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EMPOWERING STUDENTS OF THE BAPTIST CAMPUS
MINISTRY FOR MISSIONAL ENGAGEMENT AT
THE UNIVERSITY OF LOUISVILLE

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Brian Christopher Hinton
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EMPOWERING STUDENTS OF THE BAPTIST CAMPUS
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Brian Christopher Hinton

Read and Approved by:

Faculty Supervisor: William D. Henard

Second Reader: Timothy K. Beougher

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I want to thank my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ for His persevering grace.
To Anna, thanks for your support! Your love enables me to do ministry freely.
C. J. and Caleb, thanks for being daddy's big boys. Your hugs and smiles as
I come home from work encourage me. Your constant love causes me
to strive toward being a better father and husband.

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PREFACE

I am thankful to my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ for his sanctifying work in my life. I am deeply appreciative for the love of my wife and friend, Anna. I am grateful to have two sons who encourage me to be more than I am.

Thanks to all my teachers and mentors who made this project possible. Much love to Dr. Bill Henard as you gave timely suggestions that helped push and motivate me along this journey. Special thanks to Dr. Hershael York, Pastor Aaron Harvie, and Pastor Blake Hodges for your constant encouragement through the Word of God.

Brian Hinton

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The development of students for service is a crucial step toward the furtherance of the Great Commission. In Deuteronomy 6, the Israelites are commanded to give Yahweh their total devotion. This commitment to the one true God includes the training of their children to do the same. It is implied in Proverbs 22:6 that training progenies correctly will help guide them throughout life. In Luke 18:15-17, Jesus teaches that the kingdom of God involves children, and believers must become child-like in their trust of God. As a result of these biblical mandates, Christians believe through adequate spiritual development students can become effective in missional engagement to their community.

Context

Students from various walks of life can be found on a university campus. By God's great providence, the University of Louisville (UofL) Baptist Campus Ministry (BCM) is located in the middle of campus. Ironically, this was not the first location of the BCM. In late 1940s, the Baptist Union was housed out of White Hall. White Hall, a Naval barrack, was named after a former UofL Law School graduate who lost his life during a battle off the island of Guam on December 7, 1941. White Hall was moved for the construction of Schneider Hall in 1955, which is the current site of the chemistry building. There is also evidence to suggest that during the 1950s and 1960s a Baptist Center was located on West Shipp Street.¹ Based on Louisville's digital library, a photo from around 1967 shows the Baptist Center located where the current Life Science Building stands.

¹ University of Louisville, "Baptist Center," accessed December 26, 2021, <https://digital.library.louisville.edu/cdm/landingpage/collection/uofl/>.

“The university promised to provide the Baptists’ with comparable land on which to construct a new building in exchange for the Baptists’ support for urban renewal.”² Groundbreaking for the new building was November 28, 1973. The current location of the BCM building was constructed and furnished by funds through the Kentucky Baptist Convention (KBC) in 1974.³ The building was dedicated on October 20, 1974.

UofL is Kentucky’s premiere, nationally recognized metropolitan research university.⁴ However, UofL has not always had this designation. The university originally started as a theological institution by the name of Jefferson Seminary in 1798.⁵ Jefferson Seminary experienced financial difficulties and was forced to close in 1829. Although the seminary closed, this led to new beginnings in 1833, when Louisville Medical (LMI) and Louisville Collegiate Institute (LCI) were chartered. LCI was renamed Louisville College in 1840 and in 1844 inherited portions of the Jefferson Seminary for higher education in Louisville.

LMI attracted large enrollments and prospered financially, but the college had difficulty remaining open. Proponents of grass roots democracy wanted to divert a portion of the medical school’s resources to the college. They won a partial victory in 1846, when Kentucky legislature created the University of Louisville proper, combining the medical school, the college, and a newly created law school.⁶

As of fall 2017, the enrollment figures for UofL’s population included 22,459 students. UofL’s student population consisted of 71.1 percent Anglo-American, 10.4 percent African American, and 18.5 all other minorities.⁷

² University of Louisville, “Baptist Center.”

³ University of Louisville, “Baptist Center.”

⁴ University of Louisville, “Facts and Figures,” accessed June 12, 2019, <http://louisville.edu/about/profile>.

⁵ The University of Louisville’s history page notes, “On April 3, 1798, eight men declared their intention to establish the Jefferson Seminary in Louisville.” University of Louisville, “A Brief History,” accessed June 12, 2019, <http://louisville.edu/about/history>.

⁶ University of Louisville, “A Brief History.”

⁷ University of Louisville, “Facts and Figures.”

As a result of its proximity to the campus, the BCM has a mission field of untapped potential on the property of UofL.

Rationale

The UofL BCM has functioned in some capacity on the UofL campus for approximately seventy-six years as a Christian Registered Student Organization to reach college students with the glorious gospel of Jesus Christ. Functioning on the campus of UofL has been a priority because of the value placed on reaching the next generation for Christ. According to White, “As the first truly post-Christian generation, and numerically the largest, Generation Z will be the most influential religious force in the West and the heart of the missional challenge facing the Christian church.”⁸ For the BCM to be a means in advancing the kingdom of Christ, it must intentionally engage students on campus. Therefore, it was imperative that the BCM train students aged 18-26 to be effective in missional engagement. This project trained and equipped students to be aware of their God-given responsibility and to live in a way that impacts the local campus as well as the community. The curriculum focused on biblical truths from the Old Testament and New Testament that emphasized the need for missional living.

