical of this snapshot in time of his personal abiding, articulated abiding as *being specifically rooted to his prayer life*, "My wife and I are praying daily for increased sensitivity to the doctrine of the Spirit's opening doors and discernment of the person's openness to explore Scripture."<sup>35</sup> He also observed his time of abiding as "personal worship" and reflected on the wide swings in emotion that he can experience when "communing with God."<sup>36</sup> The balance of the four did not independently address their prayer life in responding with self-assessment of their abiding. *As prayer was recognized as central to their abiding, Ruling Elder self-assessment was notably critical. Self-criticism along these lines makes sense in context of confession as a component of the ACTS model of prayer (adoration, confession, thanksgiving, and supplication).*<sup>37</sup> John Onwuchekwa observes, "If we do adoration right, then confession becomes the reflex of our souls. As we reflect on God's holiness and goodness, our sinfulness becomes apparent."<sup>38</sup> It makes sense that RE: JS's focus on shepherding CPC out of his prayerful abiding would result in a sincere sensitivity to personal shortcomings—an affirming attribute in the example he is setting for members of CPC to following in abiding.

Specific to the four Ruling Elders' view of CPC's equipping them to abide on a scale of *one* (being a negative view) and *ten* (being a positive view), a generational differentiation in perspective again emerged. The two men who had the least tenure each

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<sup>35</sup> RE: JS, October 29, 2019.

<sup>36</sup> RE: JS, October 29, 2019.

<sup>37</sup> John Onwuchekwa, *Prayer: How Praying Together Shapes the Church* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2018), 79.

<sup>38</sup> Onwuchekwa, *Prayer*, 81.

assessed CPC's equipping to deserve a "nine" while the two men with twenty-five-year tenure in the Ruling Elder role within other PCA churches gauged it at "five" and "three." The two men most recently converting from modern Evangelicalism to the distinctly Reformed view of theology (PCA) experienced a heightened sense that their personal abiding had increased in and through the change in their position, as well as the discipline developed through related theological study at CPC. *When operating with a contrasting point of reference within the PCA, Ruling Elder critique of CPC's equipping members in abiding was far more critical in their reasoning through response than when self-assessing their own personal abiding, but for the Ruling Elder who distinguished his abiding specifically according to the fruitfulness of his own personal discipline in prayer.*

### **Connecting within the Ruling Elders of CPC**

Three of the Ruling Elders self-identified as an "introvert" when asked to rank their own personal competence in "connecting." The fourth acknowledged connecting with the world is a strength with a caveat that his "strategy for disciple-making is rooted in the derogatory."<sup>39</sup> He regarded his connecting with the world as "a provocative approach to produce reaction. It is rooted in the question, 'Why do you think that way?' It is an approach to generate light through heat of debate, which is a character trait."<sup>40</sup> While on the other end of the connecting continuum, a younger Ruling Elder transparently and repentantly assessed, "I have not been focusing on disciple-making in the past. This is now changing with a Session-led strategy. I need to intentionally seek men out to disciple."<sup>41</sup> The criticality of connecting for relationship with others recognized in the strategy another in his rapid ability to assess, "I'm engaging with two to five people. It is more in acts of service than disciple-making. I need to be more

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<sup>39</sup> RE: JS, October 29, 2019.

<sup>40</sup> RE: JS, October 29, 2019.

<sup>41</sup> RE: SH, October 31, 2019.

intentional in my personal spiritual disciplines and engage in a program with deliverables.”<sup>42</sup> *The men comprising CPC’s Session each began discussing connecting in context of corporate ideas of outreach with trending recognition of their own personal responsibility to connect with unfamiliar people suffering in their woundedness or wandering in the world.*

Three of the men prefaced connecting with people in context of their work as essential for the gospel, as well as the corresponding difficulty. The two younger fathers clearly felt hard pressed for time to connect with anyone apart from the members of their family while the men who were grandfathers articulated other time constraints that made it necessary to be intentional for the gospel within their circumstance. Feeling restricted by the quantity of time in devoted to his workplace combined with the workplace culture, the Ruling Elder who serves as a teaching physician claimed his disciple-making strategy to be “living out his faith through excellence at the hospital” while later recognizing, “I do not see people at work on a routine or consistent basis” for relationship to be fostered.<sup>43</sup> Rightly asserting the essential attribute of prayer for connecting with those in our life’s path, the man serving as a teacher in the public school system disclosed his disciple-making being comprised of “intentionality in my prayer life for the lost. I always have three people who I am intentionally praying for to consider the gospel at work.”<sup>44</sup> The third man holds a realtor license while creating businesses that are relevant to the retirement community in which he resides. The level of demand generated by his commercial endeavors led him to explicate that he “would need to stop building businesses in order to increase in discipleship.”<sup>45</sup> *Ruling Elders articulated experiencing*

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<sup>42</sup> RE: LL, interviewed by Michael Thompson, Georgetown, TX, October 30, 2019.

<sup>43</sup> RE: SH, October 31, 2019.

<sup>44</sup> RE: JD, October 28, 2019.

<sup>45</sup> RE: JS, October 29, 2019.

*their vocational, as well as avocational, activity as hindering disciple-making. The four men articulated a view that vocational activity was a hinderance to the integrity of personal and proactive disciple-making (particularly the third point of evangelizing in their lives) rather than a venue or vehicle by which to make disciples.*

Following a majority asserting introverted personality and ineffectiveness of strategy in connecting, a discontinuity emerged in how each then ranked themselves on a scale of *one* (requiring improvement) to *five* (flourishing) specific to connecting with the world. All four men trended toward a self-assessment of four of five in their interpersonal effectiveness in connecting—the second point of the five-point pattern described by Luke in his Gospel with regard to disciple-making.<sup>46</sup> Nonetheless, the four Ruling Elders were far more desperate of their viewing CPC’s equipping to connect on a scale of *one* (low) to *ten* (high). The younger two men trended at “seven” while the elder two men ranged “two” and “four.” Self-disparaging in self-disclosure, *there then appears to be a lack of self-awareness trending in how Ruling Elders critique their own personal connecting with others for the gospel and how they then numerically rank themselves. This includes CPC’s equipping effectiveness in connecting with the expressed intent of making disciples according to Luke’s gospel perspective. Ruling Elder anxiety, rather than apathy, would be the dispositional trend with regard to personal responsibility to connect for the gospel.*<sup>47</sup> Each of the four leaders seemed genuinely concerned to connect with the

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<sup>46</sup> Personalization is addressed in chapter 3 specific to the differentiation of a disciple’s corporate and individual responsibility in the act of evangelism and discipleship. Two different ranges were used for the Ruling Elders to delineate their responses to Ruling Elder Interpersonal Interview questions: their personal assessing of themselves on a 1 to 5 scale and their assessing CPC’s corporately on a 1 to 10 scale. The two scales were used to maintain clarity in the interview of a Ruling Elder response to questions that were similar in content but contextually differentiated between individual and corporate to ensure the interviewees comprehension.

<sup>47</sup> Onwuchekwa, *Prayer*, 109. John Onwuchekwa observes that people tend to lean one of two ways because of the tension between God’s sovereignty and man’s responsibility in evangelism: either *anxiety* because they think that they can “mess up,” or *apathy* because “God will save whomever He wants to save.”

*world to provide the gospel message rather than a false sense of security through an insufficient gospel (Matt 7:21-14).*

### **Evangelizing within the Ruling Elders of CPC**

It was encouraging when all four men responded “Yes” when asked, “Have you ever personally led someone to recognize God’s effectual call and respond to God in faith and repentance?” CPC Ruling Elders each possess an experiential comprehension of what it looks like to see God move salvifically in the lives of others. When asked to estimate the number of relationships pursued with a non-Christian (*excluding your children*) in 2019, responses varied from “three” to “ten.” With the exception of a single man, the number of relationships pursued directly correlated with “how often did you share the gospel with someone who might not be a Christian (*excluding your children*)?” The exception is the man who qualified response in his categories of “ongoing” and “exploratory.”<sup>48</sup>

Recognizing a historic moment in his assessment of the gospel being rebuffed, he delineated fifty “exploratory” events of sharing the gospel from three to four “ongoing” relationships wherein he assessed the person to be a non-Christian and is intentionally maintaining the relationship in hopes that they might hear and respond to God’s effectual call.<sup>49</sup> Discontinuity of Ruling Elder ideas of evangelizing denotes their need for a common definition in order to mobilize CPC’s mission. Commonly recognizing evangelism as “proclaiming the gospel message and inviting sinners to respond” would be helpful to CPC on a corporate, as well as personal level.<sup>50</sup> *Ruling Elders’ evangelistic thinking correlated more closely with regard to corporate evangelism than it did when responding to questions oriented toward personal*

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<sup>48</sup> RE: JS, October 29, 2019.

<sup>49</sup> RE: JS, October 29, 2019.

<sup>50</sup> Onwuchekwa, *Prayer*, 113.

*evangelism. In that it is the Session in Presbyterianism who mobilizes CPC's mission, the composition of men would best serve by being like-minded in what evangelism is—corporately and personally.*

When describing their “social circles” where they “are serving in disciple-making endeavor,” the two younger fathers made their “workplace” as primary and the two grandfathers who reside in the same retirement community sited theirs to be “neighborhood.” Regardless, all four men placed a gospel importance on the quality of their avocational or vocational contribution. One man noted his disciple-making to be the perception of his residents of him as a physician in order to “carry credibility to counsel them.”<sup>51</sup> Even for the Ruling Elder who views his avocations as the principle consumption of his time in service affirmed his performance in the “photo and cycling clubs” within his community to be an important component of his disciple-making strategy.<sup>52</sup> *For each of these men, their identity in work comprises a substantive component of their time in serving for the gospel. Performance anxiety can hamper effectiveness when we confuse our responsibility from God's in the act of disciple-making.*<sup>53</sup>

In their evaluation of how CPC equipped them for evangelizing on a scale of *one* (ineffective) to *ten* (highly effective), all trended plus/minus “five” with the younger men being more optimistic and the two grandfathers less optimistic of the results that they were experiencing from their CPC training.<sup>54</sup> Again, a generational bifurcation

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<sup>51</sup> RE: SH, October 31, 2019.

<sup>52</sup> RE: LL, October 30, 2019.

<sup>53</sup> J. I. Packer, *Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2008), 105-106. J.I. Packer states the two great obstacles to salvation: “man’s natural and irresistible impulse to oppose God, and . . . Satan’s assiduity in shepherding man in the ways of unbelief and disobedience.” This leads to the conclusion that “the sovereignty of God in grace gives us our only hope of success in evangelism.”

<sup>54</sup> In that God has given us a task with results that are not dependent on us, preparedness in evangelism was being pursued from a viewpoint of faithfulness rather than results.



occurred within the four leader's views of their personal CPC experience. There was continuity of a "three" of *ten* ranking across the four Ruling Elders when asked about "the emphasis that CPC places on the instruction of personal disciple-making." A disparity emerged with response to the question, "Rate the emphasis CPC places on how to hopefully help another hear and respond to God's effectual call?" Three men trended at "four" of *ten* while the man whose strategy entailed "daily praying for three specific people in his workplace who he assessed to not be Christians" ranked CPC's emphasis at "nine."<sup>55</sup> When asked to rank their current personal evangelism, this same man rated himself a "four" on a scale of *five* (five being flourishing) while the balance trended "one" to "three." *It became clear that, even when self-identifying as an introvert, the consistent and sustained act of prayer in evangelism evoked a personal confidence in God's working through the person to affect others for the gospel within one's social circle. Ruling Elders delineated community outreach activities from evangelism, with evangelism requiring communication of ideas specific of God's holiness, man's depravity, Christ's redemptive purpose, and the individual's personal response in belief or disbelief to these three identities.*<sup>56</sup>

### **Discipling within the Ruling Elders of CPC**

The root question asked, "Have you ever been personally disciplined by someone? [If so], was/is that person at CPC?" Encouraging is that each of the four men responded "Yes." The four Ruling Elders had each experienced a man personally investing in them "in hopes that" they "would contribute to God's sanctifying them and

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<sup>55</sup> RE: JD, October 28, 2019.

<sup>56</sup> Greg Gilbert, *What is the Gospel?* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2001), 31. Greg Gilbert possesses four crucial questions with answers to define the gospel: (1) "Who made us and to whom are we accountable?" (God), (2) "What is our problem? In other words, are we in trouble and why?" (man), (3) "What is God's solution to that problem? How has God acted to save us from it?" (Jesus), and (4) "How do I—myself, right here, right now—how do I come to be included in that salvation? What makes this good news for me and not just for someone else?" (Response)

multiplying their lives into others.” Each of the Ruling Elders specifically referenced their personal experiences of being disciplined prior to CPC membership. In each case, pastors were acknowledged to be the principle person who was recognized as their discipler. Three of the four men acknowledged pastors outside of the PCA to have been the person who disciplined them. *The four men did not attribute their being personally disciplined during their membership with CPC. The idea of being disciplined was primarily attributed to those in the pastorate. Thus, each Ruling Elder claimed to have been personally disciplined by someone in their lifetime, but outside the context of CPC.*

When asked, “On a scale of one to ten, how equipped do you feel by CPC to personally and intentionally participate in God’s sanctifying another?”, RE: JD referred to CPC’s training mechanisms as “every Sunday school and Community Group is effective in communicating the gospel.”<sup>57</sup> He rated CPC’s equipping in the area of discipling a “between a seven and eight.”<sup>58</sup> RE: SH simply stated “six.”<sup>59</sup> RE: JS commented, “CPC lacks a programmatic focus of producing discipling leaders,” with a critique of “negative two.” RE: LL, who oversees discipleship on behalf of the session, observed, “I feel personally equipped at a level of ‘eight’ due to those who equipped me before CPC. The difference of my feeling personally equipped and CPC’s capacity to equip for discipleship is CPC’s weak notion of disciple-making.”<sup>60</sup> RE: LL rated CPC’s equipping in his area of focus a “four.”<sup>61</sup> As the current RE responsible for CPC’s discipleship, RE: LL referenced his prior tenure in the Baptist church as core to his having been disciplined. His Baptist pastor incorporated “Evangelism Explosion” as the

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<sup>57</sup> RE: JD, October 28, 2019.

<sup>58</sup> RE: JD, October 28, 2019.

<sup>59</sup> RE: SH, October 31, 2019.

<sup>60</sup> RE: LL, October 30, 2019.

<sup>61</sup> RE: LL, October 30, 2019.

curriculum used in what was a positive discipling experience.<sup>62</sup> He described this experience as being “programmatically disciplined.”<sup>63</sup> RE: LL also referred a subsequent experience of another man incorporating Navigators 2.7 program to personally invest in him.<sup>64</sup> These two experiences fostered value for the formality of a structured approach to the act of believer-on-believer discipling, which RE: LL deduced is lacking at CPC. His assessment was that, “Some discipleship is happening, but it is unprogrammed and reliant on individual initiative, which is not sustainable.”<sup>65</sup> RE: JS summed-up his conclusion in response to the same question as, “CPC is weak in discipleship.”<sup>66</sup> Specific to disciple-making at CPC, RE: JD simply deferred to RE: LL in that, “RE: LL is overseeing discipleship and I defer to his thinking on the topic.”<sup>67</sup>

None of the four Ruling Elders acknowledged themselves as being disciplined at CPC. They were later asked to critique CPC’s equipping of members for believer-on-believer discipling as the fourth point of the five-point pattern defined within the *Simple Evangelism* white paper. Here, the two younger Ruling Elders each assessed CPC’s equipping them as members a “six” while the two more tenured men concluded a rating of “two” and “four.” “Four” was the deduced rating by the Ruling Elder currently overseeing discipleship within the siloed structure of CPC.<sup>68</sup> When asked to deliberate their own personal capacity for personal discipleship on a scale of *one* (needs to exercise

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<sup>62</sup> D. James Kennedy, *Evangelism Explosion: Equipping Churches for Friendship, Evangelism, Disciples, and Healthy Growth* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House, 1970), ix-x. In 1970, Billy Graham wrote the foreword to Dr. James Kennedy’s highly regarded disciple-making work, *Evangelism Explosion*.

<sup>63</sup> RE: LL, October 30, 2019.

<sup>64</sup> RE: LL, October 30, 2019.

<sup>65</sup> RE: LL, October 30, 2019.

<sup>66</sup> RE: JS, October 29, 2019.

<sup>67</sup> RE: JD, October 28, 2019.

<sup>68</sup> RE: LL, October 30, 2019.

personal discipline to improve) to *five* (flourishing), the younger two men self-assessed a “one” and the other man a “two” while the older two men concluded their behavior in the moment required a rating of a “two” and the other man a “four.” Herein, the man self-assessing “four” was attributing his role as a Community Group leader as being the core population within his social circle wherein he was personally invested in personal discipleship.<sup>69</sup> *The balance of the three Ruling Elders answered “No” when asked, “Currently, outside of your children, are you intentionally and regularly discipling an individual or individuals in the hopes that they would abide, connect, evangelize, disciple, and worship?” One of four Ruling Elders candidly stated that he was not currently discipling anyone with intentionality.*

With regard to children of Ruling Elders, all four men answered “Yes” in response to “Are you intentionally and regularly discipling your children to abide, connect, evangelize, disciple, and worship?” RE: JD added, “Absolutely, my wife is doing morning devotions with the children and reading Scripture to them every day. I lead family worship in the evenings in which we are using tools to catechize the kids.”<sup>70</sup> RE: SH observed, “My wife is leading the children due to my current work schedule.”<sup>71</sup> The two grandfathers whose children are now married and living independently were also thoughtful in regard to how they are engaging with both their children and grandchildren. RE: LL responded purposefully, “We are engaging with our children from a distance. Our discipling is informal and reactive. We respond when our girls (four daughters) have needs and questions. Our grandchildren tend to be much more engaged with us directly and responsive to our discipling effort.”<sup>72</sup> RE: JS outlined a specific tactic that he has

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<sup>69</sup> RE: JS, October 29, 2019.

<sup>70</sup> RE: JD, October 28, 2019.

<sup>71</sup> RE: SH, October 31, 2019.

<sup>72</sup> RE: LL, October 30, 2019.

found effective, “I have been sending my adult children emails that I have titled “‘Morning Thoughts.’ They seem to enjoy and respond to them.”<sup>73</sup> RE: JS went on to compliment his grandchildren for the depth of their inquiry, “Recently, my grandsons have been asking questions about progressive sanctification. In fact, they’re very curious. One just asked, ‘How did God create man from dirt?’.”<sup>74</sup> *Personal discipleship in the home was a clear priority that was deemed personal and significant in the lives of each man overseeing CPC.*

Personal discipleship outside the realm of home and offspring took on lesser priority and was deemed more of a corporate responsibility. When asked to approximate “how many Christians” each man “regularly” sought to “personally disciple in hopes that” each man “would contribute in God’s sanctifying them and multiply their lives into others” (excluding their children), the answers ranged from “none” to “twelve.” The man disclosing “zero” is the Ruling Elder thinking most critically on the topic of discipleship because he has assumed responsibility for discipleship corporately for CPC.<sup>75</sup> The man scoring twelve is assessing those who attend the Community Group that he leads.<sup>76</sup> “Four” was concluded by RE: JD who is meeting monthly with four other men based on a “supper club” that his wife and he participate in that is organized with four couples who are outside CPC membership and acknowledged to be believers.<sup>77</sup> *Personal discipleship was only recognized in context of a structured CPC initiative, Community Group, in the four men acknowledging disciple-making their personal responsibility.*

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<sup>73</sup> RE: JS, October 29, 2019.

<sup>74</sup> RE: JS, October 29, 2019.

<sup>75</sup> RE: LL, October 30, 2019.

<sup>76</sup> RE: JS, October 29, 2019.

<sup>77</sup> RE: JD, October 28, 2019.

When asked how formally involved that they would like “CPC to be in arranging personal disciple-making relationships?” (with ten being most involved), RE: JD stated “ten,” RE: SH “nine,” RE: LL “eight,” and RE: JS “six.” All four men articulated presumptive separation between personal (also referred to as organic) and “programmatic” discipleship, but on occasion blurred the distinction. For example, in the case of RE: LL, who is actively deducing CPC’s discipleship approach, responded, “None programmatically and six organically,” when clarifying his answering “zero” to the number of Christians who he personally discipled. RE: JS viewed discipleship as “an extremely focused activity.”<sup>78</sup> This view led to his conclusion that, “CPC lacks a programmatic focus of producing discipling leaders.”<sup>79</sup> RE: LL’s view agreed with RE: JS in his concluding, “Discipleship is best served as structured programmatically.”<sup>80</sup> *All four Ruling Elders emphasized a need for CPC to adopt a programmatic approach to discipleship with RE: JS deducing, “Shepherding programs are necessary. Having a tool that fosters the development of leadership that builds a discipling program is critical.”*<sup>81</sup>

It is then interesting to take note of how each Ruling Elder prioritized (primary, secondary, and tertiary) “responsibility for ensuring that people within CPC are connected into personal disciple-making relationships.” Three of the four Ruling Elders answered “Elders” as primary while one deduced the “Person” themselves as primary. RE: JS surmised, “The Spirit is primarily responsible, but from a human perspective, Elders are principally responsible by indirect development of methodology.”<sup>82</sup> “As the overseer of discipleship, the person with responsibility falls to me,” deduced RE: LL.<sup>83</sup>

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<sup>78</sup> RE: JS, October 29, 2019.

<sup>79</sup> RE: JS, October 29, 2019.

<sup>80</sup> RE: LL, October 30, 2019.

<sup>81</sup> RE: JS, October 29, 2019.

<sup>82</sup> RE: JS, October 29, 2019.

<sup>83</sup> RE: LL, October 30, 2019.