Implications are clear in the New Testament as one looks at the Great Commission, as explained by D. A. Carson: “The NT can scarcely conceive of a disciple who is not baptized or is not instructed, Indeed the force of this command is to make Jesus’s disciples responsible for making disciples of others, a task characterized by baptism and instruction.”⁹

Craig Blomberg seems to echo similar thoughts: “To ‘make disciples of all nations’ does require many people to leave their homelands, but Jesus’s main focus

⁸ James E. White, *Meet Generation Z: Understanding and Reaching the New Post-Christian World* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2017), 11.

⁹ D. A. Carson, *Matthew: Chapters 13 through 28*, in vol. 2 of *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, ed. Frank E. Gaebelin and J. D. Douglas (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1995), 597.

remains on the task of all believers to duplicate themselves wherever they may be. The verb ‘make disciples’ also commands a kind of evangelism that does not stop after someone makes a profession of faith.”¹⁰ Stephen Lutz rings a similar bell when stating, “As we see in the Great Commission, evangelism was never meant to be divorced from discipleship, and neither of these can be divorced from mission.”¹¹ It is a weighty task to consider the inferences of heeding the commandment Jesus Christ gave to his disciples and ultimately to the church today.

In addition to the implications concerning the Great commission, one must be mindful of the involvement of the Holy Spirit in evangelism. He always goes before the evangelizer to prepare the hearts of the listeners to hear the gospel message. Along with the Holy Spirit, there is the ever-abiding presence of the Lord Jesus Christ during the process as well.

The BCM must continue to make disciples and send them out to make more disciples. Failure to live life on mission will impact the effectiveness of the BCM to reach other young adults.

Purpose

The purpose of this project was to empower students of the BCM for missional engagement at the University of Louisville.

Goals

This project was guided by four sequential goals to ensure effective equipping of students of the BCM. These goals include the following:

1. The first goal was to assess the current understanding of missions and evangelism among students.

¹⁰ Craig L. Blomberg, *Matthew*, The New American Commentary, vol. 22 (Nashville: Broadman, 1992), 431.

¹¹ Stephen Lutz, *College Ministry in a Post-Christian Culture* (n.p.: House Studio, 2011), 103.

2. The second goal was to develop a five-week curriculum on biblical evangelism and missional living.
3. The third goal was to increase the students' knowledge of missions and evangelism by implementing the curriculum.
4. The fourth goal was to coach students through development and implementation of a plan to engage the UofL campus.

Conclusive research methodology measured when these four goals were accomplished.¹² The research methodology and instruments used to measure the success of each goal were detailed in the following section.

Research Methodology

Four goals determined the effectiveness of this project. The first goal was to assess the current understanding of missions and evangelism among students. Prior to the first session, a mission and evangelism pre-test was given to gauge students' current biblical understanding of missions and evangelism. This goal was considered successful met when ten students completed the assessment for further analysis.

The second goal was to develop a five-week curriculum on biblical evangelism and missional living. The lesson plans were based on the information received from the assessment instrument. The lesson plans were sent to an expert panel for review. This goal was considered successful when the expert panel critiqued the lessons, updates and corrections were made based on their input, and were approved.

The third goal was to increase the students' knowledge of missions and evangelism. The curriculum was taught to those who completed the mission and evangelism pre-test in a small group format. The lesson aim was to inform students about biblical examples of life on missions and discipleship. Students will be encouraged to actively participate in discussion questions presented in the group. This goal was

¹² All of 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.

considered successful when students showed an increase in knowledge of mission and evangelism as indicated by their mission and evangelism post-test score.

The fourth goal was to coach students through development and implementation of a plan to engage the UofL campus. This goal was led by the students and allowed students to put their goals into practical applications on a local campus. This goal was considered successful when students actively participated in an on-campus event.

Definitions and Limitations/Delimitations

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

Evangelism. Charles Ryrie describes evangelism as “the ability to proclaim the Gospel with exceptional clarity. Whether or not one has the gift of evangelism, all believers are to be witnesses.”¹³ Evangelism is a means of grace within the church.¹⁴

Glory of God. Grudem describes glory: “Properly, it is the exercise and display of what constitutes the distinctive excellence of the subject to which it is spoken; thus, in respect to God, His glory is the manifestation of His divine attributes and perfections, or such a visible splendor as indicates the possession and presence of these.”¹⁵ Grudem further elaborates that “God has made us to reflect his glory (2 Cor. 3:18; cf. Matt 5:16; Phil. 2:15).”¹⁶

¹³ Charles Caldwell Ryrie, *Basic Theology: A Popular Systematic Guide to Understanding Biblical Truth* (Chicago: Moody, 1999), 431.

¹⁴ Wayne A. Grudem, *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine* (Leicester, England: Zondervan, 1994), 959.

¹⁵ Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 271. Merrill Unger further explains, “God is the glory of his people (Jer.2:11; Zech. 2:5). Because he is the living root and spring of all that distinguishes them for good; and they are his glory in the outer sense (Jer. 13:11; 33:9), inasmuch as it is through their holy and blessed state, through the wonderful things done for them and by them, that his own glorious perfections are manifested before the eyes of men.” Merrill Unger, *New Unger’s Bible Dictionary*, ed. R. K. Harrison (Chicago: Moody, 1988), s.v. “Glory.”

¹⁶ Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 220-21.

Mission. E. J. Schnabel describes *mission* by giving an example of Jesus's life: "Jesus sought out the people who lived in the towns and villages of Galilee and called them to repent and to believe in the good news that the kingdom of God is arriving and that God's promises to Israel are being fulfilled through his ministry."¹⁷ Schnabel further states,

This is "mission" (Lat. *missio*; Gk. *apostolē*), understood as the activity of individuals (or of a community of faith) who distinguish themselves from the society in which they live both in terms of religious convictions (theology) and social behavior (ethics), who are convinced of the truth of their beliefs, and who actively work to win other people to their convictions and way of life. Jesus understood himself to be sent by the Father (the mission of Jesus). Jesus called disciples, trained them as his envoys, and sent them into the towns and villages of Galilee and eventually into Judea, Samaria and beyond (the mission of the Twelve).¹⁸

Will of God. Grudem clarifies the will of God as "God's will is that attribute of God whereby he approves and determines to bring about every action necessary for the existence and activity of himself and all creation."¹⁹ Grudem develops on the will of God by stating "it may be defined as that perfection of His Being whereby He, in a most simple act, goes out towards Himself as the highest good (i.e. delights in Himself as such) and towards His creatures for His own name's sake, and is thus the ground of their being and continued existence."²⁰

Two limitations were applied to this project. First, the accuracy of mission and evangelism pre- and post-test were dependent upon the willingness of the students to be honest about their knowledge and understanding of evangelism and missions. To lessen this limitation, the students were assured that their answers would remain anonymous. Second, the effectiveness of the training was limited by the constancy of attendance. If

¹⁷ E. J. Schnabel, "Mission," in *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels*, ed. Joel B. Green, Jeannine K. Brown, and Nicholas Perrin, 2nd ed. (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2013), 604.

¹⁸ Schnabel, "Mission," 604.

¹⁹ Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 211.

²⁰ Louis Berkhof and Richard Alfred Muller, *Systematic Theology*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1996), 77.

the participants did not attend all of the teaching sessions, it would have been difficult to measure the benefits of the teaching. To diminish this limitation, each week of the teaching sessions was during their normal young adult group meeting time.

Three delimitations were placed on the project. First, the project did not address the parent's role of teaching evangelism in the home. Evangelism in the home may involve leading the family to be active in the community and church but this training solely addressed the exercise of mission and evangelism on campus. Second, the project was confined to a twelve-week timeframe. This gave adequate time to prepare and teach the five-week training sessions and conduct the post-series survey after sessions are completed. Finally, this project was limited to their development of a plan to engage the UofL campus.

Conclusion

God has strategically placed the BCM with the necessary ingredients to reach the campus. Through the Great Commission, disciples are motivated for missions and evangelism. Young adults play a key role in reaching the next generation. The followings chapters' detail how students contribute to fulfilling the Great Commission. Chapter 2 focuses on the biblical foundation for missions and evangelism. Chapter 3 guides the reader on cultural sensitivity as one engages the community with the gospel of Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER 2

BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL BASIS FOR EVANGELISM AND MISSION

The need for evangelism and missions can be traced throughout the fabric of both Old Testament and the New Testament. Evangelism and missions are means through which God makes himself known. One must have special or particular revelation in order to know God intimately.¹ Erickson explains that “because humankind is finite and God is infinite, we cannot know or fellowship with him unless he reveals himself to us.”² God revealing himself to humankind is a gracious act. God is always the initiator when it comes to self-revelation. Erickson elaborates, “What God primarily does is to reveal *himself*, but he does so at least in part by telling us something *about* himself.”³ As partakers of this divine revelation, believers are bound to share the news of this gracious God with the nations as the One who has ultimately revealed himself in the person of Jesus Christ (Heb 1:1-4). Because of this obligation, believers are involved in evangelism and missions.

Evangelism and Mission in the Old Testament

Evangelism and mission were fundamental principles to the people of God, the Israelites. In order to speak correctly of Israel, one must begin with creation. Fretheim states, “What happens in Israel’s history can be understood only in the light of what is

¹ Millard Erickson writes, “By special revelation we mean God’s manifestation of himself to particular persons at definite times and places, enabling those persons to enter into a redemptive relationship with him.” Millard J. Erickson, *Introducing Christian Doctrine*, ed. Arnold L. Hustad, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker 2001), 52.

² Erickson, *Introducing Christian Doctrine*, 43.

³ Erickson, *Introducing Christian Doctrine*, 58.

presented in Genesis 1-11.”⁴ Hughes asserts, “What we know about God, about creation, about ourselves, and about salvation begins in Genesis. It provides the theological pillars on which the rest of the Bible stands.”⁵

Divine Initiation

God the Father, God the Son, and God the Spirit freely created the universe. Creation clearly displays God’s transcendence and his immanence.⁶ God has revealed himself by means of general revelation.⁷ God’s divine attributes, namely his eternal power and divine nature, are seen in creation according to Romans 1:18-20. Moreover, God has endowed humanity with a conscience (Rom 2:14-16). Erickson rightly acknowledges,

This is the view of God that has given us an objective, valid, rational revelation of himself in nature, history, and human personality. It is there for anyone who wants to observe it. General revelation is not something read into nature by those who know God on other grounds; it is already present, by the creation and continuing providence of God.⁸

Although general revelation renders humanity without an excuse, it is not sufficient for knowing God intimately. The apostle Paul affirms, however, that humankind does not clearly perceive God in the general revelation because of sin (Rom 1:18-32). The cloudy perception of God is partly because mankind has exchanged the glory of God

⁴ Terence E. Fretheim, *Creation, Fall, and Flood: Studies in Genesis 1-11* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1969), 3.

⁵ R. Kent Hughes, *Genesis: Beginning and Blessing* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2004), 15.