RE: JD incorporated an analogy in his response, “The parent can put food on the table but can only encourage the child to eat.”<sup>84</sup> Secondary differed across the four men with the responses being, the “Person,” “Session,” “Pastors,” and “Community Group Leaders.” The two younger men concluded “Community Group Leaders” as tertiary while the two older men differed with one designating responsibility to “Pastors” and the other the “Person.” *The Ruling Elders held disparate views when responding to how formally involved they would like to see CPC “to be in arranging personal disciple-making relationships with the one to ten numerical scale (ten being the highest level of involvement).” Response ranged from “ten” to “six” with the man desiring CPC’s highest level of involvement, surmising, “The question that the Elders need to address is how to systematically embed disciple-making into CPC culture.”*<sup>85</sup>

When asked how equipped each felt by CPC for the task of discipling, both RE: JD and RE: SH assessed CPC’s equipping a “six” of *ten*. RE: LL placed his domain under scrutiny to yield a “four” while RE: JS was most critical of CPC’s discipleship equipping capacity with a “two.” It was in this context that Community Groups were discussed. Of the four men, in 2019, three participated in CPC Community Groups and one did not. The two men residing within Texas’ single largest community for people over the age of fifty-five had both stated their neighborhood and Community Group as “the social circle(s) where” they “are serving in disciple-making endeavor.” The younger two men did not reference CPC Community Groups. One of the two younger men does not participate in CPC’s Community Groups. In the case of the three men who do participate in CPC Community Groups, the older two share a Community Group led by RE: JS, and both groups met “twice a month” in 2019. RE: JS stated that his group “did

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<sup>84</sup> RE: JD, October 28, 2019.

<sup>85</sup> RE: JD, October 28, 2019.

not meet” without his attendance.<sup>86</sup> Neither of the two groups broke-out into smaller groups either within the twice monthly sessions or outside of those times that they met. RE: LL, who oversees Community Groups as a ministry within the functional silo of discipleship stated that he “did not believe any of CPC’s Community Groups broke out into small groups intentionally.”<sup>87</sup> He went on to describe his thinking that members were often together while participating in other CPC ministries (e.g., Men’s, Women’s, Choir).<sup>88</sup> RE: SH stated of his Community Group experience in 2019, “I would like deeper relationship with members of my Community Group.”<sup>89</sup> RE: JD referenced the “supper-club” that he and his wife participate with four other couples outside of CPC as their “Community Group.”<sup>90</sup> *None of the men had experienced anyone hear and respond to God’s effectual call in their Community Group in 2019.*

### **Worshipping with the Ruling Elders of CPC**

Of the five points of disciple-making articulated within *Simple Evangelism*, worship was a point of priority among all four Ruling Elders, with one stating plainly, “I am indignant of people taking worship lightly.”<sup>91</sup> When discussing the departure of a couple from membership whose wife had become frustrated with the congregation due to their distraction during her playing the prelude to worship for purpose of meditation and preparation, there was acknowledgement of egocentricity, but a tone of understanding.<sup>92</sup> With regard to their own personal capacity to worship as an inclination that they “find

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<sup>86</sup> RE: JS, October 29, 2019.

<sup>87</sup> RE: LL, October 30, 2019.

<sup>88</sup> RE: LL, October 30, 2019.

<sup>89</sup> RE: SH, October 31, 2019.

<sup>90</sup> RE: JD, October 28, 2019.

<sup>91</sup> RE: JS, October 29, 2019.

<sup>92</sup> RE: JS, October 29, 2019.



easy to do,” Ruling Elders assessed themselves from “three” to “four” on a scale of *one* to *five* (*five* representing them to be flourishing in their worshiping). Qualifying CPC’s equipping them to worship on a scale from *one* to *ten* (*ten* being highest), the younger men each critiqued CPC a “nine” while the elder men each assessed CPC “a plus/minus six” in its current capacity to equip members to worship. Emphasis here for RE: JD was reflecting back on the idea of orthodoxy, pointing out, “The order of worship is entirely instructive on every occasion that we meet.”<sup>93</sup> “Worship is our purpose at CPC,” was RE: LL’s summation.<sup>94</sup>

### **Tangential Observations**

As previously mentioned, this chapter will not exhaustively present all data from the Ruling Elder Interpersonal Interview. However, here are a few final observations that are potentially noteworthy. *From the data, we can deduce that CPC Ruling Elders have pronounced and varied opinions with regard to the emphasis that CPC places on both personal evangelism and personal discipleship.* From their perspective, the trend of response critical of these two points of the five-point process of disciple-making indicate that *CPC should give attention and consideration to the degree to which it is presently emphasizing personal discipleship and personal evangelism.*

*Again, the Ruling Elders indicate a varied response to the degree in which they feel equipped by CPC for personal discipleship and evangelism.* The data seems to indicate that CPC Ruling Elders feel more equipped personally for evangelism and discipleship than they believe CPC is presently emphasizing these values in the equipping of members. While the data has some encouraging indicators, how CPC is equipping for personal discipleship and evangelism also seems like a conversation that needs

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<sup>93</sup> RE: JD, October 28, 2019.

<sup>94</sup> RE: LL, October 30, 2019.

considerable and thoughtful consideration. Three of the four Ruling Elders are actively engaged with CPC membership via Community Groups. There was a notable continuity in responding to Ruling Elder Interpersonal Interview questions among the three men engaged in CPC Community Groups in contrast with responses to the same questions by the man who is not engaged in the Community Group ministry. Whereas all four men observed Community Groups to be the primary ministry to foster discipleship within CPC, and focus members to evangelize outside of CPC, none of the four men knew of any formal effort for Community Groups to break out into more intimate groups for purpose of intentional and purposeful disciple-making. RE: LL, who oversees the Community Group ministry at CPC, knew of no Community Groups that intentionally broke out into smaller groups in 2019.<sup>95</sup> He went on to critique current Community Group activity assessing the “groups need to focus on the community. Community Groups are too focused on doctrine.”<sup>96</sup> My Group has placed emphasis on study of the Westminster Catechism.”<sup>97</sup> RE: SH, who has been an active member of a Community Group, disclosed his desire to know and be known by members of his Community Group more intimately than has been achieved this year.<sup>98</sup> All four Ruling Elders articulated their individual views of disciple-making to be critical going forward into the coming year. RE: SH articulated this emphasis as a “Session-led strategy.”<sup>99</sup> *The Ruling Elder Interpersonal Interview seems to indicate that the four men are collectively hoping for further equipping from CPC with respect to disciple-making with particular emphasis to*

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<sup>95</sup> RE: LL, October 30, 2019.

<sup>96</sup> Michael Lawrence, *Conversion: How God Creates a People* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2017), 107. RE: LL is advocating a distinction between doctrine and the gospel. Michael Lawrence emphasizes to “make the gospel your first recourse in counseling and discipling. The gospel is for Christians because the gospel not only converts us but also produces lasting change in us.”

<sup>97</sup> RE: LL, October 30, 2019.

<sup>98</sup> RE: SH, October 31, 2019.

<sup>99</sup> RE: SH, October 31, 2019.

*the third point of evangelism and fourth point of discipleship in context of Simple Evangelism's five-point pattern. Again, this provides an opportunity for thoughtful consideration from CPC leadership.*

Whereas connecting with those who are unfamiliar has been commonly observed as a barrier to achieving CPC vision, response of the four Ruling Elders does not point to connecting as the critical issue. In fact, discipleship within CPC was consistently referenced as the core issue to resolve.<sup>100</sup> RE: JS referred to discipleship as, “Engaging-Jesus-to-go-deeper school.”<sup>101</sup> The longest serving Ruling Elder of CPC’s current Session, RE: JS provided historic perspective that CPC discipleship has “not been consistent or objectively implemented.”<sup>102</sup> At the same time, RE: JS acknowledged that “each Christian has the responsibility to disciple and be discipled.”<sup>103</sup>

When then ranking CPC’s equipping them to worship, the two younger men’s assessments closely correlated with the Ruling Elder responsible for discipleship (“three” to “four” of *five*), while the man whose answer focused on his personal prayer in abiding devoted much deeper introspection as he self-assessed a “two” of his abiding. He then assessed his personal worship in the moment a “four.”<sup>104</sup> *A correlation between prayer in abiding and effectiveness in worship trended among the four Ruling Elders. Worship was considered the principle purpose of CPC’s initiatives among all four Ruling Elders.*

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<sup>100</sup> Lawrence, *Conversion*, 107. Each of the four Ruling Elders talked around ideas of relationship rather than specifically to the point of relationship among CPC members, as well as that of CPC members with those wandering or spiritually wounded within their social circles. Here, it might be worth considering what Michael Lawrence suggests, to “remember that relationships are as much or more about encouragement than they are accountability.” It is necessary for members to have time in fellowship with members ongoingly with regularity in order to recognize faith, hope, and love in one another’s lives to credibly point it out.

<sup>101</sup> RE: JS, October 29, 2019.

<sup>102</sup> RE: JS, October 29, 2019.

<sup>103</sup> RE: JS, October 29, 2019.

<sup>104</sup> RE: JS, October 29, 2019.

## Conclusion

This chapter has focused on the findings of the interpersonal interviews with CPC's Ruling Elders, the directional guidance of CPC's Teaching Elder, and discussions with key leaders among CPC members. The former sought to assess personal disciple-making practices within CPC's Ruling Elders' beliefs and behaviors to derive outlook on the Session's effect on members. The latter sought to assess the understanding, priority, and process for personal disciple-making at CPC from the rank and file of members endeavoring to engage in gospel ministry according to their gifts, talents, and sense of personal ministry calling.

I found that the Ruling Elders do have shaping influence with regard to disciple-making practices. Members of CPC are apprenticing the authority of the Ruling Elders. Ruling Elders clearly place disciple-making as a priority in their homes while acknowledging short-comings within CPC and their social circles. By listening to the Ruling Elder's self-assessments of personal strengths and weaknesses in *Simple Evangelism*, I found resounding evidence that vulnerability in relationships is essential for gospel effect. To the extent each man abided, his confidence in God's sovereignty opened his heart to worship of the one true God. Yet, the corresponding acknowledgement of man's universal moral condition seemed to preclude vulnerability among people outside of those they had discernable authority (e.g. their children). Recognition of God's holiness promoted each man's abiding and worshipping while acknowledgement of mankind's universal rebellious condition hindered Ruling Elder vulnerability within their social circles for correct gospel response. The correct response for all men and women is repentance and belief to connect, evangelize, and disciple (even among themselves). Woonny Kim observed that the men of "the Session could only be effective in relationship with those who they can clearly recognize as superior or subordinate...to be friends was a nebulous relationship filled with ambiguity."<sup>105</sup>

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<sup>105</sup> Woonny Kim, interviewed by Michael Thompson, Georgetown, TX, September 24, 2020.

The rank and file of members endeavor to engage in gospel ministry according to their gifts, talents, and sense of personal ministry calling while apprenticing the Ruling Elders. Their understanding, priority, and process for personal disciple-making is directly tethered to how the men of the Session lead in the tradition of Presbyterianism. Worshiping with CPC members is fulfilling because it resonates as their single unifying endeavor. In their shared endeavor to personally worship, the catechism is emphasized with such effect that it focuses member effort inwardly. The inward focus diminishes possibility of outward gospel flow. Nonetheless, it is moving to listen as CPC members express their personal frustration in not seeing CPC's vision fulfilled. Ruling Elders and members recognize disciple-making to be critical to CPC's vision; yet, what is critical is subordinate to all other. Concentration on the liturgy for the gathering compromises relationships for disciple-making. Whereas focus is being placed on abiding, by way of catechism, and worship, by way of gathering, members are being led to neglect connecting, evangelizing, and discipling. They then look up from their labors to notice that there are no converts and that chairs once occupied are now empty.

Having accomplished the first three goals of the project, this chapter opened in explaining how the fourth goal of the project remains unfulfilled and the fifth goal of the project was revised. It was in Whit Anderson's authority as a member of the presbyter that the intended pre and post member survey was substituted with interpersonally interviewing the Ruling Elders. The final goal, to develop recommendations for the Session to incorporate in their strategizing to integrate a clearer priority and process for cooperative disciple-making at CPC became the purpose of chapter 5. In the final chapter, recommendations are provided to enhance CPC's effectiveness for the gospel in implementing *Simple Evangelism* without me.

## CHAPTER 5

### IMPLEMENTING LUKE'S FIVE-POINT PATTERN FOR COOPERATIVE DISCIPLE-MAKING

The purpose of this project was to define and deploy a pattern for living the gospel-centric life of Jesus Christ at CPC, *Simple Evangelism*, particularly for wanderers and those spiritually wounded.<sup>1</sup> *Simple Evangelism* is the result of the cooperative initiative of CPC leaders and me to agree on a culturally relevant way to express the gospel in Georgetown, Texas, today. In chapter 4 important findings were outlined from the Ruling Elder Interpersonal Interview. This chapter will seek to synthesize the considerations from chapter 3 (Opportunities and Challenges for Cooperative Disciple-Making at CPC) along with the information from the last chapter. This chapter also provides recommendations to CPC's Session following the evaluation of the results implemented to promote sustainability of the member's change and growth for the desired life pattern of priority and process for cooperative disciple-making at CPC. Six recommendations emerged for CPC leadership to consider. These six recommendations include: foundationally, fostering intentional abiding among CPC membership to experience the multiplying effect of the gospel, secondly, integrating belief and behavior to connect with local culture, thirdly, *Simple Evangelism* training, fourthly, personal discipleship prioritization that yields intentionality of the Shema (Deut 6:4-9) and Great Commission (Matt 28:18-20), orienting Community Groups to focus on the community, fifthly, rebranding Reformed theology within local culture, and, finally, CPC's launching

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<sup>1</sup> *Simple Evangelism* was introduced in chapter 1 as a PCA and Southern Baptist Convention cooperative publication coauthored with CPC Associate Pastor Woonny Kim to help CPC's members in deducing a pattern for disciple-making that Luke writes about in helping the believer imitate Jesus to *communicate the gospel clearly and strikingly in context of Georgetown, TX, culture.*

a Georgetown Institute of Christian Formation to address the effects of post-Christian culture. Following these recommendations, this chapter will conclude with an overall evaluation of the project.

### **Fostering Intentional Abiding for Multiplying**

A disciplined life is what Scripture presumes of the Christian.<sup>2</sup> Greg Ogden observes, “the reality is that a small percentage of believers invest in spiritual growth practices.<sup>3</sup> At issue is fostering a pattern of behavior that is aligned with Scripture to affect the culture of the social circles in which CPC members daily participate. My first proposal seeks to address CPC members’ personal spiritual disciplines; specifically, abiding in Christ for gospel multiplying. It is the Father that gives disciples to Jesus (John 6:37). Abiding then is critical in the life of the one apprenticing Jesus for his disciple-making pattern to imitate Christ (John 15:4; 1 John 2:6). Disciple-making is what Jesus did for the believer to apprentice.<sup>4</sup> Paul recognizes the responsibility of those who have been entrusted with gospel through their belief (1 Cor 9:16). It is the disciples’ responsibility to speak the inspired Word of God into the lives of those wandering in hope of the life-giving change that comes with believing the Word of God (Ezek 37:4-6). Indeed, the one whom God entrusts with the gospel has responsibility to share it or be judged as unfaithful (Luke 22:22).

“Whereas the terms ‘make disciples’ and ‘be a disciple’ dominate Jesus’ vocabulary and the historical accounts of the early church, they are nowhere to be found

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<sup>2</sup> Donald S. Whitney, *Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life* (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 2014), 6. Don Whitney makes a critical distinction between *activities* being spiritual disciplines rather than *attitudes*. “Disciplines are practices, not character qualities, graces, or ‘fruit of the Spirit.’”

<sup>3</sup> Greg Ogden, *Transforming Discipleship: Making Disciples a Few at a Time* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2003), 26.

<sup>4</sup> The authority of God and apprenticeship of man in disciple-making is addressed in chapter 2.

in Paul’s letters,” Greg Ogden writes.<sup>5</sup> Paul never speaks of having disciples! Instead, Paul acknowledges those whose lives he has engaged to belong to Jesus. “In Christ” dominates Paul’s language when referring to those who believe. Paul abides in Christ (the Living Word) acknowledging his responsibility to love (1 Cor 13:13; Gal 3:10). For those who believe in Christ, a foundational component of love is to pray for the ones whom we love in the same way Jesus prayed for his disciples (John 17). To abide in Christ for the purpose of multiplication is contingent on the one apprenticing the Son to ask the Father to give those wandering to the Son by the power of the Spirit—to pray for those perceived as lost.

Praying for those who we think are wandering is a discipline. Discipline is the forming of a habit and requires CPC leaders to role model as the basis of fostering changes in members’ behavior. Mark Dever writes,

A disciple is one who discipled. He proclaims now so that he might present later. So, name a couple of people in your life whom you would love to see presented mature and godly on the Last day. Got their names in mind? Now, how are you proclaiming the gospel to them now to prepare them for then?<sup>6</sup>

In understanding God’s sovereignty in evangelism, CPC members state their confidence in God and their commitment to disciple-making. All members attending Community Group *Simple Evangelism* interactive presentations stated a desire to participate in God’s redemptive ministry to man.

### **Integration of Belief and Behavior to Connect**

Whereas the Scriptures picture the church as proactive ministers, the reality is too often that of passivity.<sup>7</sup> What chance of survival does any organization have if twenty percent, or less, of members actually do what they say is right? This is not likely the case

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<sup>5</sup> Ogden, *Transforming Discipleship*, 99.

<sup>6</sup> Mark Dever, *Discipling: How to Help Others Follow Jesus* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2016), 34.

<sup>7</sup> Ogden, *Transforming Discipleship*, 24.



with CPC. Instead, members who engaged in *Simple Evangelism* sessions, including all members of the Session, articulate gospel commitment in belief. As the person of the Spirit fosters member's concerns for those whom they pray, my second proposal seeks to address CPC leader's emphasis of member behavior corresponding with their belief. It is asserted that the classroom is to affirm and instruct member belief, and Community Group is where members learn how to behave according to what has been instructed.<sup>8</sup> Disciple-making is instructed in context of doctrinal training in the classroom. However, there is a discontinuity in that people within CPC's member social circle are not visiting either Community Groups or Sunday worship. Visitors to Sunday morning worship are not returning to CPC Session's satisfaction. The notable exception is those who are existing PCA members relocating to the area.

CPC's stated vision and corresponding results to date are rationales to establish specialized training for the integration of faith and work. Equipping CPC's membership to model the gospel-centered life through their social circle is an essential step to enhance *Simple Evangelism* as a value in the church. Moving toward this goal accentuates a fulfillment of CPC's stated vision toward engaging the wandering and the spiritually wounded. This goal works to strengthen evangelistic deficiencies CPC leaders recognized within the church before Lori and I arrived with another couple from our social circle whom we were evangelizing—a husband and wife. The couple self-identified Catholic and clearly were not. To date, the two have been interviewed by CPC Ruling Elders and welcomed into CPC membership. The wife has converted and is weekly being discipled by Lori. The husband is resistant to the study of Scripture to learn, grow, and change. He is engaging with members productively and contributing as a member. Recognizing God's using Lori and me in His redemptive ministry to man, CPC's Session invited me on staff to lead evangelism and outreach.

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<sup>8</sup> Woonny Kim CPC staff meeting presentation, Georgetown, TX, March 5, 2019.

Unless CPC is actively equipping its membership toward the five-point pattern of living a gospel life for application in their social circle, our fallback mode of discipleship at CPC might be relegated to simply inviting people to church. The example that Lori and I continue to endeavor for CPC is to demonstrate how through abiding in the Father, we personally connect to these wandering people in our social circle to personally evangelize them. When those whom we evangelize can believe, we then personally disciple them and gather them to worship the one true God. The trend of jumping from connecting to bringing wanderers and those spiritually wounded to worship is culturally prevalent. This can literally bring trouble into the church. Without having personally evangelized and discipled people, the prevailing trend is sustained worship among unregenerate people that can be observed in modern Evangelicalism.

Two discernable factors preclude CPC from any significant population of unregenerate people worshipping among them on any given Sunday. The first factor is CPC's rigidity. Distinct standard of belief is far more difficult for those rejecting the gospel to pretend. Neither do the regenerate living in rebellion seek to comply but can change when loved and ultimately find themselves incapable of sustained resistance to the person of the Spirit within them. Rebellious people do not wish to comply with standards of belief requiring changed behavior and leave CPC. The distinct doctrine is off-putting to both populations. CPC has experienced a propensity of first-time visitors not returning. There is a necessity to socially engage the newcomer. The intention is to overcome that person's desire to flee commitment of distinction. When members are not bringing people from their social circles to worship, the barrier of connecting with an unfamiliar person in a brief period of time becomes a steep wall rather than a speed bump. The second factor is a clear and scriptural weekly presentation of the gospel in and through the printed liturgy. The gospel is offensive to unregenerate people who will not endure the conviction that is evoked. Both these factors are affirming of CPC's love for God. Each also affirms the necessity of CPC members beginning the work of *Simple*

*Evangelism.* Outside the confines of the Sunday morning sanctuary, CPC members must bring people with whom they have relationship into the experience of worshipping the one true God.

In order to potentially sustain rebellious people for the purpose of gospel change, relationship of loving neighbor is required. It is evidenced that people will not return to CPC who do not have relationship with members who can love them well through the pain of change. Mack Stiles provides a helpful observation when he points out, “The fact is, most people come to faith through the influence of family members, small-group Bible studies, or a conversation with a friend after church service: Christians intentionally talking about the gospel.”<sup>9</sup> For people visiting CPC to experience the changing effect of the gospel, they need friends among CPC members who intentionally talk about the gospel. They need the experience of small group Bible studies that come in the form of community. These are necessary. If they are wandering, then they most likely do not have the covenant family in which many of us at CPC have enjoyed.