⁶ Erickson writes,

The meaning of *immanence* is that God is present and active within his creation, and within the human race, even members of it that do not believe in or obey him. The meaning of *transcendence* is that God is not merely a quality of nature or of humanity; he is not simply the highest human being. He is not limited to man’s ability to understand him. His holiness and goodness go far beyond, infinitely beyond ours, and this is true of his knowledge and power as well. (Erickson, *Introducing Christian Doctrine*, 87)

⁷ Erickson explains, “General revelation refers to God’s self-manifestation through nature, history, and the inner being of a human person. It is general in two aspects: its universal availability (it is accessible to all persons at all times) and the content of the message (it is less particularized and detailed than special revelation).” Erickson, *Introducing Christian Doctrine*, 87.

⁸ Erickson, *Introducing Christian Doctrine*, 47.

for the glory of man and creatures (Rom 1:23). Such false glory leaves human-kind worshipping the wrong god. Although God is clearly above creation, he is closely involved in the minute details of creation. God was not indebted to create, yet he was pleased to do so.⁹ Berkhof elaborates,

The only works of God that are inherently necessary with a necessity resulting from the very nature of God are the *opera ad intra*, the works of the separate person within the Divine Being: generation, filiation, and procession¹⁰. To say that creation is a necessary act of God, is also to declare that it is just as eternal as those immanent works of God.¹¹

God created the universe out of nothing, it was originally very good, and he created it to glorify himself.¹² Genesis 1:1-2 states, “In the beginning, God created the heavens and earth. The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.”¹³ Although the earth was without form, void, and in darkness, it did not prevent God from engaging the nothingness. Hughes states, “Darkness is impenetrable to man but transparent to God.”¹⁴

⁹ Louis Berkhof and Richard Alfred Muller, *Systematic Theology*, 2nd ed (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1996), 129.

¹⁰ Berkhof and Muller explain,

This procession of the Holy Spirit, briefly called spiration, is his personal property. The following points of distinction between the two may be noted, however: (1) Generation is the work of the Father only; spiration is the work of both the Father and the Son. (2) By generation the Son is enabled to take part in the work of spiration, but the Holy Spirit acquires no such power. (3) In logical order generation precedes spiration. It should be remembered, however, that all this implies no essential subordination of the Holy Spirit to the Son. In spiration as well as in generation there is a communication of the whole divine essence, so that, the Holy Spirit is on an equality with the Father and the Son. The doctrine of the procession of the Holy Spirit from the Father and Son is based on John 15:26, and on the fact that the Spirit is also called the Spirit of Christ and of the Son, Rom. 8:9; Gal. 4:6, and is sent by Christ into the world. (Berkhof and Muller, *Systematic Theology*, 97)

¹¹ Berkhof and Muller, *Systematic Theology*, 130.

¹² Wayne A. Grudem, *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine* (Leicester, England: Zondervan, 1994), 262.

¹³ Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture quotations are from the English Standard Version.

¹⁴ Hughes, *Genesis*, 21.

Hamilton rightly comments, “In creation, there is separation toward order: light from darkness, waters above water below, day from night, woman from man.”¹⁵

Humanity. On the sixth day of creation God created man (Gen 1:26-27). Grudem points out that intimacy or uniqueness in the creation of man and woman.¹⁶ This distinctiveness is clearly seen in the fact that God spoke animals into existence (Gen 1:24-25), compared to when God formed man by taking dust, forming it, breathing into it, and man becoming a living soul (Gen 2:7). Creation of woman is equally intimate as God puts Adam in a deep sleep, removes a rib, and creates a companion for Adam (Gen 2:21-22). Hughes also affirms the intimacy by stating, “The specialness of this section is immediately apparent because in verse 26 the narrative changes from the third person to the first person plural—‘Then God said, “Let us . . . ”’—which indicates divine dialogue.”¹⁷ Man was originally created in a state of maturity and perfection.¹⁸ There is much debate among theologians as to what the words *image* and *likeness* actually indicate.¹⁹ Image and likeness are important because it lends itself to the function and purpose of man. Luthardt and Hodge write,

According to the Reformed theologians and the majority of the theologians of other divisions of the Church, man’s likeness to God included the following points: His intellectual and moral nature. God is a Spirit, the human soul is a spirit. The essential attributes of a spirit are reason, conscience, and will. A spirit is a rational,

¹⁵ Victor P. Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis: Chapters 1-17*, The New International Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1990), 120.

¹⁶ Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 265.

¹⁷ Hughes, *Genesis*, 36.

¹⁸ Christoph Ernst Luthardt and Charles Hodge write, “By the maturity of man as at first created is meant that he was not created in a state of infancy. By the perfection of his original state is meant, that he was perfectly adapted to the end for which he was made and to the sphere in which he was designed to move.” Christoph Ernst Luthardt and Charles Hodge, *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1959), 92.

¹⁹ Luthardt and Hodge, *Systematic Theology*, 96-99.

moral, and also a free agent. In making man after his own image, therefore, God endowed him with those attributes which belong to his own nature as a spirit.²⁰

Hughes makes a definitive statement when he points out, “Some have tried to sidestep this by seeing it as a conversation with angels. But that is impossible because angels are not in the image of God. Besides, angels can add nothing to God’s omniscient wisdom.”²¹ In reference to the image of God, Hamilton states, “To be human is to bear the image of God . . . no part of man, no function of man is subordinated to some other, higher part of activity.”²² Fretheim echoes the same thoughts: “It is man, the entire person, who is created in the image of God.”²³ Okoye states, “The image is like an icon—it represents the figure it depicts.”²⁴

Since man is created in the image of God, several conclusions can be drawn based on Genesis 1:27-28. First, man is able to hear and make rational sense of what is being communicated (God said to them).²⁵ Second, man has been given the authority to rule as “viceregents over creation.”²⁶ James Chukwuma Okoye comments, “Their stewardship is meant to reflect the intentions of the Creator and to bring God’s creation to the purposes intended by God.”²⁷ Third, man has been given the ability to procreate and reproduce (be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth). James M. Hamilton Jr. retorts, “Man was created not for passive observation of the world but for an epic task, a

²⁰ Luthardt and Hodge, *Systematic Theology*, 97.

²¹ Hughes, *Genesis*, 36.

²² Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis: Chapters 1-17*, 137.

²³ Fretheim, *Creation, Fall, and Flood*, 63.

²⁴ James Chukwuma Okoye, *Israel and the Nations: A Mission Theology of the Old Testament* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2006), 33.

²⁵ Hughes, *Genesis*, 37.

²⁶ Hughes, *Genesis*, 37.

²⁷ Okoye, *Israel and the Nations*, 33.

worldwide venture.”²⁸ None of these instructions given by God are able to be carried out unless man is made in the image of God.

Spiritual realm. All religions recognize the existence of a spiritual world.²⁹ Although there are limited details on the creation and origins of the spiritual world, it is evident from scripture that it exists. Grudem alludes to the fact that the creation of the universe also includes the creation of the spiritual realm: “God created the angel and other kinds of heavenly beings as well as animals and man. He also created heaven as a place where his presence is especially evident.”³⁰

Angels. Angels are rational, moral, and immortal beings.³¹ Generally speaking, there are good angels and evil angels. In 1 Timothy 5:21, good angels are called *elect angels*.³² Good angels function in several ways, but their basic ministry is to help believers (Heb 1:14).³³ Ryrie gives a basic description of good angels ministry to believers as prayer request (Acts 12:5-10), salvation (Acts 8:26; 10:3), observing (1 Cor 4:9; 11:10; Eph 3:10; 1 Pet 1:12), encouragement (Acts 27:23-24), present at death (Luke 16:22).³⁴ Ryrie cautions that angels may or may not still function in all those ways currently.³⁵ Although

²⁸ James M. Hamilton Jr., *Work and Our Labor in the Lord*, ed. Dane C. Ortlund and Miles V. Van Pelt (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2017), 19.

²⁹ Berkhof and Muller, *Systematic Theology*, 143.

³⁰ Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 264.

³¹ Berkhof and Muller write, “This means they are personal beings endowed with intelligence and will. The fact that there are intelligent beings would seem to follow at once from the fact that they are spirits.” Berkhof and Muller, *Systematic Theology*, 144.

³² Berkhof and Muller, *Systematic Theology*, 145.

³³ Berkhof and Muller, *Systematic Theology*, 152.

³⁴ Charles Caldwell Ryrie, *Basic Theology: A Popular Systematic Guide to Understanding Biblical Truth* (Chicago: Moody, 1999), 152-53.

³⁵ Ryrie, *Basic Theology*, 153.

it is unclear if good angels still function in similar roles, the fact remains that they exist and they work on behalf of God to help believers on their spiritual journey.

Just as there are good angels there are evil angels as well. Evil angels, or demons, were not created as evil angels.³⁶ Second Peter 2:4 and Jude 6 infer that evil angels were cast down because of sin. Jude 6 implies that some of the evil angels are bound and waiting judgment on the great day. Erickson asserts,

Just when this rebellion took place we do not know, but it must have occurred between the time when God completed the creation and pronounced it all “very good,” and the temptation and fall of human-kind (Gen 3). . . . The devil is the name given in Scripture to the chief of these fallen angels. . . . He is also known as Satan, which means to be or act as an adversary. . . . The most common Greek word for him is diabolos (devil, adversary, accuser).³⁷

Satan stands against any and everything that tries to bring glory to God. Satan is not omnipresent, so he must have help. Evil angels, or fallen angels, aid Satan in carrying out his plans.³⁸

Ryrie notes that Satan’s many names signal that he can attack in various ways.³⁹ He continues by stating that Satan attacks have deception at their core.⁴⁰ An example of Satan’s attack is found in Matthew 4:1-11. In this passage, Satan seeks to tempt Jesus in forsaking his mission that was agreed upon by the Godhead. Satan is also busy seeking to deceive nations into thinking they can operate without God (Dan 10:13, 20).⁴¹ Ryrie continues, “Satan blinds the minds of unbelievers so they will not accept the Gospel (2 Cor. 4:4). . . . Satan likewise seeks to tempt the believer to commit evil.”⁴² James 1:14

³⁶ Berkhof and Muller, *Systematic Theology*, 148.

³⁷ Erickson, *Introducing Christian Doctrine*, 158.

³⁸ Erickson, *Introducing Christian Doctrine*, 159.

³⁹ Ryrie, *Basic Theology*, 166.

⁴⁰ Ryrie, *Basic Theology*, 168.

⁴¹ Ryrie, *Basic Theology*, 168.

⁴² Ryrie, *Basic Theology*, 169.

alludes to the fact that the believer is lured and enticed by his own desires. Satan cannot make the believer sin, but can use enticing bait.

Initial Instructions (Gen 2:15-17)

Since humanity is created in the image of God, clear instructions were given to Adam. Adam was placed in the Garden of Eden to “serve” and “guard” it.⁴³ Adam was allowed to eat of every tree except the tree of knowledge of good and evil. It is implied that Adam was allowed to eat of the tree of life if he chose to do so.⁴⁴ Wenham states, “The restriction is blunt and firm. ‘Never eat,’ literally, ‘you shall not eat’ resembles in its form the ten commandments.”⁴⁵ The consequences were equally clear as God explicitly stated, “For in the day that eat of it you shall surely die” (Gen 2:17). Hamilton writes, “The verse is underscoring the certainty of death, not its chronology.”⁴⁶ In other words, according to the passage, Adam and Eve did not die right on the spot after partaking of the forbidden fruit. Although a point can be made that they did indeed spiritually die that very moment, as seen in Genesis 3:7-8.