The act of worshipping with the unregenerate in attendance is not in fact unorthodox. CPC is doing this, and it is producing fruit. For example, CPC’s Men’s Ministry Leader testifies that after his lifelong involvement in the PCA, he only recently heard and responded to God’s effectual call while attending CPC worship.<sup>10</sup> Only within the last year has James Schell been converted to believe the truth of the gospel. Now, as a new father, mortgage broker, and longstanding member of the PCA, James is living his genuine belief. James is intentionally and personally connecting and evangelizing with two specific men for the gospel. He is personally evangelizing one man who self-identifies as an atheist and personally discipling one man who self-identifies as a Christian, but with no discernable doctrine to distinguish the man from the surrounding

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<sup>9</sup> J. Mack Stiles, *Evangelism: How the Whole Church Speaks of Jesus* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2014), 45.

<sup>10</sup> James Schell, interviewed by Michael Thompson, Round Rock, TX, September 12, 2019.

culture. Of great relevance and excitement is the fact that James' connection with his wife is having effect! She has shared her intentional and personal gospel at the local grocery store. While in the checkout lane, she is personally connecting with those whom she meets and is exercising the gospel in context of her unique personality to evangelize those who appear wandering. James' gospel leadership in his home models what CPC's Ruling Elders must do by way of leadership to promote member's behavior. Ruling Elders must engage their social circles outside CPC for members to follow their example.

CPC Ruling Elders have reason to be leery of such evangelical behavior. Those who are Reformed critically assess modern Evangelicals, and modern Evangelicals provide the Reformed church in America cause for concern. Arguably the best-known Reformed leader today, Tim Keller, provides candid assessment. Keller states a need for the church to Scripturally instruct members to behave in their unique social circles:

Traditional evangelical churches tend to emphasize personal piety and rarely help believers understand how to maintain and apply their Christian beliefs and practices in the world of the arts, business, scholarship, and government. Many churches do not know how to disciple members without essentially pulling them out of their vocations and inviting them to become heavily involved in church activities. In other words, Christian discipleship is interpreted as consisting largely of activities done in the evening or on the weekend.<sup>11</sup>

CPC knows to perpetuate its hopes for member disciple-making by training its membership to see that their "cubicles, studios, and homes are nothing short of sacred."<sup>12</sup>

It is exciting to witness CPC's Ruling Elders strive to instruct members to live out their doctrine. Cognitive instruction in the Sunday morning classroom is critical. Teachers must then make the jump to facilitating behavioral change for CPC to realize the aim of their instruction. The next step is to provide training to equip those members self-identifying as being introverted. Those who are working in academic, analytical, and

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<sup>11</sup> Timothy J. Keller, *Center Church: Doing Balanced, Gospel-Centered Ministry in Your City* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2012), 176.

<sup>12</sup> Center for Faith and Work, "Gotham Fellowship," January 1, 2015. <http://www.faithandwork.com/programs/1-gotham-fellowship>.

technical vocations genuinely believing they should “develop and cherish the world in ways that meet human needs and bring glory and honor to him.”<sup>13</sup> CPC could take a major step toward cultivating a greater value for personal disciple-making by training its membership to integrate gospel-faithfulness in each of their unique social circles.

In an effort to nurture the value of cooperative disciple-making, perhaps CPC can establish a specific track within its leadership training, composed of an “integrated curriculum on theology, worldview, faith and work.”<sup>14</sup> There are excellent examples available. Integration of life is affecting the immediate culture and can be gleaned for modeling. Chesterton House at Cornell University has explored the way that the Christian faith impacts the way one thinks and works for over twenty-years.<sup>15</sup> The Gotham Institute helps Christians to integrate faith and work.<sup>16</sup> Furthermore, CPC can empower and learn from the combined experiences of its membership, those of seasoned businessmen and women, leaders in the arts, mothers at home, and others in the church who have been faithful witnesses in their vocations. CPC should be encouraged from the dialog initiated through the *Simple Evangelism* Community Group sessions. The majority of every group had at least one person who might not be a Christian (excluding their children). They were praying God’s effectual call would be heard and responded. By providing each member a personal and intentional plan for connecting, evangelizing, and discipling their unique social circle, CPC will be taking a bold step in realizing the life pattern of Jesus,

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<sup>13</sup> James D. Hunter, *To Change the World: The Irony, Tragedy, and Possibility of Christianity in the Late Modern World* (New York, NY: Oxford, 2010), 3.

<sup>14</sup> Hunter, *To Change the World*, 3.

<sup>15</sup> Megan Fowler, *Scholarship and Skill in Living* (Lawrenceville, GA: byFaith, Q3 2019), 10.

<sup>16</sup> RE: JS’s passion in the endeavor of the Institute of Faith, Works, and Economics is covered in chapter 4. Gotham Institute is a comparable endeavor that has produced a development program in Nashville integrating belief with behavior in practical ways to help Christians behave what they believe in their social circle. Gotham Institute can serve as a model for CPC’s internal endeavor to train members in disciple-making and external endeavor to apply the teachings of CPC’s sound doctrine missionally. Nashville Institute for Faith and Work, “Programs,” accessed October 15, 2019, <https://www.nifw.org/leadership-training-gotham>.

or incarnating Christ, necessary to experience the same multiplying effect of the gospel that Luke describes in Acts (6:7; 7:17; 9:31; 12:24).

### ***Simple Evangelism Training***

Rather than a countercultural force, Christianity in Georgetown trends a lifestyle with values that seem to blend in. My third proposal is for CPC to distribute the *Simple Evangelism* white paper and establish this as common understanding of disciple-making to distinguish members from the culture. Context of the content can be clarified through facilitating a class that is scripturally oriented to the topic. By equipping to this end, CPC will address deficiencies and confusion around evangelism. Members will be provided direction of intentionality to reach the wandering and bring healing to those spiritually wounded. *Simple Evangelism* provides a biblically focused baseline grounded in Luke's Gospel. Co-authored with Associate Pastor Woonny Kim, the key requirement for credibly training from the material is that the facilitator role models what is described in the white paper to be credible.

Faithful members of CPC staff are demonstrating a desire to enhance their capacity to live out what they believe. Children's Ministry Leader, Jan Windsor, and her husband Chris have engaged in the activity of a parachurch ministry oriented toward helping Christians grandparent biblically. Given the aging demographic of the local community which affects CPC's membership, as well as evangelistic endeavor, training in *Simple Evangelism* provides members the essential tactics and tools for personally connecting, evangelizing, and discipling in each member's unique social circle.

The interactive Community Group sessions topically focused on *Simple Evangelism* by way of introduction provided important data on the degree to which members felt equipped to share the gospel. Participants across all Community Groups acknowledged the criticality of evangelizing their children through catechism based largely on Deuteronomy 6:4-9. Members realize a correlation between catechizing their

children and the instruction of Jesus' Great Commission (Matt 28:18-20) to "make disciples of all nations." It challenged ideas of the interpersonal nature of CPC's vision statement and necessity to personally connect in their social circle to make disciples. CPC member, Ginny Thomas, enquired, "What about Francis Schaeffer's son," specific to information that the Presbyterian apologist's son has self-identified atheist.<sup>17</sup> Members then discussed the effectual call and how it is (or is not) realized and responded by man, including the child of such a devote apologist as Schaeffer.<sup>18</sup>

The Community Group session allowed a safe forum with people with whom they were comfortable to openly discuss the correlation between catechization and evangelism. Those who could hear the gospel responded to the challenge to intentionally connect with those in their social circle. Some were able to articulate specific examples of their concurrent endeavor, like Gary Britigan who was using his hobby of running to connect with wanderers.<sup>19</sup> Most members participating recognized shortcomings in their personal evangelism and discipleship. This difference between scriptural directive and member behavior was acknowledged by those engaging in the interactive Community Groups' *Simple Evangelism* sessions as "sin."<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Ginny Thomas, *Simple Evangelism* interactive Community Group presentation interaction, Georgetown, TX, July 16, 2019.

<sup>18</sup> Ginny Thomas, July 16, 2019.

<sup>19</sup> Gary Britigan, *Simple Evangelism* interactive Community Group presentation interaction, Georgetown, TX, March 27, 2019.

<sup>20</sup> Alan Richardson and John Bowden, *The Westminster Dictionary of Christian Theology* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1983), 539. Cf. Walter A. Elwell, *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology* 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2001), 1104. Sin is "any word or deed or thought against the eternal law," (Augustine) according to *The Westminster Dictionary of Christian Theology*. "In Reformed theology, the core of sin is unbelief," reports the *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*. Each Community Group *Simple Evangelism* interactive presentation included specific discussion focused on Matt 28:17-20 (The Great Commission). It was emphasized from verse 17 that "some doubted" and from verse 20 that Jesus responded by "teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you." The difference between doubting and doing evangelism was acknowledging Jesus to be God, which is also a difference between member behavior in evangelism from God's law of loving God and neighbor.

Tim Keller brings clarity to the trouble of sin in connecting with other people in his observation that “Sin makes us feel superior and overconfident (because we are trying to prove to ourselves and others that we are significant) and inferior and under confident (because at a deep level we feel guilty and insecure).”<sup>21</sup> Keller asserts this behavior to result from a condition of being “glory empty.”<sup>22</sup> It is the condition that all mankind suffers in being “starved for significance, honor, and a sense of worth.”<sup>23</sup> CPC members might articulate this in their lives as being “nerdy,” “introverted,” or possibly “busy.”<sup>24</sup> It is the gospel that satisfies this void for those who can believe. *Simple Evangelism* is the means of delivering the news of significance, honor, and worth to both CPC members and those who comprise their social circles who are suffering the same moral condition dealing with the spiritual woundedness of insignificance, dishonor, and worthlessness that is not true.

The common human condition that Keller identifies, and corresponding internal conflict within all mankind, makes connecting difficult for all. How can CPC foster member capacity to connect? Due to the sudden departure of CPC’s Welcome Ministry Leaders, there is immediate opportunity.<sup>25</sup> CPC can better discern how to equip its membership more properly for evangelism by using the welcoming function of

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<sup>21</sup> Timothy J. Keller, *Serving A Movement: Doing Balanced, Gospel-Centered Ministry in Your City* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2016), 145.

<sup>22</sup> Keller, *Serving a Movement*.

<sup>23</sup> Keller, *Serving a Movement*.

<sup>24</sup> The term “nerd” and any derivative of the word was applied by Associate Pastor Woonny Kim to explain his asserted personality hindrance of CPC members whose interpersonal orientation precludes disciple-making endeavor. It was not used then, or now, as a distinguishing characteristic of Calvin’s doctrine, the PCA, or even CPC as a whole. Being “nerdy,” “introverted,” or “busy” are common states of being asserted by CPC members participating in the *Simple Evangelism* Community Group interactive sessions to explain the barriers of engaging their social circles for the gospel.

<sup>25</sup> The teacher and his wife abruptly relinquished CPC membership with their adult daughter and her family after negotiating the launch of a CPC *Welcome Ministry* that they facilitated with the cooperation of CPC’s Session. The two families departed together to attend a local General Baptist Church in September 2019.



Sunday mornings. Welcoming visitors can be difficult for an entrenched membership. Members form patterns on Sunday morning within their preexisting CPC social circle, as all people do daily, that can resist being interrupted. People do not like change. CPC member personality has been self-identified by many as “introverted.” This personality style can lead to difficulty connecting with those who are not familiar. Members need to welcome those visiting on Sunday morning who they do not know.

Assigning welcoming as a responsibility around worship provides an opportunity for each member to intentionally practice connecting in a safe and familiar environment. Is this not how we train up those we love in our homes? Parents provide their children milk before solid food as their ability to digest develops. Parents read to, and then with, their children before sending them into the world to encounter dialect that further develops and influences worldview. Children are provided chores to learn work in a safe and caring context before being sent into the world to work for others. Members disciple them in the areas that they must develop to mature as believers. Learning to connect with visitors through welcoming them to worship is a critical starting point of relationships that will bless and challenge every member of CPC in their personal disciple-making journey. Tim Keller stresses that small churches grow through newcomers’ attraction to the relationships in the congregation.<sup>26</sup>

So, why might it be so difficult to foster a welcoming culture at CPC on Sunday mornings? Leadership’s rationale that the congregation’s introverted personality is to blame does make sense. The corresponding question then is, How does a congregation become so homogenous? It is clear from Scripture that the gospel promotes diversity. It is a single gospel affecting all nations unanimously for and in Christ. Jesus did not compel his disciples to be more or less than themselves with changed hearts.

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<sup>26</sup> Timothy J. Keller, *Leadership and Church Size Dynamics: How Strategy Changes with Growth* (New York, NY: Redeemer City to City, 2006), 7.

Bruce's *Training of the Twelve* exhibits the gospel promoting diversity amongst people whereas doctrine promotes unity amongst people.<sup>27</sup> Where doctrine is overly weighted in instruction, the gospel can be overshadowed. Men and women begin focusing on members around them. They mimic what the other members do for purpose of conforming than abiding in Christ. Paul did stress to Timothy the importance of watching his doctrine closely, but not to the detriment of the gospel (1 Tim 4:16). Formats of adult education and Community Group agenda at CPC must weigh the doctrine of Calvin with the gospel of Scripture to Scripture's conclusion. When people do not feel welcomed in a church, the deterrent or detriment is assuredly in the grace of man's doctrine rather than the truth of the gospel.

Spreading the responsibility of welcoming visitors among all members through the same distribution of the weekly "Greeter" and "Usher" assignments best serves the church. It is the sort of church discipline that all Ruling Elders embraced during interpersonal interviews. Distribution of weekly welcoming responsibilities places welcoming into a predefined workflow that is already working for the functions of greeting and ushering. Welcoming is a logical and reasonable addition to this lineup of membership serving. All three (greeting, ushering, and welcoming) fall into serving roles that can be filled by either men or women on Sunday mornings. These serving capacities are correctly overseen by the deaconate. Just as members share the burden of greeting visitors at the door, or serving as an usher, encouraging all members to function in a weekly rotational welcoming capacity is comparably correct. It affirms that connecting is a disciple-making function of all who believe. Members become more involved in the mechanisms of ministry that better equips them. They learn to ask questions to collect personal data of visitors. The data is used to prepare CPC leaders to follow-up. Members

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<sup>27</sup> Alexander Balmain Bruce, *The Training of the Twelve: Exhibiting the Twelve Disciples of Jesus Under Discipline for the Apostleship* (New York, NY: A.C. Armstrong and Son, 1889), 101. See *Cooperative Disciple-Making of the Wounded* in chapter 2.

learn to operate hand in hand with leaders, being responsible to bring God the glory due Him by welcoming all who come to worship the one true God.

Without members bringing people from their social circle to worship on Sunday mornings, the practical requirement of time to establish rapport becomes evident. People need time when connecting to other people. Rushed hellos are no more effective than passing someone on the street. When standing in the aisles, CPC parents need the benefit of extended childcare to have the potential to effectively establishing a meaningful rapport with those whom they welcome. It would be prudent of leadership to extend childcare an additional fifteen minutes with explicit communication to members that the purpose of the extended care of their children is for them to establish intentional and meaningful rapport with those who are visiting.

### **Personal Discipleship Prioritization**

Local culture, in fact the world, views the church as an optional institution and does not regard discipleship as critical. Scripture frames the church “as the essential chosen organism in whom Christ dwells.”<sup>28</sup> This being true, discipleship is something far more essential to the essence of being than man makes of it. My fourth recommendation is for CPC to develop a disciple-making curriculum that is defining and delineating of discipleship as a resource for the church. As noted in chapter 4, several Ruling Elders shared a strong caution toward communicating one specific plan for personal evangelism, largely because no single plan can account for the myriad of personalities, callings, and contexts represented within CPC. The Session does not wish to fall into a programmatic pattern. I agree wholeheartedly. CPC should never inhibit the ability of its membership to make disciples in their own way by articulating one formal and exclusive plan for personal discipleship. However, a resource that explains certain ways in which CPC members can emulate Jesus’ pattern in life as a component of discipleship could prove

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<sup>28</sup> Ogden, *Transforming Discipleship*, 31.

profitable. *Simple Evangelism* is essentially a commentary on Luke's description of Jesus' life pattern for the believer to apprentice. Every individual's personality and social context is a facilitator of personal evangelism and not a hindrance. Uniqueness of personality and social context requires attention to how a person might nurture each discipleship trait in their personal social circle. Additionally, this curriculum could suggest (not exhaustively) a number of other resources and opportunities available to engage in *Simple Evangelism*. It works to equip believers as they walk alongside others to teach and model the life of Christ. Let us consider for a moment David and Shelie Moore.

David and Shelie Moore are CPC members who exhibit a particular gifting in the area of hospitality. Following the Community Group interactive *Simple Evangelism* presentations, David and Shelie took time to consider the life pattern that Luke describes in his Gospel in context of their married life. The Moore's concluded to apply their design in the marriage God had gifted them with the pattern of disciple-making described by Luke. They launched a dinner club that meets every other month—six times a year—and includes a cross-section of couples from their social circle. They did not extend themselves beyond who they already knew. David and Shelie did nothing that is uncomfortable for them by the standard of how they already live lives committed to the gospel.

The two continue to speak with all involved as they always have. However, there is a new intentionality to their praying for these people. Those participating who are known to be genuine believers engage others in the group by connecting with relational intention. Not just being friendly but being friendly through gospel conversation. As Christians do, the gospel is intentionally discussed as it relates to living life, raising children, and navigating the troubles that come within local culture. Sometimes, people in the group hear the gospel in a new and interesting way. For some, this appears challenging, difficult, or illusive. For others, reaction is with interest, a sign of being encouraged, or simply joy. In some cases, the couples separate and go to their identified

churches to worship—we think. There is also the chance that the named church affiliation is simply a religious destination for the odd occasion. Prayer occurs before, during, and after each dinner event. Through *Simple Evangelism*, David and Shelie shared their friends, the gospel, and all of the life that comes with the two. The Moores demonstrate how simple that evangelism can be in the life of the believer.

The Moores' dinner club demonstrates how we who apprentice Christ are called to make disciples rather than just evangelize. We should reject programmatic thinking created in the minds of men. We should also take care to stay true to Scripture. We should recognize when members, like the Moores, apply scriptural truth whether the call is articulated through a publication like *Simple Evangelism* or not. We should communicate these sorts of intentional initiatives corporately to foster people's gospel understanding, creativity, and compliance. At CPC, this communication is particularly important in the lives of parents to specifically affirm, define, and differentiate catechism and evangelism.

### **Clarity between Catechism and Evangelism**

What does it mean to catechize and how is this different from evangelism? Catechism, in its most basic form, becomes a regimen of questions with predetermined answers that the one being catechized commits to memory. For CPC, the Westminster Confession is pivotal to the member's spiritual discipline. It is very much the center of discipling children in member households. Catechism is historically meaningful to the spiritual formation of believers. Dominican preacher John Bromyard called for "parents to repent because they focused on making certain their children were well-educated and well-to-do while neglecting their children's formation in Christian faith."<sup>29</sup> Centuries later, Michael Wren records the irony of a Lifeway Research survey of modern parents

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<sup>29</sup> C. Michael Wren, *Trained in the Fear of God: Family Ministry in Theological, Historical, and Practical Perspective* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 2007), 113.

revealing that “having children who become ‘happy adults’ tied for first place as the common goal for parenting today.”<sup>30</sup> In contrast, “only nine-percent of parents mentioned godliness or faith in God.”<sup>31</sup> Considering that this is the cultural standard, is it in any way surprising that members of CPC would seek to keep their children distant from culture while looking to CPC’s Session to invest their tithe toward supporting the training up of their children in the fear of God?

The challenge for CPC is that faithfulness to Scripture requires compliance to both the Shema (for the disciple-making of our children) and to the Great Commission (for the disciple-making of all nations). Scripture testifies unto itself that, “All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work” (2 Tim 3:16-17). The Shema and Great Commission have always been intended to work together in God’s redemptive ministry to man. Difficulties ensue when man prioritizes any population of man over another for purpose of gospel ministry, including our own children. Man’s best intentions are made difficult by the desires of the heart, which easily weigh the eternal welfare of our children over our local social circle.

Catechism is a tool within the construct of disciple-making and evangelism. Each Ruling Elder has voiced, in different ways, rejection of a program driven methodology for CPC to conduct disciple-making. Whit Anderson emphasized discipleship can (and should) look a thousand different ways in the church. Whit points out that I cannot assert discipleship as “prescriptive” but “descriptive” is a correct position.<sup>32</sup> The difficulty comes where the multiplying effect of the gospel is not being experienced. Hence, over time, it becomes hard to describe—maybe even unrecognizable.

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<sup>30</sup> Wren, *Trained in the Fear of God*, 113.

<sup>31</sup> Wren, *Trained in the Fear of God*.

<sup>32</sup> Whit Anderson, interviewed by Michael Thompson, Georgetown, TX, September 12, 2019.

As already recognized, no single person is going to make disciples the exact same way. Yet, Scripture provides what any single believer requires at any single moment in time to do what is necessary to perform every good work (2 Tim 3:17).

It became clear from Ruling Elder interviews that there is a concern for CPC's youth. Common reflection among them, and others comprising CPC leadership, was the recent departure of a CPC Deacon to attend a local Evangelical church because he was seeking a desirable youth program for his children.<sup>33</sup> It is one thing to assess insufficient growth trend as a leader, its completely another to have leaders begin deserting for an alternative program; especially, when you disaffirm programing as an acceptable component of effective ministry. Offsetting this circumstance at CPC, the Session just employed a young man for the purpose of youth ministry in the hope of creating a mechanism for member recruitment and retention that is lacking.