Adam was provided with a place to live, a job (purpose), sustenance, intimacy with God (God brought the animals to Adam), and authority (God allowed Adam to name the animals). God even provides Adam with a helper, a companion, a wife. Naming the animals may possibly be the event God used so that Adam could realize none of God’s creation was fit for him. God provided and met each of Adam’s needs. Hughes asserts, “Adam was to partake of everything in the garden to his heart’s content, which included the tree of life. This is lavish, extravagant abundance, and Adam could take from the tree

⁴³ Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis: Chapters 1-17*, 171.

⁴⁴ Gordon John Wenham, *Genesis 1-15*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 1 (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2014), 67.

⁴⁵ Wenham, *Genesis 1-15*, 67.

⁴⁶ Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis: Chapters 1-17*, 172.

of life if he wanted. Everything was there for him—everything he could possibly want.”⁴⁷

The Fall (Gen 3:1-7)

Genesis 3 starts off with an interesting comment that the serpent was craftier than any other beast of the field that the Lord God had made (v. 1). Wenham affirms that the serpent is “an obvious candidate for an anti-God symbol” but he is not willing to go as far as to say the serpent is the devil.⁴⁸ Hamilton similarly states, “Regarding the serpent’s origin, we are clearly told that he was an animal made by God. This information immediately removes any possibility that the serpent is to be viewed as some kind of supernatural, divine force.”⁴⁹ Although these scholars seem to avoid stating that the serpent is being possessed, the conversation with Eve seems to imply the use of satanic tactics.⁵⁰ On the other hand, Hughes does not hesitate to write, “This is a snake, a naturally shrewd creature under the control of Satan—and a natural tool.”⁵¹ He goes on further to explain that the New Testament believes this is also the serpent in Revelation 12:9; 20:2.⁵²

The conversation begins with a questioning of God’s Word: “Did God actually say . . . ?” Rightly declared by Hughes is the evidence that all Eve enjoyed to this point was due to the Word of God: “Day and night, the sun and moon, the dappled blue of the sky, the exotica of the garden, the flowers, the singing rainbows of birds, the adoring creatures, her Adam.”⁵³ The implications from the serpent point to God keeping something back from Eve or maybe Eve hearing incorrectly. The reply of the woman seeks to correct

⁴⁷ Hughes, *Genesis*, 54-55.

⁴⁸ Wenham, *Genesis 1-15*, 72-73.

⁴⁹ Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis: Chapters 1-17*, 188.

⁵⁰ See “Angels” section in this chap.

⁵¹ Hughes, *Genesis*, 66.

⁵² Hughes, *Genesis*, 66.

⁵³ Hughes, *Genesis*, 67.

the serpent, but in the end the serpent corrects her thinking. Eve, unsure concerning the word of God, ends up adding to the command given by God (Gen 3:2). Wenham affirms, “These slight alterations to God’s remarks suggest that the woman has already moved slightly away from God toward the serpent’s attitude.”⁵⁴ In Genesis 3:4-5, the serpent suggests that he knows God better and God is holding back all the details. The details in this case are that Eve and Adam would be “like God.” Oddly enough, Eve failed to realize that the serpent offered an item she already possessed (Gen 1:26-27). Moreover, all Adam and Eve currently had in the garden was already pleasant to the sight and good for food (Gen 2:9). Unfortunately, in Genesis 3:6-7, Adam and Eve trade the truth for a lie by eating and disobeying God. Now what was good and pleasant brought shame and fear (Gen 3:7-13). Wenham comments, “In this sense they did die on the day they ate of the tree: they were no longer able to have daily conversations with God, enjoy his bounteous provision, and eat of the tree of life; instead they had to toil for food, suffer, and eventually return to the dust from which they were taken.”⁵⁵ Hughes summarizes the aftermath of the fall:

What Satan had told them was true—half true. They did not die that day, as they supposed they might. Indeed Adam lived another 930 years. Yet they did die. Their constant communion with God underwent death. They would go to earthy graves. They would need a Savior. Their eyes were opened—grotesquely. They got the knowledge they sought but they got it the wrong way. They saw evil. And they saw themselves. Their innocence evaporated. Guilt and fear gripped their hearts. Now they would have to labor to love God and each other.⁵⁶

Although Adam and Eve really made a mess of things (Rom 5:12-21), Hodges notes, “Sin, therefore, according to the Scriptures, is permitted, that the justice of God may be known in its punishment, and his grace in its forgiveness.”⁵⁷

⁵⁴ Wenham, *Genesis 1-15*, 73.

⁵⁵ Wenham, *Genesis 1-15*, 74.

⁵⁶ Hughes, *Genesis*, 71.

⁵⁷ Luthardt and Hodge, *Systematic Theology*, 435.

Hope (Gen 3:8-24)

In the midst of this disastrous scene and upcoming consequences for disobedience there appears to be reasons for hope. According to Hughes, “the temptation to eat from ‘the tree of the knowledge of good and evil’ was to seek wisdom without reference to the word of God. It was an act of *moral autonomy*—deciding what is right without reference to God’s revealed will.”⁵⁸ Hamilton echoes similar thoughts in speaking on the prohibition given by God: “What is forbidden to man is to the power to decide for himself what is in his best interest and what is not.”⁵⁹ Even with this indifference to the goodness of God, God pursues humankind in their fallen state (Gen 3:8). God pursues human-kind through conversation (Gen 3:9, 11, 13-19, 22). God also pursues human-kind in judgement because of sin but this does not diminish hope for the future (Gen 3:14-21).

In Genesis 3:15, there is an important declaration on which the whole Bible hangs: “I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.” Hamilton retorts, “This is one of the most famous cruxes of Scripture. Interpreters fall into two categories: those who see in the decree of a messianic import and those who see nothing of the kind.”⁶⁰ Hamilton hesitates to label this verse as a clear-cut reference toward the coming of the Messiah⁶¹; however, he does note, that according to 1 Corinthians 15:25, this passage in Genesis 3:15 refers to Jesus.⁶² Similarly, Wenham comments, “Once admitted that the serpent symbolizes sin, death, and the power of evil, it becomes much more likely that the curse envisages a long struggle between good and evil, with mankind eventually

⁵⁸ Hughes, *Genesis*, 55.

⁵⁹ Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis: Chapters 1-17*, 166.

⁶⁰ Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis: Chapters 1-17*, 197.

⁶¹ See “The Consequences of Transgression (3:14-19),” in Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis: Chapters 1-17*, 197-203.

⁶² Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis: Chapters 1-17*, 200.

triumphing.”⁶³ On the other hand, Hughes clearly sees Genesis 3:15 as referring to the coming Messiah, Jesus Christ.⁶⁴ He comments further by noting,

Here in Genesis 3:15 we have a prophecy of the cross when Satan would *strike* the heel of Christ (the suffering of the cross), but Christ would *strike* Satan’s head (through his death and glorious resurrection). God is the author of Scripture, and this prophecy is a direct quotation of his words. God knew what he meant. He meant to communicate that his Son, the second Adam, as the ultimate offspring of Eve, would be wounded in his destruction of Satan.⁶⁵

Although Satan, through his crafty use of the snake, caused humanity to experience spiritual separation from God, this would not stop God from providing deliverance.

A hint of this deliverance may be seen in Genesis 3:21: “And the Lord God made for Adam and for his wife garments of skins and clothed them.” Evidently the fig leaves that Adam and Eve used as a covering in Genesis 3:7 were insufficient according to God’s standard. According to Hughes, “the first is an attempt to cover oneself and the second is accepting a covering from another. Adam and Eve are in need of salvation that comes from without. God needs to do for them what they are unable to do for themselves.”⁶⁶ Hughes comments on this verse and describes God’s action as “an act of mitigating grace.”⁶⁷ He further records, “This was a gracious foreshadowing of his ultimate sovereign provision for sin.”⁶⁸ Conversely, Wenham views the covering of Adam and Eve somewhat different as he notes that the provision of clothes is not really an act of grace but a reminder to Adam and Eve of their sinfulness and their need to be

⁶³ Although Wenham seems to interpret Gen 3:15 as referring to a group of individuals, he notes, “Certainly, later Christian commentators, beginning with Justin (ca. A.D. 160) and Irenaeus (ca. 180), have often regarded 3:15 as the Protoevangelium, the first messianic prophecy in the OT.” Wenham, *Genesis 1-15*, 80-81.

⁶⁴ Hughes, *Genesis*, 86.

⁶⁵ Hughes, *Genesis*, 86.

⁶⁶ Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis: Chapters 1-17*, 207.

⁶⁷ Hughes, *Genesis*, 94.

⁶⁸ Hughes, *Genesis*, 86.

covered in the presence of God.⁶⁹ God did provide a temporary covering of skins for Adam and Eve prior to expelling them from the Garden of Eden, but they longed for the coming seed and ultimate covering He would provide.⁷⁰

Longing for the Seed (Gen 4-11:26)

Alexander summarizes, “When Genesis is viewed as a whole it is very apparent that the genealogical structure and the concept of ‘seed’ are closely linked in order to highlight a single, distinctive, family lineage.”⁷¹ Genesis 4:1 records Eve’s thought: “I have gotten a man with the help of the Lord.” Kaiser declares, “She apparently understood that the male offspring promised to her would be no less than a divine-human person.”⁷² However, Cain was not the promised seed, for he killed his brother (Gen 4:8). Enoch walked with God but was taken by God (Gen 5:21-24). Noah seemed like a viable candidate according to the words of his father, Lamech (Gen 5:28-29). Noah received the grace of God to be a “preacher of righteousness” as he warned the people about the judgment of God during the building of the ark (Gen 6-9:17; 1 Pet 3:20; 2 Pet 2:5).⁷³ Nevertheless, Noah was not the promised seed as he was found drunk and uncovered in his tent (Gen 9:20-21). In spite of his sin, the actions of Noah’s sons, Shem and Japheth, covering him with “the garment” is similar to God’s action when he covered Adam and Eve in their sin.⁷⁴ Their gracious deed arranges the backdrop for the blessings

⁶⁹ Wenham, *Genesis 1-15*, 85.

⁷⁰ Hughes, *Genesis*, 96-99.

⁷¹ T. Desmond Alexander, *From Paradise to the Promise Land: Introduction to the Main Themes of the Pentateuch* (Carlisle, CA: Paternoster, 1995), 9.

⁷² Walter C. Kaiser Jr., *Mission in the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2012), 3.

⁷³ Kaiser, *Mission in the Old Testament*, 6.

⁷⁴ Hughes, *Genesis*, 152.

pronounced by Noah, and thereby sets the stage for the promised seed (Gen 9:26-27).⁷⁵

Genesis 11:26 marks a “sharp line of demarcation”⁷⁶ to patriarchal history.⁷⁷ Aalders elaborates, “Genesis 1:1- 11:26 give us the history of humanity as a whole.”⁷⁸

The Call of Abram (Gen 11:27-12:9)

Aalders remarks, “Genesis 11:27 begins the history of a single family chosen by God to receive the revelation of redemption.”⁷⁹ Hughes responds similarly: “Genesis 11:10-32, which takes us from Noah’s son Shem to Abram reveals how God again took steps to save a people: 1) preserving the line of Shem through one man (parallel to the way God had done it through one man in his use of Noah), and 2) again doing it through one man’s faith (as God had alone done in Noah).”⁸⁰ Likewise, the call of Abram⁸¹ involve similar elements.