In a separate, but directly connected situation, Ruling Elders were asked by Whit Anderson to rate the strength or weakness of five areas:

1. Biblical preaching and teaching that edifies, equips, and convicts.
2. Christ-centered worship that nourishes and strengthens faith and faithfulness.
3. Internal growth/discipleship—spiritual growth.
4. External growth/missions—numerical growth (conversions, unchurched).
5. Healthy church community—loving, hospitable, servants, generous.<sup>34</sup>

As the days passed, and leadership reflected on the questions, discipleship emerged as the point of emphasis. When asked, “What man are you currently engaged in a discipling relationship?,” RE: SH, responded, “There is not anyone at present, but I am expecting to begin that with our Session-led change starting very soon.” When rated on a scale of one

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<sup>33</sup> The Markert family CPC departure was topical in several of the Ruling Elder Interpersonal Interviews and has been raised by members in various conversations as a point of concern toward CPC's implementation of a desirable youth program to sustain families as their children grow into adolescence.

<sup>34</sup> Whit Anderson staff meeting presentation, Georgetown, TX, September 3, 2019.

to ten, “the emphasis that CPC places on the instruction of personal disciple-making,” one to three was the range of response from Ruling Elders. Corresponding with this recognition has been a concurrent assertion from RE: LL (responsible for the segmented function of discipleship) to study the thinking of a modern Evangelical, Larry Osborne, who wrote the book *Sticky Church*. His asserting this text speaks to Ruling Elder recognition that CPC member retention is being challenged by factors requiring resolution.

As disciple-making emerges as CPC member’s common personal missional directive, catechism should be recognized as a tool. With this recognition, the creation of an adult catechism class might rightly emerge as necessary for bringing those who are being changed by the personal evangelistic focus of CPC’s adults and their children in Georgetown and everywhere they serve. Originating CPC member Chris Windsor candidly confesses that his hesitation in engaging others for the gospel is rooted in “fear of man.”<sup>35</sup> What a courageous act of gospel testimony when a man reflects on what is and what should be the outcome of God’s Word as truth! Without confession there cannot be repentance, which yields deeper faith as a man turns to worship the one true God in his own personal participation in God’s redemptive ministry to man by living out the gospel. Chris and I went on to converse on the five-step pattern of *Simple Evangelism* and how it might help his adult son to realize the saving grace God has given us in Christ. These one-off conversations are the fourth step in *Simple Evangelism*—discipleship. Chris quoted, “Iron sharpening iron,” in his paraphrasing Proverbs 27:17 to contextualize the relationship that he seeks with believing men in his life.<sup>36</sup> However, CPC cannot simply depend on one-off relationships to provide the infrastructure to a growing organization.

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<sup>35</sup> Chris Windsor, interviewed by Michael Thompson, Georgetown, TX, October 9, 2019.

<sup>36</sup> Windsor, October 9, 2019.



Yes, they are foundational, but insufficient in the intentional disciple-making requirement of a *Sticky Church*, according to the author.<sup>37</sup>

Organizational disciple-making at CPC is critical and important to serve the prospective growth of the church. CPC has already learned from its experience that disciples are not made without a communicable biblical method to make disciples intentionally. RE: JS has said it well when acknowledging, “CPC’s mission statement gives organizational clarity, but not as much personal clarity.”<sup>38</sup> CPC teaches a good disciple-making game in the Sunday morning classroom, but members consistently fail to deliver members of their social circle on almost every occasion. Whether Men’s Ministry Porch Night or Women’s Ministry S’mores at the Moores’, it is the random and odd occasion that a member is joined by anyone from outside the church to introduce into the church.

Where CPC members have shown tireless commitment is in their devotion to the children of CPC. When members are asked to stand in the moment of baptism to commit themselves commonly to the raising up in Christ of that child whose sprinkling is imminent, they are committed. Children of members are faithfully instructed in the Westminster Catechism. Results of children’s memorization are tested at home and church, where results of their biblical education are demonstrated. The capacity for children’s memorization is affirmed in the vast majority of instances. Fathers and mothers demonstrate their commitment to exercise common disciplines in their homes. Intergenerational ministry is beautiful at CPC on every occasion. One experiences all generations worshipping together on Sunday mornings. In every CPC event, interfamilial children, parents, and grandparents are engaging productively to foster fellowship within

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<sup>37</sup> Larry Osborne, *Sticky Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2008), 119.

<sup>38</sup> RE: JS, interviewed by Michael Thompson, Georgetown, TX, October 14, 2019.

CPC. There is a basis of personal responsibility that is affirmed in the communal act of catechization that must carry forward into evangelism for the church to grow.

CPC needs to make an intentional transition from communal responsibility to personal responsibility for disciple-making to take root. CPC's mission statement gives communal clarity but requires equipping the individual member to behave in congruence with belief. CPC Ruling Elders affirmed this point and the need to act for resolution in their response to Ruling Elder Interpersonal Interview questions related to discipling. CPC needs to move from a cognitive model of classroom instruction to a volitional model of *Simple Evangelism*.<sup>39</sup> We need to stop seeing CPC as only having an affective vision that can be identified as the philosophy of man (Calvinism), but rather recognize the Great Commission as our volitional calling from God. Each member must be nurtured to see themselves as integrally aligned with the theological vision CPC articulates which is grounded in Scripture. Thus, I believe CPC would do well to provide clarity and emphasis towards *Simple Evangelism* for discipleship that equips its members for the unique responsibility to make disciples in their social circle, seeking to provide accountability and direction along the way. Let us now consider practical considerations to this end.

### **Communicating the Difference between Catechizing and Evangelizing**

CPC leaders would be well served by communicating the traits of a healthy disciple. Scripture defines a healthy disciple's attributes. Paul explains the criticality of speaking the truth in love to promote maturity within the body-building community (Eph 4:13, 15). Peter teaches to use the gifting provided by God to serve others—serving

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<sup>39</sup> James Estep, Roger White, and Karen Estep, *Mapping Out Curriculum in Your Church: Cartography for Christian Pilgrims* (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing, 2012), 99-102. The aim of Christian education is to promote change in the believer to actually become like Christ. Cognitive learning is the student's will to understand the new behavior. Affective learning is then the student's willingness to experience the benefit of the new behavior. Volitional learning is a how-to, step-by-step process of then doing what is required of the student in living what is learned as new behavior.

community (1 Pet 4:10). Matthew states with clarity that a disciple then makes disciples—multiplying the community (Matt 28:18-20). Of course, these and other traits serve cumulatively to worship. In worshiping, the disciple gathers to do so (Luke 11:23). Sunday morning worship is agreed by all at CPC to be a core strength. The liturgy that is composed weekly is done with the greatest of care to singularly articulate Scripture in every mode (reading, preaching, singing, etc.). The challenge that CPC members and leaders acknowledge is *gathering*.<sup>40</sup>

Gathering is an exercise that occurs mostly outside the confines of the sanctuary. Gathering is a critical word and concept to communicate to CPC members because of Calvin’s emphasis of worship. This is covered in chapter 3. Negation of gathering convolutes member’s understanding the essential biblical necessity of their personal gathering responsibility. Whereas catechism is a tool that is used in disciple-making and evangelism is a step in a life pattern, gathering is the lifestyle of a disciple. Gathering is the constant state of watching for the wandering in which a disciple lives. Gathering is requisite for members to understand that their life is not their own. Member lives extend beyond their nuclear family. Just as CPC’s members are on the watch for their own children, disciples are called out of darkness and into light growing in maturity to watch out for God’s adopted children. God’s adopted children extend beyond CPC member households in Georgetown and all places that members serve.

CPC vision articulates this wonderfully in a theological vision that watches out for Georgetown and all places members serve. Language with mental models for the act of gathering articulated from the pulpit and in the classroom must be complemented with

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<sup>40</sup> Thabiti Anyabwile, *Christ-Centered Exposition: Exalting Jesus in Luke* (Nashville, TN: Holman Reference, 2018), 193. In Luke, Jesus teaches that there is no neutral ground when it comes to his identity as the Son (Luke 11:23). Thabiti Anyabwile asks, “Do we try to gather people through sharing the good news about Jesus, or do we scatter them by failing to share the good news?” When CPC members “scatter” after they gather on Sunday mornings, gathering should continue all week long. Members can gather neighbors for family worship in their homes, or to attend a men’s or women’s ministry event. To do so in Georgetown and all places served presumes the scattering of members across the culture for the purpose of gathering those perceived as wandering.

means and mode for lifestyle change that promotes God’s defined reality into individual life pattern. There are real barriers to overcome. For example, the overwhelming majority of CPC parents live a life pattern that incorporates either Christian private school, or home schooling.<sup>41</sup>

Grace Academy’s Headmaster is currently assessing CPC membership. He would join several of his teaching staff who are already members. In fact, the Headmaster is currently promoting a program to solicit pastors to enroll their children at Grace for a significant discount.<sup>42</sup> This initially appears a blessing, but it is in fact a curse of the gathering aptitude of the church. Why? Because before Christians gather to worship, we “scatter.” When CPC members walk out of the sanctuary on Sunday mornings, the biblical ideal is that they go in all directions with and for the gospel. If all pastors, all CPC members, fail to go beyond their individual homes and a single school, the effect of scattering to gather is substantially diminished. The Moores’ dinner club is a beta test of this truth. Whereas there may seem to be unregenerate people among those participating, all but those empty nesters among them are parents of students of Georgetown’s Grace Academy.

When we are living through the season of life that involves raising children towards independent adulthood, their lives consume our lives. The vast majority of our time as parents is taken up by the responsibilities of parenting. This focuses our social circle to those who are encircling our children—their teachers, friends, and parents of their friends whom we devote time to knowing in order to guard our children from inappropriate influences. Apart from making money to support our family and running (literally) the daily errands to sustain our homes, members are hard pressed for margin in their life to devote to relationship outside their nuclear family. The outcome is that our

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<sup>41</sup> Whit Anderson, interview with Michael Thompson, Georgetown, TX, October 11, 2019.

<sup>42</sup> Anderson, October 11, 2019.

social circle becomes where our time allows it to be. If that time is concentrated in singular places as members of CPC (e.g., Grace Academy), gathering will only occur from the microcosm of our conjoined social circle. This affects the multiplying effect of the gospel. It affects us being the church in Georgetown, Texas.

As previously noted, cooperative disciple-making is going beyond those with whom we completely agree in context of *Simple Evangelism*. This requires connecting with the local culture, including other church cultures, which is assuming of broader, diverse, and categorically differing social circles. If every member of CPC is living in demographically common social circles, they are literally cannibalizing one another's gospel capacity to multiply. They are unintentionally living an Amish lifestyle by existing uniformly in a common community. In fact, the Amish trend an avoidance of culture with no intentionality of gathering those outside their familial social circle (principally tourists who transit them to observe the oddities of their communal life). The Reformed members of CPC cannot allow themselves to simply become a social oddity for Georgetown culture to transit as theological tourists. CPC should strongly consider clarifying its mission to give intentionality in the lives of members to be where the balance of CPC members are not (opposed to congregating at a single Christian school) Monday through Saturday. In taking these steps, CPC might clarify and catalyze members to scatter more broadly and gather with intention to bring their social circle to worship the one true God on Sunday mornings as they are personally disciple-making.

Next, CPC should highlight the distinct values of catechizing and evangelizing in the life of a disciple as critical unto themselves. In other words, CPC is likely to benefit by emphasizing that disciple-making does not have to correlate with its organizational missional endeavors in order to be valuable and effective. Members can and should personally evangelize. Many members are actively and personally catechizing their children and gathering them each week for Sunday worship. If we were to communicate the question and answer format in which they are accustomed by way of

catechism to be the key tactic of evangelism (asking questions rather than making assertions), members may better recognize the continuity of effort in making disciples of their children and everyone else. A key leap for members is the academics of catechism. Evangelism is not academic. Kevin Vanhoozer acknowledges this in the third step in disciple-making when he writes,

Christian discipleship involves more than intellectually agreeing with Jesus, even more than trying to obey his commandments. Discipling is ultimately about becoming more like Jesus: It is enough for the disciple to be like his teacher (Matt 10:25). Christlikeness is the goal of discipleship . . . . To be more precise it is a state of being-in and abiding in Christ.<sup>43</sup>

Given the size of CPC, according to Tim Keller, the pulpit continues to have a very personal and powerful effect on prospective members and members alike.<sup>44</sup> Whit's pulpit message of Christlikeness being a way of walking and a state of being must continue to be exemplified in Whit's home to fully effect those resistant to the idea that they are to gather from their social circle each week following scattering after worship on Sunday.

From these examples, the truth of CPC's need for the stated theological vision is clear. Members require ongoing reminding of the necessity to make disciples in conjunction with how to make disciples. Interpersonal interviews with Ruling Elders demonstrate the difficulty in leadership's scattering to then gather before returning to worship together the following Sunday. Ruling Elders acknowledge that they recognized a need to change their own life pattern for the purpose of disciple-making (apart from their children). Given the disclosure of considering pastors to have been the key disciplers in the lives of most Ruling Elders, as well as members during Community Group interaction. It must be predicated that more mature believers are to focus their time gathering less mature believers. This is necessary to usurp a pattern where members maintain disciple-making as one of the professional duties of the Session. Members need

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<sup>43</sup> Kevin J. Vanhoozer, *Hearers and Doers: A Pastor's Guide to Making Disciples Through Scripture and Doctrine* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2019), 204.

<sup>44</sup> Keller, *Leadership and Church Size Dynamics*, 5.

to recognize the correlation between the catechizing of their own children with evangelizing people in their social circle, as well as the differences. Disciple-making is a life investment with commonality to parenting, an investment of one's time, energy, and resource into the life of another who is weaker, like a child.

Lastly, by way of the pulpit, we must consider how we communicate disciple-making from the pulpit in order for member to recognize the tool of catechizing and the steps of evangelizing. Anderson provides the members of CPC a good example in this area of his life. The Andersons' children are enrolled in public education and active in many cultural venues wherein they connect with the world effectively. Whit brings to bear a plethora of life stories from local culture to help CPC members understand the importance of scattering and gathering. Through his preaching Scripture, Whit articulates to the congregation an empathetic but convicting message comparable to Kevin Vanhoozer's, asserting,

It is not that disciples have to do exactly what the Son did (as Hebrews tells us, the Son is superior to all other beings and his sacrificial death was "once and for all), but they should be doing the same kind of thing they see the Son doing, and in the same power, namely, the Holy Spirit . . . but not every disciple is like Christ in exactly the same way. Disciples are not the spitting image but fitting image of Christ.<sup>45</sup>

We can then discern that the pulpit (albeit primary and centric to the theological vision of CPC) is not the means by which members uniformly change. Hearing does not equate to doing. Instead, the balance of all that is CPC must uniformly align with Whit's message to help one another change to be more like Christ. Whit should invite members of CPC to speak of their personal testimonies on Sunday mornings. Member stories of scattering from the sanctuary and gathering those in their social circles to ultimately sit in the empty chairs the following week, month, or year will be encouraging to those who desire the theological vision of CPC to be realized. Those devoted to CPC's perpetuating gospel

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<sup>45</sup> Vanhoozer, *Hearers and Doers*, 205.

ministry have already shown their understanding of the timeline of heart change of those who we pray for belongs to God.

### **Community Groups Focusing on the Community**

Chris Windsor’s candor and transparency with regard to fearing conflict with other people is helpful to all of us at CPC. We know that “Scripture pictures all believers as those who share the story of their faith in Christ with others.”<sup>46</sup> However, like Chris, we all share in a fear of doing what we know to be right when encountering opportunity. We need community to help us be brave. RE: JS’s assertion of “CPC Community Groups focusing on the community” is a great way for members to encourage one another in the points of disciple-making that they find to be difficult.<sup>47</sup>

My fifth proposal relates to Community Groups and is two-fold. First, CPC leaders should proactively advocate Community Groups to consistently break out into triads.<sup>48</sup> This represents an opportunity to establish more meaningful personal connections for discipleship within the church membership. This allows members to build aptitude at reconciling needs in the lives of members; hence, responding to the spiritual woundedness within CPC. Second, CPC should create a structured opportunity within Community Groups for the purpose of connecting with wanderers, specifically by intentionally practicing the five-point pattern together in Community Groups and inviting those with whom they connect in the world into their group. By group members abiding together, specifically praying for those they have identified in their social circle as

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<sup>46</sup> Ogden, *Transforming Discipleship*, 35.

<sup>47</sup> RE: JS, interviewed by Michael Thompson, Georgetown, TX, October 29, 2019.

<sup>48</sup> Ogden, *Transforming Discipleship*, 176. Greg Ogden presents “triads” as one person from the Community Group asking two others into a covenantal relationship structured around a Bible-based curriculum for the period of a year. Ideally, one of the two invited would be from outside the Community Group and within that person’s social circle. For CPC, triads could interconnect between Community Groups and Men’s or Women’s Ministry to promote interconnection among the congregation.



wandering, Community Group members will work to engage certain assumptions of Christian conversion within groups that might be unhealthy.<sup>49</sup>

Community Group leaders cultivating the value of breakout groups within Community Groups provides opportunity for more intentional strategic vision to minister to those who might claim Christ and yet not bear fruit (non-Christians). Recognizing the propensity in local culture of prejudice toward denominational distinction, Community Groups can become CPC's strategic point of entry for those who are not PCA. Those self-identifying as Christian in our culture are likely not drawn to the specificity of CPC's PCA identity, which is exactly what draws PCA members relocating to the county.

With regard to the first proposal of CPC leaders proactively advocating Community Groups to consistently break out into triads, Community Group leaders have affirmed desire to provide a meaningful opportunity for personal and small group discipleship. As mentioned in chapter 4, none of CPC's Community Groups broke out into smaller groups to foster personal discipleship. Thus, Community Groups are not functioning to foster disciple-making as a vehicle of relationship intimacy in the lives of members. It is enlightening that Ruling Elders do not have men in whom they are currently investing their lives. Members will tend to follow the example of leaders. Because CPC leaders commit its culture to the specificity of Calvin, the distance between the sixteenth and twenty-first century can foster an academic approach, rather than personal approach, to relational ministry. All CPC's Ruling Elders voice rejection of programmatic disciple-making. They recognize that "discipling relationships are customized to the unique growth process of the individuals, whereas programs emphasize

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<sup>49</sup> I cover what I mean by the basic assumptions of Christianity in chapter 3. In summary, I am referring to the fact that Georgetown possesses those self-identifying as Christian. Many find it culturally appropriate to attend churches that value the authority of Scripture, even if they don't personally keep watch of their lives or doctrine closely. Thus, especially at a church in the Bible belt, it is highly presumptive to conclude that most people, if not everyone, are Christians.

synchronization.”<sup>50</sup> As good leaders, Ruling Elders do not look for synchronization in members, but seek to foster each member’s unique growth process in Christ.

Apart from their children, CPC members are hesitant to identify a person that became a Christian in their Community Group in 2019.<sup>51</sup> This factor provides an opportunity for reflection and growth. While Community Groups primarily serve to cultivate the value of gospel-centered community amongst believers, they also represent a defined venue for CPC members to invite those comprising their social circle. The act of meeting in homes for social, dining, and learning events is indigenous to the local culture. It is easier for someone who identifies as a Christian, but does not hold to a distinct denominational affiliation, to come into a home to meet new people than to step through the doors of a population of people who hold themselves out as distinct from the population. Those who do not attend church, or are not interested in visiting a church, can be more at ease in being welcomed into a home environment that is casually familiar. Community Groups at CPC might be successful in cultivating an aspect of the “Center Church” ideal articulated by Keller for churches to model in being missional, but I assess that CPC needs to improve upon the missional focus within these groups.<sup>52</sup>

John 17 provides a litmus test for CPC’s Session to consider.<sup>53</sup> The operable question is whether or not CPC Community Groups are functioning in the way Jesus articulates. Is each Community Group functioning according to the dynamic, socio-external, and evangelistic pattern described by Jesus? Being self-centric doesn’t necessarily just include one’s self. We have capacity to keep to ourselves or share relationship. Self can be beyond oneself depending on where a person is identifying. Self-

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<sup>50</sup> Ogden, *Transforming Discipleship*, 125.

<sup>51</sup> RE: LL, interviewed by Michael Thompson, Georgetown, TX, October 30, 2019.

<sup>52</sup> Keller, *Serving a Movement*, 13-18.

<sup>53</sup> See chapter 2, *Jesus is Distinctly Cooperative*.

identification can be inclusive of one's spouse, children, and members of one's church to the detriment of all others. I would propose this a form of idolatry. Rather than bringing outsiders in to experience the benefit of fellowship, it is possible to neglect, or even refrain, from invitation. How can wanderers be provided gospel guidance, or those wounded experience gospel healing, without the invitation? Qualities of living in Christian community (e.g., confession, mutual accountability, etc.) are necessary for the church to cultivate among members. In fact, it is among these very qualities that the church is to model to the world. The Ruling Elders foray into studying *Sticky Church* by Larry Osborne as an initial step in understanding the disciple-making relationships within CPC that must exist to effect relationships for the gospel outside CPC.<sup>54</sup>

Whereas RE: JS distinguished CPC's Reformed theology as "placing no value in culture," if there is no connection to the world, there is no one to take note.<sup>55</sup> There is no evangelism, hence the disciplines of discipleship remain unchallenged, underdeveloped, and, in fact, may go undone. Fortunately, the genuine belief among CPC leaders intends faithfulness in discipling the importance of these virtues into its culture for *Simple Evangelism*. This driving desire to fulfill CPC's theological vision is why CPC leadership should consider if its vision for Community Groups weighs too heavily on the inward dimensions of membership, and not enough on the need for connecting with the world to engage in gospel dialog.

CPC leadership has wonderful hopes that its members (individually and communally) are engaging those wandering in their social circle, yet CPC has built very few organizational venues for the specific purpose of evangelizing those who might become members. Leadership must recognize that the children of the Boys and Girls Club, residents of the Delaney, and those incarcerated are unlikely future members of

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<sup>54</sup> RE: LL, interviewed by Michael Thompson, Georgetown, TX, October 8, 2019.

<sup>55</sup> RE: JS, October 29, 2019.

CPC. This is in no way to discourage any of these missional endeavors, which are beautiful and right. It is to state what was acknowledged in inviting Lori and me into CPC as Reformed Evangelicals operating within a membership of Reformed people; *Simple Evangelism* is necessary to achieve CPC's vision by equipping members to connect in their social circles and invite people resident in Georgetown, and wherever CPC members serve, into Christ and then CPC. This is not to say that Community Groups at CPC have not faithfully embodied the value of gospel-centered multiplication. Rather, CPC manages to practice one aspect of gospel-centered multiplication very well. Over the last eight years, Community Groups have become collectives of sustaining relationship in member life. They have served as the place where members can know and love one another and each other's children.

As observed by one of the original CPC members, gospel-centered multiplication has almost entirely been experienced "through children being born into the covenant family."<sup>56</sup> The resulting emphasis on those having children is that expanding need for youth ministry. As their children progress from childhood into adolescence, the corresponding appetite for a youth program may have resulted in the enormous ministry opportunity coming with an unanticipated cost.

In that CPC counts membership by household rather than individual believers, concentration of resources directed to our children may actually be hampering growth. In other words, by orienting CPC to respond to parental needs within CPC perhaps CPC has missed opportunities to employ and equip its people to also make disciples of those outside of the church. Internal focus yields this sort of resourcing issue in commerce and bears common consequence in the church. Jen Hatmaker has commented on resource constraint resulting from internal focus in a church.

The church has a very limited amount of resources both human and financial. If we

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<sup>56</sup> Chris Windsor, interviewed by Michael Thompson, Liberty Hill, TX, October 23, 2019.

consume them all on programs for saved people then we cannot expect our folks to live on mission elsewhere because they have already spent their expendable energy on the church campus. If we're drowning in a sea of Christian consumers, we better take a hard look at the scaffolding we've built.<sup>57</sup>

Obviously, the children of CPC households should in no way be holistically appropriated to the category of "Christian consumers." In many cases, they are recognized not to be Christians. Nonetheless, we all know our children to consume. Some consume vociferously. It is our responsibility as parents to ensure that our homes build the local church and do not consume it.

In its responsibility to support parents in the catechizing of their children while growing the church through evangelizing the local culture, the Session might consider the ideas of another Texas Reformed Evangelical church—The Austin Stone Church (TASC). Rather than Community Groups, TASC deploys "Missional Communities" (MCs). MCs are defined by way of three characteristics.<sup>58</sup> Firstly, MCs gather as a *community* in a family meeting. Second, MCs gather as *disciples* for purpose of life transformation. Finally, MCs gather as *missionaries* to the world in which each member connects—their social circle.

Current CPC structure interestingly segments mission from discipleship, which may hamper the gospel intuitiveness of CPC Session thinking in these two coalesced areas of ministry. What all in the Session agree from the input to interpersonal interviews is that directing ministry outside the church to achieve CPC vision is good. Hence, catalyzing culturally targeted ministry by way of disciple-making through mission is a very reasonable Community Group charter. Such a charter is highly plausible through the trained pattern of *Simple Evangelism* in individual members of the church because they will simply do life as they do it, but intentional of and with the gospel. This is not to

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<sup>57</sup> Jen Hatmaker, "How to Kill Your Missional Community," plenary address at Verge Conference (Austin, Texas, November 12, 2012), video (the video has since been discontinued), <http://www.vergenetwork.org/2012/11/06/how-to-kill-your-missional-community-jen-hatmaker/>.

<sup>58</sup> Todd Engstrom, *Transitioning Your Church to Missional Communities* (Saturate Resources, 2018), 8, Dropbox.

make Community Groups into MCs, but rather to deploy a hybrid approach that balances the care of members with the love of neighbor.

CPC's reach to love one's neighbor can be readily expanded by deploying members of CPC's Session in Community Group ministry. Currently, one Ruling Elder leads a Community Group.<sup>59</sup> His Community Group is attended by a second Ruling Elder both of whom reside in the single largest retirement community in Texas.<sup>60</sup> Another man who is a candidate for Ruling Elder attends the same Community Group within the same expansive retirement community. A third Ruling Elder does not participate in CPC Community Group ministry.<sup>61</sup>

A fourth Ruling Elder articulates his desire to build deeper relationship with a Community Group but has not yet found bandwidth in his demanding life to do so.<sup>62</sup> The CPC Community Group that Lori and I attend is led by a man who qualifies as a Ruling Elder but has rotated off the Session and consists of a man who is nominated to join the Session as a Ruling Elder near term, CPC's Teaching Elder, and CPC Associate Pastor who states his personal desire to plant a church. Given the shepherding capacity of Ruling Elders, doesn't it make sense to delegate individual Community Group oversight for Ruling Elders to practice discipleship of members and role model evangelism? Associate Pastor Woonny Kim articulates desire to plant a church. Why would the Session not oversee Kim's personal initiative to launching and shepherding his own Community Group for purpose of discipling him in the areas of ministry necessary for church planning? Why would Ruling Elders huddle together in a common Community Group when a substantial community of retirees is available for them to personally

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<sup>59</sup> RE: JS, October 29, 2019.

<sup>60</sup> RE: LL, interviewed by Michael Thompson, Georgetown, TX, October 30, 2019.

<sup>61</sup> RE: JD, interviewed by Michael Thompson, Georgetown, TX, October 28, 2019.

<sup>62</sup> RE: SH, interviewed by Michael Thompson, Georgetown, TX, October 31, 2019.

evangelize by exercising the five-points that Luke describes in his Gospel? These are the sorts of questions that growing and thriving Texas churches like TASC and TVC have had to address in their deploying Community Groups to foster superstructure for retention of members.

Key to TASC's MC definition that differentiates it from CPC Community Groups is the third component being missional. The primary aspect of MC's that I propose for consideration is with regard to its third purpose, "to gather as missionaries."<sup>63</sup> Todd Engstrom writes, "Unless we intentionally make time for people outside our community, we often won't do it. Few of us naturally drift into mission."<sup>16</sup> The approach Engstrom engineers provides an informal and regularly occurring opportunity for group members to gather with those they perceive wandering within their social circle. By creating a dedicated space for both discipleship and mission, MC's seek to foster growth in both the internal and external dynamic of Christian community. TASC approach to Community Group by applying MC definition achieves what is needed within CPC culture. It creates a familiar place, outside their home and the sanctuary, for members to make disciples and be discipled.

If CPC members are going to live out the theological vision of the church within the lives of people in Georgetown and where CPC members serve, Community Groups must be welcoming of those who are wandering in order for members to love them well. Community Groups are appropriate places for discipleship and also provide a pronounced opportunity to broaden disciple-making in the lives of CPC members. Because CPC does not provide much in the way of organizational design and direction to nurture multiplication in Community Groups (apart from emphasizing the need for more Community Groups to cover the broadening expanse of geography where members now

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<sup>63</sup> Todd Engstrom, "The Insufficiency of Small Groups for Discipleship," The Gospel Coalition, August 19, 2013, <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/the-insufficiency-of-small-groups-for-discipleship/>.

live), has already been identified by the Session as a missed opportunity. Convinced that God desires to see those in the social circles of CPC members effected by the gospel, I recommend that the Session provide theological vision for Community Groups explicitly for the purpose of multiplication and corresponding training to Community Group leaders in order to delegate a portion of the disciple-making weight that they view is their primary responsibility.

### **Rebranding Reformed Theology**

I next propose that CPC leadership consider a local media strategy, as CPC's vision for Georgetown still requires more explicit attention. In doing so, CPC can provide renewed and strategic vision as it seeks to fulfill its theological vision. CPC has been a church for the past eight years and has demonstrably influenced the culture of Georgetown. Many have experienced grace, mercy, and care resulting from the doctrine of grace preached from CPC's pulpit and taught in its classrooms. Along with the preaching of Whit Anderson, CPC Ruling Elders have abided and connected with members to disciple them faithfully in the doctrines of Calvin. These contributions notwithstanding, it might now be time to reset how the local community thinks of Reformed theology. Resetting the faulty understanding that local culture holds of Reformed theology might preclude prejudice of CPC.

As discussed in staff meeting, CPC holds a minority Reformed position among churches in Georgetown. In fact, the majority of churches exercise an evident evangelicalism, but do not exposit Scripture to derive or convey a clear doctrine for disciple-making. This is neither unique to Georgetown in place nor time. In his address at the 2018 National Parliamentary Prayer Breakfast, Tim Keller provided a framework



for a rebranding of Reformed theology, for which he is likely to be the current best-known representative.<sup>64</sup> The Gospel Coalition reports,

According to the best statistics, no more than 3 percent of the population of 65 million are evangelical Christians, and the UK has the world's ninth-slowest-growing evangelical community, with annual growth currently less than 0.0 percent. All mainstream political parties support a progressive agenda on issues such as same-sex marriage and transgender rights. Moreover, evangelical Christians have felt increasingly marginalized and have experienced the restrictive effects of equalities legislation and the prohibition of "hate speech," which has made some fearful of practicing their faith and speaking the gospel.<sup>65</sup>

In such a culture as this, Keller stood and delivered a talk that emphasized Scripture. He spoke on a very basic and communicable verse to relay the value of Christianity to a people group void of Reformed theology for purpose of rebranding an old idea of Christian as "salt of the earth" into an epiphany (Matt 5:13). Having provided a masterclass in gracious apologetics, Keller's address, "What Can Christianity Offer Our Society in the 21st Century?" was a prolific example of how CPC can rebrand Reformed theology in Georgetown culture. Keller spoke in a discernable, respectable, and formidable voice that connected with the world that he was addressing to make clear the gospel of Jesus for those who could hear and believe. It is Keller's example that CPC should follow to engage the local community specific to the work of its missions at the Boys and Girls Club, Delaney Senior Living Center, and Jubilee Prison Ministry.

In his presentation, Keller relays culture's incapacity for recognizing the historical value of Christianity as a "what have you done for me lately" view. This disposition is challenging to Christianity's coexistence with those who view it irrelevant to this historical moment. Responding to this question posed by Keller in his British Parliamentary Prayer Breakfast presentation is exactly the same question begging answer

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<sup>64</sup> Timothy J. Keller, "What Can Christianity Offer Our Society in the 21st Century?" presentation at the 2018 National Parliamentary Prayer Breakfast, Westminster Hall, London, June 19, 2018, video, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AkcouxJE6o4>.

<sup>65</sup> John Stevens, "Tim Keller's Witness at the Parliamentary Prayer Breakfast," The Gospel Coalition, July 5, 2018, <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/tim-keller-parliamentary-prayer-breakfast/>.

within CPC's local community. CityLife Church (PCA) in St. Paul, Minnesota, capitalized on a rebranding opportunity.<sup>66</sup> In its case, their Session became aware of a play that was opening with a storyline set 100 yards from their sanctuary and 100 years ago. The story dealt with a very current culture issue—racism. CityLife chose to host the play as community outreach for the purpose of stimulating gospel conversation on the topic that had caused woundedness in the hearts of so many in their community.

CityLife's brand position and related awareness in the community was shifted to one of relevance in the local community for the gospel through their linking the gospel to culture's agenda and then interpreting the "what have you done for me lately" response.

CPC has an immediate opportunity on a cooperative level in Georgetown to affect culture with the gospel in a comparable approach to CityLife.<sup>67</sup> Over the past five years, Christ Together Greater Austin (CTGA) has methodically organized city-wide campaigns to promote gospel awareness. A consortium of largely modern Evangelical churches, this year's slogan is, "What After," to promote community dialog in response to cultural interest in after life experiences that have been reported. There is a higher mortality rate in Georgetown due to the presence of Sun City. CPC does have opportunity to pivot off of CTGA's initiative in the coming months to link the gospel to cultures agenda and then interpret the "what have you done for me lately" response to the reality of death for Georgetown's culture. CPC's Reformed position is exactly the right voice to speak on behalf of Georgetown's genuine believers because of the loving tone and content that the world can recognize. CPC's focus has been to reconcile contemporary practical needs in the community since its inception. A voice of mercy and justice from the church is what will rebrand cultural assumptions of apathy, intolerance, and judgment.

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<sup>66</sup> Natalie Atwell, *Yes, In Our Neighborhood CityLife Church, St. Paul, Hosts a Play for the Neighborhood* (Lawrenceville, GA: byFaith, Q3 2019), 17.

<sup>67</sup> Brady Traywick, interviewed by Michael Thompson, Georgetown, TX, October 15, 2019.

In Greg Ogden's view, Christian culture can be a dangerous place for the young and new believers because their lives are a syncretistic compromise.<sup>68</sup> This fosters liberal theology that can be particularly confusing and cause deep spiritual wounds. David Bosch's examination of Luke's Gospel, from which *Simple Evangelism* is patterned, denotes that the church's mission is to alert people to the universal reign of God beyond simple branding and recruitment.<sup>69</sup> This requires an articulation of loving neighbor and God well beyond a historical Calvinistic doctrine. In Georgetown, CPC has served well and can put forward testimonies from community entities who will speak to the acts of kindness, mercy, justice, and service that shapes the ideal of culture. This is the rebranding of Reformed theology in the mindset of men.

### **Georgetown Institute of Christian Formation**

When you consider CPC is the principal instructor of definitive Reformed Doctrine in Georgetown, does it not have a responsibility to all believers of Georgetown to lead in the teaching the doctrines of grace? Because members are well educated professionals who place value in education, would it not make sense to collectively architect and execute an Institute comparable to that of other Texas churches like The Austin Stone Community Church (ASCC) or The Village Church (TVC)? Both these Reformed Evangelical churches have structured cooperative disciple-making affiliation with seminaries to form programs that offer both seminary and non-seminary tracks for curriculum. CPC has, in fact, borrowed from TVC in regard to their covenantal membership and Community Group training material. Comparably, CPC could borrow this approach to exercise the skills of members for the purpose of teaching Reformed Doctrine as a Christian culture outreach. Such a Reformed Theological Institute could

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<sup>68</sup> Ogden, *Transforming Discipleship*, 33.

<sup>69</sup> David Bosch, *Believing in the Future: Toward a Missiology of Western Culture* (Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press International, 1995), 33-35.

both fill the space left void by the General Baptist Texas Conventions education endeavor with Mary Hardin Baylor.<sup>70</sup> A local theological educational initiative could serve as a cornerstone to correct the liberal theological views instructed in Georgetown for so many years. CPC has established working rapport within the local municipality and school district that could legitimize a program in Georgetown's culture while providing facility for instruction, which is my final recommendation.

Given CPC's size and related budgetary restraint, development of a broad theological program could be staged over time by partnering with a larger existing church doctrinally affirming of the Reformed position. First Baptist Church Georgetown (FBCG) is a local entity whose pastoral leadership asserts a desire to closely affiliate with CPC, as well as launch an Institute to affect the community for the gospel.<sup>71</sup> Senior Pastor, Kevin Ueckert, asserts an intentional initiative to launch such an educational endeavor locally, as well as his personal desire to partner in ministry with CPC's Teaching Elder, Whit Anderson.<sup>72</sup> Additionally, the man chartered to launch FBCG's Institute initiative, Chad Warren, attended the same seminary as Whit Anderson and holds a distinct leaning towards the Reformed position doctrinally affirmed by CPC.<sup>73</sup>

Together for the gospel, CPC with FBCG could benefit from TVC's proven model that offers opportunity for seminary credit through two different theological entities. The Village's "Training Program" is a one-year "discipleship cohort with one

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<sup>70</sup> Strategic Church Solutions, "Questions (& Answers) about the Sale of our Property," email, August 15, 2019. The General Baptist Texas Convention (GBTC) initially renamed the Williamson County Baptist Association "Strategic Church Solutions" in order to work more broadly across denominational lines for increased revenue opportunity. Failing to resolve profitability issues, the GBTC divested of its real estate this year to reduce operational expense and raise capital for a "virtual presence" that no longer sustains capacity to host classes offered by Mary Hardin Baylor to members of the community.

<sup>71</sup> Kevin Ueckert, interviewed by Michael Thompson, Georgetown, TX, September 19, 2019.

<sup>72</sup> Kevin Ueckert, September 19, 2019.

<sup>73</sup> Chad Warren, interviewed by Michael Thompson, Georgetown, TX, October 22, 2019.

curriculum that aims for biblical formation.”<sup>74</sup> Its hope is to equip believers in “three areas of discipleship—Christian story, Christian theology, and Christian formation.”<sup>75</sup> Josh Patterson of The Village Church describes that “by weaving together these three elements into a holistic approach to discipleship, men and women have the opportunity to grow in their love for God, Scripture and His mission.”<sup>76</sup> Each participant is paired with a cohort leader in groups of two to six and must commit to the duration of the program. Each semester is thirteen weeks in length with a weekly two-hour class. Whereas membership is not required for the Training Program at the Village Church, CPC could use a cooperative Institute in Georgetown as a structured forum to which members could invite friends from their Evangelical social circles into a cooperative disciple-making endeavor. They could form their personal cohorts in order to have a structured mechanism to personally evangelize those thought to be wandering, as well as incorporate the Institute into the triad covenantal plan that they incorporate for purpose of CPC personal discipleship.

The opportunity for cooperative disciple-making via launching an Institute in Georgetown to promote theological education is immense. Firstly, it is sound theological training offered to the Christian community of Georgetown and which CPC is uniquely prepared to offer. It could potentially be offered in conjunction with the Southern Baptist Texas Convention and others, broadening the local subscription base. It could be represented to churches in the area as a means of structured leadership training with focus on whatever prioritization is deemed essential for the development of leadership. Immediate cooperative opportunity exists, in that First Baptist Church Georgetown has a comparable initiative underway. Senior Pastor Kevin Ueckert’s affiliation with

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<sup>74</sup> Josh Patterson, interviewed by Michael Thompson, Edwards, CO, October 1, 2019.

<sup>75</sup> Patterson, October 1, 2019.

<sup>76</sup> Patterson, October 1, 2019.

Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary provides an immediate alignment with a seminary for individuals to gain course credit if they so choose. Initially, limitations for cooperative disciple-making are (1) CPC will need to overcome its suspicions of modern Evangelicals, particularly local Baptists, (2) the busy lives of members must be addressed (e.g., childcare provision) in order to create margin for members to productively engage, and (3) CPC membership is widely dispersed and commuting to a central facility would be required on a regular basis. Given what exists by way of sustaining and successful programs, it will not be difficult to engineer a curriculum for wanderers and those wounded. Addressing the essentials of faith in a forum outside the formalities recognized as the church by way of an academic venue may prove more conducive to serving their inhibitions. This might contribute to the prevention of beliefs that foster bad behaviors in Christian culture. In doing so, CPC could create a safe place for the wanderers and those wounded to find scriptural direction and healing.

### **Conclusion**

This chapter offered formal recommendations to CPC's Session in hopes of helping leadership formulate a plan to integrate the belief that is commonly espoused throughout the people of the church into a common set of behaviors. These behaviors simply being patterned after what we can discern from Scripture to be like those of Jesus. It is the behavior of Jesus that makes disciples and cooperates with others who are endeavoring to do the same but whose church culture deviates from the whole of what CPC believes. The areas of observation I believe will contribute to more faithful behavior included: fostering intentional abiding to experience the multiplying effect of the gospel, integrating belief and behavior to connect with local culture, *Simple Evangelism* training, personal discipleship prioritization that yields intentionality of Deuteronomy 6 and Matthew 28, orienting Community Groups to focus on the community, rebranding Reformed theology, and CPC's launching a Georgetown Institute of Christian Formation

to address the effects of post-Christian culture. My hope is that these recommendations serve to bolster a greater value within CPC for cooperative disciple-making, specifically toward wanderers and those spiritually wounded.

### Evaluation

In the end, my proposals are not a model per se, but observations that I can see enhancing CPC's overall model for disciple-making. I pray this project serves the church well. It is here that I must start by acknowledging that not all the goals of this project were fulfilled. The words of a Puritan prayer expresses the project's outcome of which I will elaborate:

O Lord, May I never fail to come to the knowledge of the truth, never rest in a system of doctrine, however scriptural, that does not bring or further salvation, or teach me to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts...<sup>77</sup>

The CPC Session did not implement *Simple Evangelism* for outward initiative, instead they prioritized instruction spanning anxiety, fear, and depression for inward focus. The bringing and furthering of salvation fell considerably short under the Session's leadership. As my wife and I gathered with CPC to worship, the liturgy highlighted the liberalized doctrine of my Baptist church. Like the Puritan prayer articulates, neither of these conditions is acceptable in my "knowledge of the truth." CPC's failing to "further salvation" and my Baptist church denying "ungodliness," Lori and I found ourselves without a local church.

The outcome of George Whitefield's endeavor to work through sectarianism with Presbyterians haunts me.<sup>78</sup> This is not stated as a criticism of CPC but out of appreciation. In a culture wherein distinction of doctrine is so often criticized, the Ruling Elders of CPC make every effort to ensure that CPC membership is set apart to their view

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<sup>77</sup> Arthur Bennet, *The Valley of Vision: A Collection of Puritan Prayers and Devotions* (Edinburgh, Scotland: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1975), 116.

<sup>78</sup> See chapter 3.

of God's sovereignty. It is in the shared view of a sovereign God that we men agreed. It is in our responsibility as men that we struggled. Nonetheless, CPC's negation of personal responsibility in connecting, evangelizing, and discipling while abiding and worshiping is an act of reductionism. One cannot be right without the full balance displayed in behavior. The reductional consequence is "that which is truly life" being denied (1 Tim 6:19).

Sectarian prejudice is an impediment to CPC ever realizing their stated vision, "*to invite every person in Georgetown and every place CPC serves into life-changing relationship with Jesus Christ.*" This difficulty is highlighted in a recent discussion with a CPC Community Group leader who stated that he "could see no difference between his Biblical theology and his Systematic theology."<sup>79</sup> He fully recognized that his position alienated any other doctrinal position as invalid. Why should he not believe this to be true when CPC's leadership training material is a manual of PCA Systematic theology. Calvin's doctrine is instructed at CPC as in concert with the Bible. When Catholicism and Dispensationalism are lumped together as heretical and the thinking of a single man, John Calvin, is trusted as singularly true, it can be very easy to find oneself making an idol out of one's doctrine. No one responds well to another person's exclusionary thinking-especially when he is the one being excluded. Prejudice renders cooperation mute and connecting within the community for the gospel implausible.

The strength found in this project resided in the necessity of my own personal cooperation with the members of CPC. I subjected myself to the authority of the Session and all Ruling Elders affirmed my disciple-making contribution in this endeavor. Holding to our own denominational distinctives, CPC members sharpened me, and I them, in our negotiating and facilitating belief and behavior for the gospel. Arguably, the position description did not negate the anticipated limitation of my CPC membership status. The

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<sup>79</sup> Lane Joffrion, interviewed by Michael Thompson, Georgetown, TX, September 26, 2020.



events reported in chapter 4 validate the trouble that my maintaining Southern Baptist identity generated.<sup>80</sup> In fact, the goals of the project and the process by which they were achieved were forced to change as a result of me declining CPC membership.

Cooperation led to productivity until CPC Ruling Elders were inclined to not cooperate.

I would argue that the difficulties I encountered to have been correct on the part of the Session but not the outcomes. With my Baptist church membership approaching two decades compromised due to questions of orthodoxy, living among a people pursuing orthodoxy was encouraging. CPC critically shaped my value and view of the Reformed position. Ultimately, CPC's Session was unwilling to allow me to oversee implementation of the recommendations. In fact, to date, members of the Session have failed to agree on how to move forward independent of my involvement. It appears that the Session's hope might have been that I would have changed, denounced the Southern Baptist Convention for Presbyterianism, and become a member to move forward with CPC. Instead, my Southern Baptist positions were reinforced by my CPC experience, my project activity led me into meaningful dialog with a variety of Georgetown's church leadership, and this ultimately led to the dialog with Terranova Church leadership resulting in a path toward membership. This is not to say that gospel progression in the lives of individual members of CPC did not result from this project's endeavors.

The cooperative strength of the project relied on meaningful conversations that I had with members of the Session, each of whom are the architects and visionaries behind the philosophy of ministry at CPC. From these conversations, I attempted to capture and synthesize helpful data toward a gospel-centric conclusion. Additionally, being able to hear from Community Groups yielded helpful data.

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<sup>80</sup> See "CPC Drama, Teaching Elder Directional Guidance, and Resulting Cooperation" in chapter 4.

There are many weaknesses to this project. I had clearly underestimated the consequences of the membership issue at the outset. CPC membership was seriously contemplated because it was biblically defined and disciplined—unlike my Baptist church. In hindsight, I wish that I had asked fewer and more concise questions to the Ruling Elders or at least had more intricately prepared follow-up questions to take us introspectively deeper. I also wish that I had been successful in establishing more deeply rooted relationships with the members of the Session for them to better experience my love for them and the church that they so faithfully serve. I would have done that differently if time had allowed for it. Ruling Elders and I may have learned something new of friendship. It was when my apprenticeship was questioned based on the absence of membership that the authority of the Session became difficult to negotiate.

As I consider my time serving CPC, I am convinced all the more that Jesus lived a pattern in his life to which a genuine believer is drawn. There is no greater work than personally apprenticing Jesus resulting in the flourishing of the gospel in multiplicity. I witnessed evidences that the CPC Community Group is a vital platform to grow as a disciple and grow the church. I also learned that CPC's members feel partially equipped and completely desirous of fulfilling their scriptural responsibilities to apprentice their Master well for the gospel. Members do recognize that there is a failing to achieve CPC's stated vision. Yet, when offered the opportunity to deploy *Simple Evangelism* training in 2019, the Session opted for an inwardly focused program to address member anxiety, fear, and depression. It is this inward focus that seems a wall to CPC's collective outreach.

Missionally, focusing on those who are subject to their authority (children, the infirmed, and those incarcerated) may be precluding members from developing the disciplines necessary in relational vulnerability. Vulnerability within CPC's own member relationships will determine the individual's capacity to make disciples both inside and outside membership. If CPC members can breach their self-determined limitations for

vulnerability in relationships with fellow members, then each will develop the tactics necessary to do so in their social circle to foster evangelism. It will be from relationship with their Georgetown neighbors that CPC will fulfill their vision statement. These relationships are the members' responsibility and any salvific result is God's responsibility. I thank God for His grace and for the members of CPC whom I love.

The disaffected state of my longstanding Baptist church membership has been affirmed by my time serving the faithful members of CPC. Concurrently, the Lord has delivered my wife and me to a local church that aligns with the distinctives of our Southern Baptist Theological Seminary tradition. The Elders of Terranova Church have read and affirm the content and conclusions of this project. The Senior Pastor of Terranova Church asserts that the introspective questions this project promotes are “convicting,” thus reinvigorating his own intentional personal disciple-making endeavor.<sup>81</sup> As Lori and I move through the membership process, he has asked that I present the project to the Terranova Elders and engage in disciple-making in tandem with him. He and I share a desire to see CPC and Terranova members cooperate locally for the gospel. This being the case, I cannot say that this is the end to my dissertation project. I believe this the beginning of flourishing through cooperative disciple-making in Georgetown, Texas—for the truth, for the church, for the world, for the glory of God.

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<sup>81</sup> Kyle Cheatham, interviewed by Michael Thompson, Georgetown, TX, June 5, 2020.

## APPENDIX 1

### **Position Description: Evangelism & Outreach Leader**

**Department:** Missions

**Location:** Christ Presbyterian Church (CPC), Georgetown, Texas

**Reports to:** Session of CPC (RE: SH overseeing Missions and directly relates to Assistant Pastor Woonny Kim leading Assimilation).

**Classification:** Bi-Vocational/Developmental

**Purpose:** The position is structured for the purpose of training for gospel ministry in context of PCA orthodoxy and doctoral dissertation project pastoral staff mentorship

**Thesis:** Cooperation of Reformed Peoples (PCA and confessional Baptist) for the Purpose of Evangelistic gospel ministry in Georgetown, Texas.

**Commitment:** CPC staff and Session are committed to what is necessary in fully developing the candidate in his ministry calling and doctoral program completion.

### **Position Description and Responsibilities**

#### **Position Summary:**

The Evangelism & Outreach Coordinator leads the church to grow in its vision “*to invite every person in Georgetown and every place CPC serves into life-changing relationship with Jesus Christ.*” He provides Biblical leadership and supports the ministries of CPC specifically in the area of evangelism and outreach. Cultural engagement and spiritual formation of congregation membership is emphasis of the position charter. A member of the CPC staff, he will enable the church to focus on carrying out the Great Commission through formal training and informal influence. He will especially aim to instill in the lifestyle of CPC a culture of hospitality and evangelism. This leader will coordinate with CPC leadership to plan and implement a gospel outreach ministry.

#### **Personal Qualifications:**

- Committed Christ-follower who brings right worship of the one true God into the surrounding culture in context of individual lives, families, and the CPC congregation.
- Desirous to help the congregation, surrounding community, and the un-churched/mis-churched encounter and grow in Christ.
- Possesses organizational and leadership skills.
- Devoted to praying, speaking, singing, reading, preaching Scripture.

#### **Position Qualifications:**

- Previous experience in evangelism OR outreach ministry (paid or volunteer)
- BA or BS degree and progressing in theological education (e.g., MDiv)

**Position Responsibilities:**

- Assist in oversight of evangelistic ministries of the church, including but not limited to outreach, special evangelism events, missions, etc.
- Create culture, environments, and training to facilitate evangelism through new and existing ministries inside CPC.
- Available for additional tasks as directed by pastoral staff.
- To teach the Bible in accordance with CPC doctrinal statement.
- Work alongside the pastoral staff in communicating the priority of evangelism and outreach in accordance with the CPC vision.
- Participate in monthly all-staff meetings.
- Participate in bi-weekly Assimilation Meeting.
- Orchestrate a system to prime ministry leaders for known incoming visitors.
- Participate in special programs and events as needed.
- Prepare an annual plan of activities to be approved by the Missions Ministry.

**Position Competencies & Expectations:**

- Fully embraces the mission, vision and values of CPC.
- Must be reliable, self-motivated, and take initiative.
- Embrace and adapt to growth, change, innovation and creativity.
- Use appropriate judgment in the areas of discretion, sensitivity and confidentiality
- Have a cooperative, healthy, and motivating relationship with coworkers and volunteers.
- Possess an attitude of servant leadership.
- Model the call, character, and competencies becoming a minister of the gospel of Jesus Christ.
- Promises to support the church in its worship and work to the best of his ability.
- Promises to be submitted to the government and discipline of the church and promises to study its purity and peace.

**Position Essential Functions:**

- **EVANGELIZING:** this person will evangelize in various ways in the community.
- **EQUIPPING OTHERS to EVANGELIZE:** he will train and equip others to evangelize in their spheres of influence.
- **COMMUNITY OUTREACH:** this position will lead and help coordinate a plan for reaching out with the gospel in meaningful ways to the Georgetown community. This will include mobilizing the congregation to serve the community in various manners to demonstrate love and represent God's grace to them:
  - Support the Session in their understanding of the vision, focus, and plans of surrounding communities' leadership for economic, political, and cultural development.
  - Become knowledgeable of the plans, interests, and activities of faith based organizations in and around the Georgetown area and prepare profiles on these organizations. Lead the development of a strategy for engaging in the ministries of these organizations as directed by CPC leadership.

- **MENTORING:** this will include meeting with people in the congregation for the sake of helping them mature and grow in Christ as a maker of disciples.
- **DISCIPLING:** this will include meeting with men and couples for the sake of helping them think biblically regarding their life situations.
- **TEACHING:** this will include sharing God's Word in a formal type setting, including at times on Sunday morning, but also in various smaller classroom forums.
- **VISITATION:** this will include visiting the sick at times for prayer and encouragement.

**Position Skill Set:**

- Active and growing personal relationship with Jesus Christ, evidenced by action, attitude, and behavior.
- A passion for ministry.
- Effective communication skills (written, verbal, and interpersonal).
- Demonstrated ability to understand and relate to the congregation and community.
- Ability to reach out and connect with families, as needed.
- Competency with basic computer software.
- Ability to share faith, testimony, and scripture with others in order to evangelize, as well as train others to do so.

**Position Relationships:**

- Reports to the Assistant Pastor of CPC.
- Works closely with all areas of ministries within CPC.

APPENDIX 2

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VAN**MICHAELTHOMPSON&**  
GELISMSIMPLE**WOONNYKIM**

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# SIMPLE EVANGELISM<sup>1</sup>

Why does evangelism seem so hard? Is it an inherently difficult task, or have we complicated it under layers and layers of methodologies and approaches?

What's clear is that in the foggy confusion of what to do, evangelism has for many Christians become a chore. What is meant to be an organic and joyful outflow of life in God's Kingdom has become labored, begrudging obligation for not a few followers of Christ. Perhaps evangelism brings to mind pre-packaged sales tactics or reductive techniques that rarely work as advertised. Maybe you think of the awkwardness that halted a relationship with a co-worker or neighbor once you brought up your faith in conversation. Or, maybe like many others, you simply walk around feeling guilty about all that you should be doing but aren't.

Many of us have sought to love our unbelieving neighbors and build up relationships based on trust and genuine care. We have rightly recognized that turning a person into our "project" to meet our evangelism quota betrays the nature of relationships, for one, and of the gospel, for another. Somehow though, while playing the "long-game," we've lost a sense for how to make progress. We need a strategy for speaking the gospel, but instead we keep waiting for the unbelieving person to bring it up first. We feel lost in our effort to save the lost.

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## LIFTING THE FOG

Somewhere along the way, evangelism became a source of frustration, uncertainty, and insecurity. We often feel afraid to fail, even as we grasp the importance of doing it. What we've forgotten is that evangelism isn't really about us. The battle belongs to the Lord—it's *his* good news and it's *his* redemptive plan and it's *his* power that matters. Sure, we are his instruments and we have a role to play, but before we look at task, target, or tool in leading others to Christ, we would do well to see how Jesus himself led others to the good news of the Kingdom. Of course, Jesus is the fulfillment of the Father's plan of salvation, not merely its messenger, so not all his steps are for us. Nevertheless, Scripture is clear that Jesus' method of ministry was more than incidental. They are the vital pattern Jesus intended for his followers to imitate as they carry out the remainder of his saving work as his Church.

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## IMITATING CHRIST

Like the other Gospel writers, Luke gives an account of Jesus—the Messiah and long-awaited Savior of the world; the fulfillment of all the Father's design and desire to pursue and redeem mankind now realized in his incarnate Son (1:32-33). The Gospel of Luke is about the radical *singularity* of the person and work of the Christ. Unique among the Gospel writers, however, Luke writes his Gospel with a second narrative in mind; and in Acts, Luke shows the radical *continuity* of Christ's saving work, carried out in the power of the Holy Spirit through the Apostles' work to establish the Church—an institution in which the followers of Jesus could bear witness to him to the ends of the earth to the end of the age.

With that continuity in mind, Luke presents Jesus both to show his unique power and person and to show the life Jesus' followers were to imitate. Paul, Luke's contemporary and co-laborer, wrote,

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<sup>1</sup> An abridged version of *Simple Evangelism* is included in the project appendices in order to meet the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary style requirements. Colored pictorials, graphs, and formatting have been removed or altered so as to comply with standards.



“Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ (1 Cor. 11:1 ESV), and Luke clearly has something like that in mind. If Christians, faithful to the work and life of Christ and carried on by the same Spirit as the Apostles, want to know how to lead, evangelize, disciple, or do any other sort of ministry, Jesus’ example is square one.

## ABIDING

Obeying the Father • Trusting in the Word • Walking in the Spirit

In order to **obey the Father**, according to Luke, evangelism for the believer must be a Trinitarian enterprise. In other words, you need to trust in the Father, the Son, and the Spirit to evangelize. Evangelism stems from obedience to the Father, which for Jesus began as a child in the synagogue (Luke 2:49). After being baptized, the Holy Spirit descends upon Jesus and the Father speaks from heaven saying, “You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased (Luke 3:21-22).” Before Jesus does anything, the Holy Spirit “comes upon” him. The Father, Son, and Spirit are unified in their singular purpose of restoring man to God.

In Luke 3, Jesus’ evangelism begins with what Paul describes in Galatians, “If we live by the Spirit, let us also **walk by the Spirit** (Gal. 5:25 NIV).” Man’s condition apart from God requires the Spirit (2 Cor 5:7). Jesus is “full of the Holy Spirit” as Luke 4 opens (4:1). Jesus is led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by Satan (Luke 4:1-2). After forty-days, Luke tells the reader that Jesus came out of the desert in the “power of the Spirit (Luke 4:14).” Jesus is not living according to his own strength in dealing with the trials set before him in the desert, but he is demonstrating the power of the Spirit to overcome. Likewise for us, it is the Spirit that is effective in evangelism. The believer following Jesus’ pattern trusts and cooperates.

Having responded to the temptations presented him in the desert by walking in the Spirit, Jesus begins his ministry (Luke 4:14). He returns to his hometown of Nazareth where the people have knowledge of him prior to the Spirit coming upon him and his desert trials (Luke 4:21). Teaching in the synagogue, Jesus reads from Isaiah 61:12 to identify himself as the promised Anointed. In the desert, Jesus did not look to his circumstance to define his identity. Now, in his hometown, Jesus does not allow the people to define him. Rather than being affected by circumstance, and the people surrounding him, Jesus **trusts the Word** for his true identity. Jesus knew, spoke, and did the word (and in fact, *was* the Word, (John 1:14)) such that he completely obeyed the Father to overcome the world (1 John 5:3-5). Jesus recognizes the reality of the identity assigned by the Father in salvation is in being the Word (John 7:16-18). Jesus provides the truth in which all men and women would need to abide.

## CONNECTING

Meeting Needs • Building Trust • Diagnosing Hearts

**Meeting needs** involves two stated behaviors that Jesus reads in Isaiah—*proclaiming* and *healing* (Luke 4:18-19). We are to both speak the Word and do good deeds. Both are required of the believer, even if the results can be mixed. Sometimes, Jesus must avert those who are hostile to the gospel (Luke 4:30), and Luke’s story teaches us that we should anticipate opposition from those who

identify Jesus in a way that does not match the way his Father identifies him. Some people will connect with Jesus and other people will reject Jesus. Nevertheless, Jesus demonstrates that one purpose of being Spirit-filled is to meet needs in order to connect with the world around him. By doing this consistently, the surrounding culture begins to know Jesus as one who meets needs (Luke 4:37).

Trusting Jesus, Simon Peter hosts Jesus in his home, which then serves as a base of ministry for Jesus in the town. Jesus' reputation as one who meets needs (healer) results in Simon Peter inviting Jesus into his home to heal his wife's mother because Jesus had **built trust** (Luke 4:38). As a result of repeated success, Jesus builds trust so that the sick people of the town come to Simon Peter's home to be healed (Luke 4:38-40). Luke understands that it is in the two-fold tactics Jesus employs in meeting needs (speaking truth and doing good) that builds trust to follow him.

**Diagnosing hearts** enables us to know people's needs. While Jesus is praying, people are looking for him because of his reputation as a man who meets needs. He tells them, "I must preach the good news of the kingdom of God to the other towns as well; for I was sent for this purpose (Luke 4:43)." We can understand what motivates others by asking them questions, listening to their answers, and contrasting their desires with the desires of the Father. Our mission to meet needs is not dictated by cultural boundaries, desires, or expectations, or by the motives of man (Luke 14:1-6). Asking questions, rather than making statements, gets the other person talking to give us information to diagnose their motives (heart desires). Asking questions is the key tactic for diagnosis rather than asserting our judgments of others (Luke 6:37).

## EVANGELIZING

Identifying Yahweh, Man, & Jesus • Speaking the Truth in Love • Seeking a Response

Upon his realization of what he was experiencing in his nets, Simon recognized his unworthiness, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord! (Luke 5:8 ESV)." Simon responded in contrite repentance correctly **identifying** Yahweh's holiness. It's apparent that Simon also correctly identifies Jesus, since he acknowledges him as Lord and regards him with reverent fear. Jesus responded to Simon's confession of sin, saying, "Do not be afraid, from now on you will be catching men." More directly stated in Mark's Gospel, "Follow Me, and I will make you become fishers of men (5:10)." Simon Peter left his nets to follow Jesus. In turn, Jesus establishes his new identity, redefining Simon the fish catcher to a catcher of men.

Jesus models **speaking the truth in love** rather than judgment (Luke 6:37-38). He further defines truth by defining what is due his Father and what is due man (Luke 20:19-26). Jesus says, "Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you," treating well both those who love and those who hate him (Luke 6:27-28).

Before Peter left Capernaum, he abided in the Father, connected with those around him by meeting their needs and impacted those in his path by speaking and doing what Jesus had said and done. Having established the identities of Yahweh, man, and Jesus, Peter **sought response** from his social circle because he had a clear understanding of their heart condition due to the time he had invested in relationship with them. Response is required when hearing and seeing the identities of the Father, man, and Jesus. The resurrection ultimately validates Jesus' identity as the Son who then calls for man's response as his disciples (Luke 24:47). Jesus makes clear that no man can be his disciple by doing anything other than imitating him (Luke 14:27).

## DISCIPLING

Cultivating Faith • Deepening Obedience • Modeling Christ

Jesus' model requires obeying the Father and being a vessel of the Spirit (Rom. 9:21-23). Jesus intends for his disciples to repeat what he's been doing by imitating his pattern of speech and behavior.

**Cultivating faith** in Luke happens by forsaking all things for the sake of following Jesus. Jesus' assertion is shocking when his mother, Mary, and his brothers come looking for him. Jesus redefines family stating that "My mother and my brothers are those who hear the word of God and do it (Luke 8:21)." Family to Jesus comprises those who hear the Father's word and obey it!

In Luke 7, John the Baptist—the man who obeyed God, met needs, preceded Jesus to prepare his way, faces execution for his faithfulness to the Father. Understandably discouraged, John sends his disciples to Jesus to get affirmation that Jesus is who John thought he was—the Messiah (Luke 7:18). Jesus answer seems indirect. Instead, Jesus instructs them to tell John what they have seen Jesus do. By seeing Jesus meeting people's needs, the disciples are given what John desires to know, thus cultivating John's faith and **deepening his obedience**. Actually, it turns out Jesus is showing John how he has been fulfilling Isaiah 61, affirming for him that he truly is the Messiah. At the deepest point of John's obedience, John follows him by dying (Luke 9:9). In John's death, Luke teaches something about control. As we become more honest and secure in the doctrine of God's grace, we stop trying to control people and circumstances, and in faith and obedience, we stop manipulating the results. In place of control, we trust God has the power to do what he wills.

Jesus intentionally chose twelve men to obey him and **model Jesus' example**. Luke 6 exhibits a crucial activity of discipleship—speaking to the Father in prayer. Later in Luke, his disciples ask Jesus explicitly to teach them to pray (Luke 11:1-13). As Jesus teaches about the prayers of the religious leader and the tax collector (Luke 18:9-14), he subverts the social order that leads people to treat others better and worse based on their own value judgments and sets the expectation that the Father regards humble repentance and impartial compassion. Jesus teaches his disciples in that parable to be unmoved and unimpressed by anything but the Father's will, because that alone is how we find grace and peace in relationships with others and bring them into abiding relationships with the Father.

## WORSHIPPING

Remembering the Father • Renewing Hearts • Building the Church

Luke 8 opens by summarizing that Jesus was traveling with his twelve disciples from town to town speaking (proclaiming the good news) about the kingdom, and those who were healed were with him. Jesus gathers the twelve disciples together giving them the authority to proclaim the Father's kingdom and to heal the sick and find houses of peace (Luke 9:1). He gives them specific instructions and sends them out to abide, connect, engage, disciple, and worship. Luke tells us that they went out and traveled from village to village "preaching the gospel and healing everywhere. (Luke 9:1-6 ESV)" They were just doing what they had seen Jesus model for them.

**Remembering the Father** is always in relationship. Whether urging the use of earthly means to build human relationships (the Parable of the Dishonest Manager, Luke 16:1-13) or teaching about the commitments of marriage (Luke 16:18), Jesus clearly regards the relationships we hold with one another as reflecting and impacting our relationship with the Father. All Jesus' directives are rooted in relationship: loving both Father and man. The condition of man's heart is requisite for worshipping the Father (Ps 107:12-22).

The "parable of the sower" follows remembering the Father. Speaking of the heart as the soil receiving seeds of faith, remembering the Father can result in abundance and/or famine depending on the condition of the heart of the receiver. The Father fulfills his responsibility of preparing the soil (heart) and the sower fulfills his responsibility of sowing (speaking and doing the Father's Word in remembrance). At times, when a disciple sows the Father's Word, even following much prayer and faithful speaking and doing, the results can be disappointing (Ps 40:14). Jesus is setting the expectation that the heart condition determines what a disciple should expect to happen. He tells them that there are the four kinds of heart responses to the gospel: the hard path, rocky soil, thorny soil, and good soil. The good soil yields multiplicity (Matt 13:1-9). In Jesus' parable, the disciple understands that not all who follow are genuine. As we build the church one heart at a time, the Bible tells us that some will fall away (Ps 101:3). Still others will return to worship and celebrate what the Lord has done.

Worshipping together is the final step in the process of evangelism because genuine faith is expressed by delighting in the object of faith. The good theology that undergirds the prior steps, if it is genuinely believed and applied, ought to lead to doxology—a rich and robust praise of God. Not only does that provide the period to end of the sentence in evangelism, in worship we find the mission of God compelling us to the next sentence God would utter through his disciples—to go out and abide, connect, evangelize, disciple, and return with yet more souls to worship God.

## APPENDIX 3

Date: May 2, 2019  
To: Larry Lorimor (LL)  
Copy: Whit Anderson (WA), Woonny Kim (WK)  
From: Michael Thompson (MT)  
Subject: Evangelism & Outreach Leadership

The purpose of this memo is to provide a brief status summary, ideas for a go-forward plan, and summative assessment specific to Christ Presbyterian Church (CPC) evangelism and outreach. CPC vision reflects that we know that CPC's ministry becomes ineffective and unrecognized if CPC fails to connect to our community, which is evangelism and outreach.

**Summary:** Recognizing deficiency in CPC's making of disciples specific to the area of Evangelism, the Session defined my CPC role as Evangelism & Outreach Leader. Four iterations of position description have defined my charter. Charter was based on CPC need for CPC-member development in disciple making. I was assessed by the Session as having been called, equipped, and to be effective for the purpose of equipping the congregation to make disciples to fulfill CPC's mission statement.

Following LL's discipleship role designation, I applied Scripture to the position description to formulate Biblical definition of the evangelism and outreach leader role by way of a "research paper," which was submitted to the Session, edited, and approved. Focal is leadership as defined by Luke in his Gospel. In articulating what Lori and I have volitionally implemented in our marriage as our disciple-making model, I articulated the "**5-Step Model**" as defined by Luke in his Gospel to imitate Jesus in the making of disciples. Partnering with WK, we edited my language to apply the model in the context of CPC. WK and I partnered in his editing my narrative to produce a white-paper that illustrated how to live out the gospel by way of applying Luke's Gospel (with corresponding PowerPoint for engaging Community Groups (CGs)).

WK and I have since presented the "**5-Step Model**" to CPC CGs. One Group remains and will participate in the presentation over the summer. We desire member's minds, hearts, and behavior to be shaped by Scripture to be like Christ in the making of disciples.

**Go Forward Plan:** WK and I used the CG sessions as a means of pre-assessment and formative assessment.

We were connecting with the congregation, asking questions and listening to collect data for the overall planning of CPC evangelism curricula requirement while executing a real-time assessment of the status of member evangelism.

CPC members tell us that their behavior is inconsistent with the way Luke tells us to imitate Jesus' example. Members recognized orthodoxy in each of the "5-Steps." Yet, they consistently identify deficiencies when we explored how individual members are – abiding, connecting, evangelizing, discipling, and gathering to worship the one true God. We know that a single presentation does not achieve enduring change. Hence, we need to continue in a process that is affirmed in Scripture to cooperate with the Spirit in the lives of our members for this change by:

| "Keeping in Step with the Spirit."                                  |  |  |   |   |
|---|--|--|---|---|
| Presupposition  | The church is God's plan for instructing His people in 5 areas:  |  |   |   |
|   | Worship  | Fellowship   | <i>Evangelism</i>   | Kingdom<br>Consciousness  |
| Objective   | Equip CPC members " <i>to invite every person in Georgetown and every place we serve into a life-changing relationship with Jesus Christ.</i> "  |  |   |   |
| Scope   | Parenting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deut 6:4-9</li> <li>• Eph 6:4</li> <li>• Col 3:18-21</li> </ul>   | Love God and Neighbor<br>The Greatest<br>Commandment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Matt 22:34-40</li> <li>• Mark 12:28-31</li> <li>• Luke 10:25-29</li> <li>• Luke 10:30-37</li> <li>• John 5:3</li> <li>• John 14:15</li> <li>• 1 John 5:3b</li> <li>• Rom 3:20</li> </ul> | Make Disciples<br>The Great<br>Commission <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Daniel 7:13-14</li> <li>• Matt 28:18-20</li> <li>• Mark 16:15</li> <li>• Luke 24:47</li> <li>• Acts 1:8</li> </ul> |   |
| Context(s)  | CPC Adult Education  |  |   |   |
|   | Sunday School  | Community<br>Group   | Men's<br>Ministry   | Women's<br>Ministry   |
| Learning Task   | How to: <b>Abide; Connect; Evangelize; Disciple; and Gather for Worship</b>  |  |   |   |
| Organizing Principle  | Exercise continuity across the 4 contexts by partnering with the leader of each to plan and execute appropriate curricula presentation sessions that are interactive to move from cognitive/affectional to volitional individual member evangelism and outreach for purpose of " <i>making disciples of all.</i> " |  |   |   |
| Action / Concurrent Process Path for Change over the next 12 months | Publish the " <b>5-Step Model</b> " white-paper in a format consistent with the Chapell and Smallman   | Prepare a " <b>5-Step Model</b> " Sunday School curriculum that I would instruct the cognitive,  | Develop and execute the means by which to engage those adult members  | Form an evangelism and outreach focus group consisting of adult leaders |

|  |  |   |  |  |
|--|--|---|--|--|
|  | monographs for continuity of doctrinal data presentation and distribute to reinforce the Scriptural model as CPC’s view of disciple-making behavior. | encourage the affectional, and direct the volitional learning of adult members. | not participating in CGs with an interpersonal version of the “ <b>5-Step Model</b> ” CG presentation to ensure continuity across the congregation | in the 4 areas of CPC adult education to partner for desired outcome, including restructure of new member class to instruct the “ <b>5-Step Model</b> .” |
|--|--|---|--|--|

**Summative Assessment:** Members resonate with the “**5-Step Model**” gospel presented to date. Members have participated in editing the illustrative approach, which has contributed to their participation in the gospel story. As such, the model needs to be integrated into CPC curriculum across adult education to be effective in modifying member behavior. Further, members need to see the “**5-Step Model**” in print and be affirmed by the Session as orthodox to begin the change process.

Moving members from cognitive recognition, to engaging affectionally, and ultimately becoming volitional as their own gospel life model in the way individuals think, feel, and do in making disciples is CPC’s responsibility. In going forward, we should ask the following questions:

|                           |  |  |   |
|---------------------------|--|--|---|
| CPC MISSION               | <i>“CPC exists to invite every person in Georgetown and every place we serve into a life-changing relationship with Jesus Christ.”</i> |  |   |
| CPC PERFORMANCE VARIABLES | CPC PERFORMANCE LEVELS   |  |   |
|                           | Organization Level   | Process Level  | Individual level  |
| Mission/Goal              | Does CPC’s mission/goal fit reality as created by God and is defined by His Word?  | Do the process goals enable CPC to achieve CPC and member mission/goals?             | Is member doctrine congruent with the evangelistic mission/goals of CPC?        |
| System Design             | Do CPC systems provide structure and policies supporting the desired evangelistic performance?   | Are processes designed in such a way to work as a sustainable and repeatable system? | Do members face obstacles that impede their obedience performance in fulfilling |

|            |   |  |  |
|------------|---|--|--|
|            |   |  | evangelistic<br>Scriptural directive?  |
| Capacity   | Does CPC have the leadership, capital, and infrastructure to achieve the stated mission?                                | Does the defined process for change have the capacity to perform (quality, quantity, and timeliness)?  | Do CPC members have the mental, physical, and emotional capacity to perform the “ <b>5-Step Model</b> ?”                             |
| Motivation | Do CPC policies, culture, and reward systems support the desired evangelistic performance?                              | Does the process provide the information and human factors required to maintain it?                    | Do CPC members want to perform evangelism and outreach no matter what?   |
| Expertise  | Does CPC establish and maintain selection and training policies and provide resources that support the desired outcome? | Does the process of developing evangelistic expertise meet the changing demands of changing processes? | Do members have the knowledge, skills, and experience to perform according to the Scriptural standard defined by Luke in his Gospel? |



## APPENDIX 4

### SIMPLE DISCIPLE-MAKING IN OUTREACH

Facilitator: Michael P. Thompson  
thompson.michaelp@gmail.com  
(214) 868-MIKE

**CLASS DESCRIPTION:** An in-depth study of the theology and practice of disciple-making as exemplified in the life of Christ according to Luke's Gospel, designed to equip the learner: to understand the cultural context in which they minister the gospel, to share the gospel effectively in that context, to respond appropriately to the issues raised as they share the gospel, and to train others in a variety of skills related to the Great Commission mandate.

**LEARNING OBJECTIVES:** While *worship* is the church's primary *purpose*, *disciple-making* should be its primary *activity*. It is imperative for CPC-members to know how to witness so that they can promote God's effective call among all men and women to make disciples themselves. In this class you will learn how to more strategically think, act, and pray. You will understand the nature and mission of the church as well as be equipped to implement a biblically-based theology of personal disciple-making to realize CPC's vision of existing "*to invite every person in Georgetown and every place we serve into a life-changing relationship with Jesus Christ.*" You will be able to communicate God's truth clearly, accurately, and effectively.

**CLASSROOM VALUES:** The facilitator will guide the learning experience according to the following values to which the facilitator and learner mutually agree:

- Scripture is authoritative. It serves as the single ultimate source by which facilitator and learner (interchangeable roles) subjects one's thinking and feeling. Scripture is the source of self-examining one's belief and behavior internally through praying Scripture and externally through the transparency of asking one another questions. Hence, class behavior is to Prepare-Ask-Listen-Learn-Act. (1 Tim 4:16; 2 Tim 3:16)
- In that the facilitator and learner roles are interchangeable at any one time, all agree to reason through Scripture together whenever and whatever our thinking and feeling does not agree. (Isa 1:18)
- As facilitators and learners, we agree to seek unity in Christ by the power of the Spirit. (Ps 133:1; Eph 4:3, 4:13; 1 Pet 3:8)

### **CLASS POLICY:**

- **Why Prepare:** Each of us as believers are instructed to be ready at any moment to account for our belief and behavior to other moral creatures, as well as knowing that the historical moment will come in time when each person must give an account of his/her belief and behavior to God (1 Peter 3:15; Rom 14:12).
- **Assignment Submission Guidelines:**
  - Papers will be completed prior each class session as: a tool to capture biblical data for class participation, a location for noting builds and changes to one's thinking during class participation, and a means of communicating progress of growth to the facilitator at the end of each class session. (1 Tim 4:16)
  - The witnessing reports will be completed by using the form available in class handouts. (1 John 1:13)

### **DISCLAIMERS:**

1. This syllabus is intended to reflect accurately the class description, content outline, class objectives, evaluative criteria, activities to be evaluated, major benchmarks, consequence of absence, class bibliography, and other information necessary for the learner to appraise the class. However, during the period of the program, the facilitator reserves the right to modify any portion of this syllabus as may appear necessary because of events and circumstances that change.
2. In order to ensure full class participation, any learner with a disabling condition requiring special accommodations (e.g., tape recorders, special adaptive equipment, special note-taking or test-taking needs), or scheduling conflict is strongly encouraged to contact the facilitator prior to the initial class session.
3. All learners are required to affirm their commitment to fully prepare and participate in each learning exercise.

**Evaluative Outcome:** Learning objective of this class can only be 100 percent achieved in the life of each learner if preparation and participation are subscribed at 100 percent. The learner can anticipate enhanced result in their own personal spiritual formation on progressing scale:

**5 CLASS GOALS:** Upon completion of the 6 class sessions and corresponding preparatory work, you will be able to:

1. Consistently share your faith in Christ in evangelistic encounters by effectively connecting with those who are lost and wandering. This objective will be accomplished through:
  - a. Learning to live the 5 components of Luke's Gospel-centered life pattern
  - b. Readings in the class texts
  - c. Class learning and discussion
  - d. Writing out of personal conversion testimony
  - e. Maintaining a disciple-maker's prayer journal
  - f. Participating in at least five witnessing encounters, followed by personal evaluation and reflection.

2. Train others to share their faith effectively. This objective will be accomplished through:
  - a. Personal discipline in intentionally living the 5 components of Luke’s gospel-centered life pattern as a faithful example of behaving according to Scripture
  - b. Readings in the class texts
  - c. Class learning and discussion
  - d. Memorization of Scripture
  - e. Writing a personal disciple-making philosophy
  - f. Writing of a summary reflection paper
3. Understand the church’s nature and mission, as well as the contemporary cultural situation, and therefore be able to lead in faithful outreach. This objective will be accomplished through:
  - a. Memorization of Scripture
  - b. Readings in the class texts
  - c. Class lectures and discussion
  - d. Writing of sovereignty/responsibility critique
4. Communicate your thoughts topically on the making of disciples more clearly and organized according to a Scriptural-basis in writing. This objective will be accomplished through:
  - a. Writing of personal ministry philosophy
  - b. Writing of critical book reviews
  - c. Writing of a position paper on sovereignty/responsibility
  - d. Writing of a summary reflection paper
  - e. Written feedback on assignments
3. Communicate the gospel clearly and accurately. This objective will be accomplished through:
  - a. Memorizing forty specific verses of Scripture that relate to the gospel
  - b. Readings in the class texts
  - c. Class lectures and discussion
  - d. Class role-play
  - e. Participating in at least five witnessing encounters, followed by personal evaluation and reflection

**TEXTBOOKS:**

| 5-Point Pattern                 | Required Reading   | Supplemental Reading  |
|---------------------------------|--|---|
| Point 1 Abiding<br>John 15:4-17 | Packer, J. I. <i>Disciple-making &amp; the Sovereignty of God</i> . Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1991. | Colman, Robert E. <i>The Master Plan of Disciple-making</i> . Grand Rapids: Revell, 1993. |

|   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
|   | Whitney, Donald S. <i>Praying the Bible</i> . Wheaton: Crossway, 2013.*  | Whitney, Donald S. <i>Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life</i> . Colorado Springs: NavPress, 2014.   |
| Point 2<br>Connecting<br>Matt 28:18-19                                      | Beougher, Timothy. <i>Overcoming Walls to Witnessing</i> . BGEA, 1993.<br><br>Koukl, Greg. <i>Tactics: A Game Plan for Discussing Your Christian Convictions</i> . Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2009.*   | Metzger, Will. <i>Tell the Truth: The Whole Gospel Wholly by Grace Communicated Truthfully &amp; Lovingly</i> . 4 <sup>th</sup> ed. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2012. |
| Point 3 Engaging<br>Matthew 28:20   | Gilbert, Greg. <i>What is the Gospel?</i> Wheaton: Crossway, 2001.   | Packer, J. I. <i>Keep in Step with The Spirit</i> . Old Tappan: Fleming H. Revell, 1984.   |
| Point 4 Discipling<br>Isa 8:16 (Read, Speak, Pray, Teach, Sing – Scripture) | Bridges, Jerry. <i>Respectable Sins: Confronting the Sins We Tolerate</i> . Colorado Springs: NavPress, 2007.*<br><br>Schaeffer, Francis A. <i>True Spirituality: How to Live for Jesus Moment by Moment</i> . Wheaton: Tyndale House, 1971. | Jones, Timothy Paul. <i>Family Ministry Field Guide: How Your Church Can Equip Parents to Make Disciples</i> . Indianapolis: Wesleyan Publishing House, 2011.                    |
| Point 5 Gathering   | Kauflin, Bob. <i>Worship Matters: Leading Others to Encounter the Greatness of God</i> . Wheaton: Crossway, 2008.  | Peterson, David. <i>Engaging with God: A Biblical Theology of Worship</i> . Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1992.   |

### CLASS REQUIREMENTS TO ACHIEVE LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

#### 1. Prepared Reading, Writing, and Class Participation

Comprehension and application of all eight texts in their entirety is required as learning foundation to achieve a life of disciple-making. Class discussion will be as beneficial to each learner as the effort to complete preparation to participate. “Winging it” hurts everyone’s quality of learning. Rather than being assumptive of expertise, taking time to allow the author of the text to challenge and augment your existing disciple-making philosophy benefits the body as a whole. Every

class experience will be interactive, the better prepared the learner, the better learning experience is the class. The idea is to foster discussion among the group.

The facilitator will provoke participation, and those who do not respond or engage will be encouraged to do so by advocating her/his position specific to the topic and not stray.

The facilitator may interject responses as well.

Responses will be evaluated to see if the learner is engaging the topical position of others in the class with Scriptural emphasis.

## 2. Three Critical Book Reviews (see required reading\*)

Each learner will submit three 1-page critical book reviews defining how the author's view affects the learner's personal philosophy of making disciples at the end of each corresponding class (Gilbert, Koukl, and Bridges).

## 3. Sovereignty/Responsibility Position Paper (see required reading\*)

Each learner will submit a 3-page critique/position paper of *Evangelism & the Sovereignty of God*. The paper should address the following issue, "What is the proper understanding of the relationship between the truth of divine sovereignty and the task of personal disciple-making?" Learners should include 1) a very brief summary of Packer's answer to this question, 2) a critique of Packer's position, and 3) the learner's Scripturally-derived personal answer to the question and how the learner's view is applied in ministry.

## 4. Personal Disciple-Making Philosophy

Each learner will be required to write and submit his or her personal disciple-making philosophy at the outset of the 6-class series in a single paragraph. At the end of the class series, each learner will repeat the exercise incorporating the knowledge and understanding derived from their class participation for comparison.

## 5. Witnessing Reports:

The only way one ultimately learns to do personal disciple-making is by doing it! Therefore, each learner is encouraged to take advantage of opportunities to witness during the class. Five of these experiences will be summarized on a Personal Disciple-Making Report Form that is provided for the learner; one of the five **must also** written up in a witnessing verbatim (an 8<sup>th</sup> assignment), which gives a complete account (running dialogue) of the conversation.

## 6. Personal Disciple-Making Reflection Paper

Following the completion of the five witnessing reports, each learner will complete a 3-page assessment. The paper will include what you have learned

about personal disciple-making in this class; what you have changed in your approach to personal disciple-making because of this class; what you still need to work on in your own ministry of personal disciple-making; etc.

7. **Personal Testimony:** (emphasizing Scripture memorization “word for word”)  
 Each learner will compose her/his personal testimony using a single paragraph that can make biblical sense from the supernatural occurrence for another moral creature’s consideration. The memorization exercise of the "40 Key Verses for Disciple-Making" is key to this exercise. Writing out these verses (word for word) from memory will clarify God’s role in salvation for us as His instruments to communicate. Failure to use Scripture to guide our thinking results in confusion. You may memorize from the Bible translation of your choice, but the English Standard Version (ESV) will be used in facilitation of the class.
8. **Prayer Journal:**  
 Prayer is an essential discipline in the making of disciples. Praying for God’s sovereign will in our personal endeavor, as well as praying with those who we seek after to turn from their idols and worship the one true God is requisite to the multiplying effect of the gospel. Each learner will maintain a disciple-making prayer journal by: (1) listing those that appear to be lost in their social circle in the front; (2) praying daily for the list of individuals; and (3) selecting at least five of the individuals for specific prayer and disciple-making endeavor in which the learner will intentionally serve as God’s instrument in the act of disciple-making as described by Luke in his Gospel while journaling what the learner detects as change and growth in her/himself and the one for whom she/he is praying.

**CLASS SCHEDULE:**

|  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| <b>PREPARE</b>                             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read: Syllabus and contact Michael with any questions you may have.</li> <li>• Memorize: 40 Key-Verses (The exercise will be ongoing).</li> <li>• Reading: Packer’s <i>Evangelism &amp; the Sovereignty of God</i> and Luke’s Gospel.</li> <li>• Write: 3-page Packer paper with your philosophy of personal disciple-making stated as the closing response.*</li> </ul> |   |
| <b>CLASS</b>                               | <b>SCRIPTURE</b>  | <b>CLASS TOPICS</b>   |
| 1. Intro. Luke’s view of imitating Christ. | <i>Selected Scripture from Luke’s Gospel</i>  | #1 What is Disciple-Making?<br>– Share your disciple-making philosophy*<br><br>#2 Biblical Foundations for personal disciple-making |

|                |   |   |
|----------------|---|---|
|                |   | #3 Motivations for Disciple-Making  |
| <b>PREPARE</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reading: Whitney's <i>Praying The Bible</i>.</li> <li>• Write: Your 1-page personal testimony of salvation and a list of names of those in your social circle who appear to be lost in the front of a notebook. Select 5 individuals from the list to daily pray for using the Bible. Journal what you ask and what you observe in that person's life.</li> </ul>                                |   |
| 2. Abide       | <i>Selected Scripture from Luke's Gospel</i>  | #4 Devotional Life and Disciple-Making<br>#5 Personal Holiness and Disciple-Making  |
| <b>PREPARE</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read: Gilbert's <i>What is the Gospel?</i> and Beougher's <i>Walls to Witnessing</i></li> </ul>  |   |
| 3. Connect     | <i>Selected Scripture from Luke's Gospel</i>  | #6 Overcoming Walls to Witnessing<br>#7 What is the Gospel?<br>#8 Concentric Circles of Concern<br>#9 Bridges to the Gospel   |
| <b>PREPARE</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reading: Koukl's <i>Tactics</i></li> <li>• Connect: With 5-people who you have relationship and who appear to be lost by applying Koukl's evangelistic approach.</li> <li>• Invite: Michael to join you in your disciple-making endeavor.</li> <li>• Write: a 1-page summary of the connection encounter: what worked for you and what didn't work. Tell about those awkward moments.</li> </ul> |   |
| 4. Evangelize  | <i>Selected Scripture from Luke's Gospel</i>  | #10 Methods of Sharing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gospel Booklet</li> <li>• Personal Testimony</li> <li>• Home Bible Study</li> <li>• Servant Disciple-Making</li> </ul> |
| <b>PREPARE</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Execute Methods of Sharing</li> </ul>  |   |
| 5. Disciple    | <i>Selected Scripture from Luke's Gospel</i>  | #11 Calling for a Response  |

|                    |   |  |
|--------------------|---|--|
|                    |   | #12 Dealing with Obstacles<br>#13 Common Objections and Obstacles  |
| <b>PREPARE</b>     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read: Bridge's <i>Respectable Sin</i></li> <li>• Write: 1-page Witnessing Reports</li> </ul>   |  |
| 6. Worship         | <i>Selected Scripture from Luke's Gospel</i>  | #14 Disciple-Making as a Way of Life: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children</li> <li>• Family Members</li> <li>• Cross-Cultural Disciple-Making</li> <li>• Cult Members</li> <li>• Church Members</li> </ul> #15 General Principles (e.g., Assurance of Salvation)<br>#16 Closing Challenge (Romans 1:14-16) |
| <b>POST-MORTEM</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete 5-evangelistic encounter witnessing reports with verbatim.</li> <li>• Write the 3-page reflection paper by applying memory verses.</li> </ul> |  |

#### 40 KEY VERSES FOR DISCIPLE-MAKING

| <i>GOSPEL THEME</i>     | <b>OLD TESTAMENT</b>                      | <b>NEW TESTAMENT</b>   |
|-------------------------|---|--|
| <b><i>GOD</i></b>       | Psalms 19:1<br>Leviticus 19:2             | Matthew 22:37-38<br>Revelation 4:11  |
| <b><i>REBELLION</i></b> | Isaiah 53:6<br>Isaiah 59:2                | Matthew 10:28<br>Romans 3:23<br>Romans 6:23<br>Hebrews 9:27                                  |
| <b><i>ATONEMENT</i></b> | Isaiah 1:18<br>Isaiah 53:5<br>Isaiah 55:7 | Matthew 11:28<br>John 1:12<br>John 3:16<br>John 3:36<br>John 14:6<br>Luke 13:3<br>Luke 19:10 |



|                            |  |   |
|----------------------------|--|---|
|                            |  | Acts 4:12<br>Acts 16:31<br>Romans 5:8<br>Romans 10:9<br>Romans 10:13<br>2 Corinthians 5:21<br>1 Peter 2:24<br>1 Peter 3:18<br>1 John 1:9<br>2 Corinthians 6:2<br>Ephesians 2:8-9<br>Revelation 3:20 |
| <i><b>ETERNAL LIFE</b></i> |  | John 10:10<br>John 6:37<br>1 John 5:12-13<br>Romans 8:16<br>John 5:24<br>2 Corinthians 5:17<br>2 Timothy 1:12   |
| <i><b>CONVERSION</b></i>   |  | John 3:3  |

APPENDIX 5

RULING ELDER RESPONSES FROM  
INTERPERSONAL INTERVIEW

| <b>Question</b>   | <b>RE: JD</b>          | <b>RE: SH</b>           | <b>RE: LL</b>                    | <b>RE: JS</b>                     | <b>Comments</b>  |
|---|------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|
| A1. How long have you served CPC as a RE?   | 1 year<br>CPC /<br>PCA | 2 years<br>CPC /<br>PCA | 1 year<br>CPC<br>25 years<br>PCA | 3 years<br>CPC<br>25 years<br>PCA |  |
| A2. How long have you been a member of the PCA?   | 5 years                | 13 years                | 28 years                         | 35 years                          | RE: SH – Raised Christian Church to Dispensational Baptist<br><br>RE: LL – Raised Methodist to Baptist (Walked down the street to the PCA when Baptist Church shut down) |
| A3. What is your understanding of the three critical demarcations of a true church?<br>1. Sound biblical teaching?<br>2. Proper administration of the sacraments?<br>3. Proper exercise of church discipline? | Agree                  | Agree                   | Agree                            | Agree                             |  |

|  |           |           |  |            |  |
|--|-----------|-----------|--|------------|--|
| <p>A4. Do you believe that a church's doctrine must be Reformed in order to be orthodox to Christ's teaching and hence be effective in the regeneration, salvation, and sanctification of the one who believes?<br/>Please elaborate</p> | <p>No</p> | <p>No</p> | <p>Yes<br/>(Not required for salvation or fellowship of believers)</p> | <p>Yes</p> | <p>RE: JD – “John and Charles Wesley were genuine believers.”</p> <p>RE: SH – “Calvinism does not define orthodoxy. A specific doctrinal position defines orthodoxy.”</p> <p>RE: LL – Historic theologies align with certain people's beliefs. “Calvin's is personally preferable because the 5 Solas put the entire process of salvation back on God's work and not humans.”</p> <p>RE: JS – “Tough question.” “Reformed theology is so radically doctrinally framed, so deliberate and succinct that the PCA is a firmly framed take-it-or-leave-it system.” “Reformed theology is perfect for those who are willing to be abused for the opportunity to challenge culture because</p> |
|--|-----------|-----------|--|------------|--|

| Question  | RE: JD | RE: SH | RE: LL | RE: JS | Comments  |
|---|--------|--------|--------|--------|---|
|   |        |        |        |        | we don't value culture."  |
| A5. Have you ever been personally disciplined by someone? |        |        |        |        | RE: SH – Disciplined by a "home church" pastors.  |
| Yes?/No?  | Yes    | Yes    | Yes    | Yes    | RE: LL – Baptist Pastor disciplined programmatically by applying Evangelism Explosion methodology and another man   |
| Was/is that person at CPC?                                |        |        |        |        | disciplined via the Navigators 2.7 program.   |
| Yes?/No?  | No     | No     | No     | No     | RE: JS – Former PCA Pastor John Wood and others from prior PCA church (Cedar Springs). "I am always seeking to be disciplined." "Discipleship is everything." |

| Question   | RE: JD | RE: SH | RE: LL | RE: JS | Comments   |
|--|--------|--------|--------|--------|--|
| <p>A6. If yes, which most accurately describe your CPC discipleship experience? Worshipping together? Bible Study? Living life together? Using Scripture and prayer together with worship to change to be more like Jesus? Bringing those who appear wandering into our relationship with Jesus for purpose of each one of us being changed to be more like Jesus?</p> | NA     | NA     | NA     | NA     | <p>RE: LL – “Some discipleship is happening, but it is unprogrammed and reliant on individual initiative. Not sustainable.”</p> <p>RE: JS - “CPC is weak at discipleship.”</p> |

| Question  | RE: JD   | RE: SH   | RE: LL  | RE: JS  | Comments  |
|---|--|--|---|---|---|
| <p>A7. Outside of your children, how do you think of yourself in personally and intentionally disciple-making by speaking and living out the gospel within your social circle expressly hoping that those who you serve might become followers of Christ?</p> <p>How might you improve in disciple-making?</p> <p>Do you have a personal strategy for disciple-making?</p> <p>If yes, what does that look like?</p> | <p>“There is intentionality in my prayer life for the lost. I always have three people who I am intentionally praying for to consider the gospel at work.”</p> <p>“I am encouraging maturity among the believers at church.”</p> | <p>“I have not been focusing on disciple-making in the past. This is now changing with a Session-led strategy.”</p> <p>“I need to intentionally seek men out to disciple.”</p> | <p>“I’m engaging with two to five people. It is more in acts of service than disciple-making.”</p> <p>“I need to be more intentional in my personal spiritual disciplines and engage in a program with deliverables (e.g., Journey).”</p> | <p>“My strategy for disciple-making is rooted in the derogatory. It is a provocative approach to produce reaction. It is rooted in the question, ‘Why do you think that way.’”</p> <p>“It is an approach to generate light through heat of debate, which is a character trait.”</p> | <p>RE: SH – The Session is reading <i>Sticky Church</i> by Larry Osbourne to address the issue of retention that has emerged.</p> |

| <b>Question</b>   | <b>RE: JD</b>  | <b>RE: SH</b>  | <b>RE: LL</b>  | <b>RE: JS</b>  | <b>Comments</b>   |
|---|--|--|--|--|---|
| <p>A8. Of the five-point pattern that Jesus lives according to Luke in his Gospel, rank (1) where you need to invest personal discipline for you to flourish in your disciple-making to (5) that which are simply inclined and find easy to do?</p> <p>Abiding in the Father?,<br/>           Connecting with the World?,<br/>           Evangelizing Wanderers?,<br/>           Discipling Spiritually Wounded?,<br/>           Worshiping the one true God?</p> | <p>A = 3.5</p> <p>C = 4</p> <p>E = 4</p> <p>D = 2</p> <p>W = 4</p> | <p>A = 3.5</p> <p>C = 3</p> <p>E = 1.5</p> <p>D = 1.5</p> <p>W = 3.5</p> | <p>A = 4</p> <p>C = 3</p> <p>E = 2</p> <p>D = 2</p> <p>W = 3</p> | <p>A = 2</p> <p>C = 4.5</p> <p>E = 3.5</p> <p>D = 4</p> <p>W = 4</p> | <p>RE: JS – “Lucy and I are praying daily for increased sensitivity to the doctrine of the Spirit’s opening doors and discernment of the person’s openness to explore Scripture.” “I am indignant of people taking worship lightly.” Qualified discipling as, “Engage in Jesus school to go deeper”</p> |

| <b>Question</b>  | <b>RE: JD</b> | <b>RE: SH</b> | <b>RE: LL</b> | <b>RE: JS</b> | <b>Comments</b>          |
|--|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|--------------------------|
| <p>A9. Currently, outside of your children, are you intentionally and regularly discipling an individual or individuals in the hopes that they would abide, connect, evangelize, disciple, and worship?</p> <p>If yes, what does that look like?</p> | No            | No            | No            | Yes           | RE: JS – “CG Leadership” |



| Question  | RE: JD   | RE: SH  | RE: LL  | RE: JS  | Comments |
|---|--|---|---|---|----------|
| A10. Are you intentionally and regularly discipling your children to abide, connect, evangelize, disciple, and worship? | Yes  | Yes   | Yes   | Yes   |          |
| If yes, what does that look like?   | “Absolutely, my wife is doing morning devotions with the children and reading Scripture to them every day. I lead family worship in the evenings in which we are using tools to catechize the kids.” | Wife has led due to current work schedule. Middle child is more receptive. Elder children less receptive. | “We are engaging with our children from a distance. Our discipling is informal and reactive. We respond when our kids have needs and questions. Our grandchildren tend to be much more engaged with us directly and responsive to our discipling effort.” | “I have been sending my adult children emails that I have titled ‘Morning Thoughts.’” “Engaged my two grandsons on the topic of progressive sanctification and answering their question, ‘How did God create man from dirt.’” |          |

| <b>Question</b>   | <b>RE: JD</b>                          | <b>RE: SH</b> | <b>RE: LL</b>  | <b>RE: JS</b>                               | <b>Comments</b> |
|---|--|---------------|--|---|-----------------|
| <p>A11. During 2019, what describes the social circle(s) where you are serving in disciple-making endeavor?</p> <p>Neighborhood?<br/>Workplace?<br/>Civic Organizations?<br/>School?<br/>CPC Mission?<br/>Other?</p>          | <p>Work</p> <p>Monthly Supper Club</p> | <p>Work</p>   | <p>Neighborhood</p> <p>CG</p> <p>Adult Sunday School</p> | <p>Neighborhood</p> <p>CG</p> <p>Family</p> |                 |
| <p>A12 During 2019, estimate the number of relationships you pursued with someone who might not be a Christian (excluding your children), with the express hope that they might hear and respond to God's effectual call.</p> | <p>6</p>                               | <p>3</p>      | <p>10</p>  | <p>3-4 ongoingly</p>                        |                 |

| <b>Question</b>  | <b>RE: JD</b> | <b>RE: SH</b> | <b>RE: LL</b> | <b>RE: JS</b> | <b>Comments</b>   |
|--|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---|
| A13. In 2019, how often did you share the gospel with someone who may not have been a Christian (excluding your children), with the express hope that this person would hear and respond to God’s effectual call?        | 6             | 3             | 10            | 50            | RE: JS – Refers to his endeavor quantified as 50 to all be “exploratory.” This indicates a social engagement that he pursues on a regular basis to engage in gospel conversation.   |
| A14. In 2019, approximate how many Christians did you regularly seek to personally disciple in hopes that you would contribute in God’s sanctifying them and multiply their lives into others (excluding your children). | 4             | 2-3           | 0             | 12            | RE: JD – The 4 men in monthly supper club. Not affiliated with CPC.<br><br>RE: SH – Differentiated programmatic from organic with 2-3 being rooted in some form of structure and specifying 12 to be organic.<br><br>RE: LL – “None programmaticall y and 6 organically.” |
| A15. On a scale of 1 to 10, rate the emphasis that CPC places on the instruction of personal disciple-making.  | 3             | 3             | 3             | 3             | RE: JD – “I don’t think about it. Go with whatever RE: LL assesses.”  |

| <b>Question</b>  | <b>RE: JD</b>                                   | <b>RE: SH</b>                             | <b>RE: LL</b>                             | <b>RE: JS</b>                                 | <b>Comments</b>   |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| A16. On a scale of 1 to 10, rate the emphasis CPC places on how to hopefully help another hear and respond to God's effectual call.  | 8.5   | 4   | 4   | 5   | RE: JD – "Every sermon is effective in communicating the gospel."   |
| A17. On a scale of 1 to 10, how equipped do you feel by CPC to personally and intentionally participating in God's sanctifying another?  | 7.5   | 6   | 4   | -2  | RE: JD – "Sunday schools and CGs are effective in communicating the gospel."<br><br>RE: LL – "I feel personally equipped at a level of 8 due to those who equipped me before CPC. The 4-point delta is CPC's weak notion of disciple-making." |
| A18. On a scale of 1 to 10, how equipped do you feel by CPC in each of the five points of disciple-making?<br>Abiding?<br>Connecting?<br>Evangelizing?<br>Discipling?<br>Worshiping? | A = 9<br>C = 6.5<br>E = 6.5<br>D = 6.5<br>W = 9 | A = 9<br>C = 7<br>E = 5<br>D = 6<br>W = 9 | A = 5<br>C = 4<br>E = 3<br>D = 4<br>W = 6 | A = 3<br>C = 2<br>E = 4<br>D = 2-3<br>W = 6-7 | RE: JD – "The order of worship is instructive to the entire congregation of abiding."<br><br>RE: JS – "CPC lacks a programmatic focus of producing discipling leaders."<br>"Discipleship is an externally focused activity."                  |

| Question   | RE: JD | RE: SH | RE: LL | RE: JS | Comments  |
|--|--------|--------|--------|--------|---|
| A19. On a scale of 1-10, how formally involved would you like CPC to be in arranging personal disciple-making relationships? | 10     | 9      | 8      | 6      | <p>RE: JD – “The question that the Elders need to address is how to systematically embed disciple-making into CPC culture.”</p> <p>RE: LL – “Discipleship is best served as structured programmatically.”</p> <p>RE: JS – “Discipleship should be tied to shepherding. Healthy churches have good programs with active shepherding as a statement of health.”</p> |

| <b>Question</b>   | <b>RE: JD</b> | <b>RE: SH</b> | <b>RE: LL</b> | <b>RE: JS</b> | <b>Comments</b>   |
|---|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---|
| <p>A20. From your perspective, who holds the primary responsibility for ensuring that people within CPC are connected into personal disciple-making relationships?</p> <p>Pastors?<br/>Elders?<br/>CG Leaders?<br/>The Person?<br/>Other?</p> | Elders        | Person        | Elders        | Elders        | <p>RE: JD – “The parent can put food on the table for the child but can only encourage him eat.”</p> <p>RE: LL – “As ‘overseer’ of discipleship the personal responsibility then falls to me.”</p> <p>RE: JS – “The Spirit is primarily responsible, but from a human perspective Elders are principally responsible by indirect development of methodology.”</p> |
| <p>A21. From your perspective, who holds the secondary responsibility for ensuring that people within CPC are connected into personal disciple-making relationships?</p>  | Person        | Session       | Pastors       | CG Leaders    | <p>RE: JS – “Shepherding programs are necessary. Having a tool that fosters the development of leadership that builds a discipling program is critical.”</p>  |

| <b>Question</b>   | <b>RE: JD</b> | <b>RE: SH</b>   | <b>RE: LL</b>   | <b>RE: JS</b>   | <b>Comments</b>   |
|---|---------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|---|
| A22. From your perspective, who holds the tertiary responsibility for ensuring that people within CPC are connected into personal disciple-making relationships?        | CG Leaders    | CG Leaders      | Person          | Pastors         | RE: JS – “Each Christian has the responsibility to and be disciplined.”<br>“Ordination is respected.” |
| A23. Have you been personally disciplined by the leader or another member of your CPC CG? Yes?/No?  | NA            | No              | No              | No              | RE: JS – “Not consistently or objectively.”   |
| A24. In 2019, how frequently did your CG meet?  | NA            | Twice per month | Twice per month | Twice per month | RE: JS – “My CG does not meet in my absence.”   |
| A25. In 2019, did your CG regularly break out during weekly group time into smaller and more focused groups? (Example: women meeting together with women, men with men) | NA            | No              | No              | No              | RE: SH – “I would like deeper relationship with members of my CG.”                                    |

| <b>Question</b>   | <b>RE: JD</b> | <b>RE: SH</b> | <b>RE: LL</b> | <b>RE: JS</b>  | <b>Comments</b>  |
|---|---------------|---------------|---------------|----------------|--|
| <p>A26. In 2019, did your CG regularly break out apart from your CG gathering into smaller and more focused groups?</p> <p>(Example: men meeting for weekly/biweekly breakfast, women meeting together on a separate night of the week)</p> | NA            | No            | No            | Yes* (no)      | RE: JS – 5 members are unaffiliated with CPC. *Random get together to socialize.                                 |
| <p>A27. If your CG regularly broke into smaller groups (during CG's regularly scheduled meeting or during another time of the week) how often did the smaller group meeting take place?</p>   | NA            | NA            | See Comment   | NA             | RE: LL – “Some CG members met regularly in participating in our CPC ministry areas (e.g., Men’s, Women’s, Choir) |
| <p>A28. On average, how many people were a part of the break-out group?</p>   | NA            | NA            | See Comments  | 2-3 (see A26*) | RE: LL – 4 to 5 participated in other CPC areas of ministry together.  |



| <b>Question</b>   | <b>RE: JD</b> | <b>RE: SH</b> | <b>RE: LL</b> | <b>RE: JS</b> | <b>Comments</b>   |
|---|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---|
| A29. Have you ever personally led someone to recognize God's effectual call and respond to God in faith and repentance? | Yes           | Yes           | Yes           | Yes           |   |
| A30. In 2019, did you experience someone hear and respond to God's effectual call in your CG?                           | No            | No            | No            | No            | <p>RE: LL – “CG’s need to focus on connecting in the community. CG’s are too focused on doctrine. Our CG has placed emphasis on study of the Westminster Catechism.”</p> <p>RE: JS – “We need to put discipline in what the CGs do.” “How can we extend and project the CG into the community?” “We need to use CGs to do community service.”</p> |

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## ABSTRACT

### DEVELOPING DISCIPLE-MAKERS AT CHRIST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN GEORGETOWN, TEXAS

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Chapter 1 provides an introduction for the project and outlines its goals. This chapter gives the rationale for the project and considers essential background information to understand the unique context of Christ Presbyterian Church (CPC). Chapter 1 communicates that the purpose of this project is to implement a model for cooperative disciple-making at CPC, specifically for those who are wandering, who are on a pilgrimage, and those who have been wounded in the progression of either venture.

Chapter 2 offers biblical and theological support for cooperative disciple making. In this chapter we look into Jesus's life pattern for cooperative disciple-making and show how his behavior evidences a discernable simple model for the believer to imitate, which must remain as an essential strategy for the modern believer as a member of the organic local church.

Chapter 3 shows how both the individual believer and organic local church are integral for cooperative disciple-making. In addition, this chapter explores the unique challenges and opportunities for cooperative disciple-making at CPC.

Chapter 4 reviews the results of the project, specifically by evaluating findings from the Ruling Elder Interpersonal Interview. The purpose of interviewing the Ruling Elders was to discern personal disciple-making practices within CPC's Session to assess



how CPC leaders understand, communicate, and prioritize disciple-making as a value within the church to be modeled by members.

Chapter 5 synthesizes the considerations and results of the previous chapters and offers formal proposals to CPC's Session to bolster and enhance CPC's model for cooperative disciple-making, as well as offering an evaluation of the project.

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