Commanded by God. Upon arriving to Genesis 12:1-3, one begins to observe greater details concerning the promised seed. Hobbs asserts,

These three verses are among the most important in the Bible, for they mark the beginning of the outworking in history of God’s eternal redemptive purpose. What had been in Jehovah’s heart in eternity and had been foreshadowed in Eden (Gen

⁷⁵ Kaiser, *Mission in the Old Testament*, 12.

⁷⁶ G. Charles Aalders, *Genesis*, Bible Student’s Commentary, vol. 1 (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1981), 260.

⁷⁷ Patriarchal history refers to “the period of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.” Merrill Unger, *New Unger’s Bible Dictionary*, ed. R. K. Harrison (Chicago: Moody, 1988), s.v. “Patriarchal Age, The.”

⁷⁸ Aalders, *Genesis*, 260.

⁷⁹ Aalders, *Genesis*, 260.

⁸⁰ Hughes, *Genesis*, 175.

⁸¹ Unger states, “Abram means ‘high father.’” This was the “original name of Abraham” according to Gen 17:5. “Abraham means father of a multitude.” Unger, *New Unger’s Bible Dictionary*, s.v. “Abraham, Abram.”

3:15) now surfaces in history as God calls one man out of whose line would come him who is the “Lamb slain from the foundation of the world” (Rev 13:8).⁸²

Abram would have remained in Ur and ignorant of the true God, had God not initiated a conversation with him.⁸³ This conversation highlights the first time God had spoken to anyone since Noah.⁸⁴ The imperative from God is “go.”⁸⁵ The implications from this command, based on its original language, is *go by yourself*.⁸⁶ Abram is commanded to leave country, family connections, and his current residence (his father’s house) in Genesis 12:1. Hamilton observes, “The objects in 12:1 are arranged in a sequence of less intimate to more intimate”⁸⁷ Hughes comments concerning this verse: “The shocking immensity of God’s command and agonizing nature of Abram’s decision are indicated by the ascending order of Abram’s sacrifice.”⁸⁸ To put it another way, Okoye states, “To leave one’s land and kin . . . was to face an uncertain future and to subject oneself to grave danger. The stranger was liable be mistreated or abused.”⁸⁹ Leaving some of the dearest relationships in Abram’s life “add[s] punch to the command and emphasize[s] the uncompromising nature of God’s words.”⁹⁰ Not only was Abram commanded to leave all those things, he is commanded to leave without having a definite destination—he is commanded to go “to a land I will show you” (Gen 12:1). Hughes rightly affirms, “Abram was not told that

⁸² Herschel H. Hobbs, *The Origin of All Things: Studies in Genesis* (Waco, TX: Word, 1975), 98.

⁸³ Hughes, *Genesis*, 182.

⁸⁴ James Montgomery Boice, *Genesis: An Expository Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1985), 2:444.

⁸⁵ Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis: Chapters 1-17*, 370.

⁸⁶ Wenham, *Genesis 1-15*, 274.

⁸⁷ Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis: Chapters 1-17*, 370.

⁸⁸ Hughes, *Genesis*, 182.

⁸⁹ Okoye, *Israel and the Nations*, 45.

⁹⁰ Wenham, *Genesis 1-15*, 274.

Canaan was the land God was talking about until he got there!”⁹¹ Ultimately, Abram’s leaving shows a trust in the will of God for his life.⁹²

The “will” of God. The will of God is always the best path for one’s life. As the will of God is revealed in Genesis 12, Boice suggest that the promises are guaranteed, “because God is God and his will is the law of the universe.”⁹³ Abram is told by God that He will bring about seven promises concerning him.⁹⁴ First, God promises his presence as he leads Abram to a land that he will reveal (Gen 12:1).⁹⁵ Second, Abram is promised that God would make of him a “great nation” (Gen 12:2). Hughes comments, “God’s promise that Abram would become a great nation assaulted reality, because Abram was childless and Sarai was barren a painful reality in antiquity and doubly painful in the throw-away world of Ur.”⁹⁶ Such a statement further highlights the faith of Abram as he trusted the will of God for his life. Hamilton remarks, “God does not here promise to make of Abram a great people for he is already a great people simply because of he has his nephew Lot.”⁹⁷ Hamilton elaborates further by inferring that the use of the word nation indicates “special elements of status and stability of nationhood in a land designated for that purpose.”⁹⁸ Third, God promises to bless Abram. Boice expounds, “A person is blessed

⁹¹ Hughes, *Genesis*, 182.

⁹² Okoye, *Israel and the Nations*, 45.

⁹³ Boice, *Genesis*, 2:445.

⁹⁴ Boice, *Genesis*, 2:445.

⁹⁵ Boice restates Donald Grey Barnhouse’s observations concerning this passage: “It makes no difference where it is . . . if the Lord leads us there, it is a land for us. If the Lord does not lead us, it can never be the right land, even though it is paved with diamonds.” Boice, *Genesis*, 2:445.

⁹⁶ Hughes writes, “The Hebrew word here for nation is *gôy*, which is a word used to describe the Gentile nations of the world. . . . Abram’s offspring would be a nation among the nations—a powerful political entity with a land and language and government.” Hughes, *Genesis*, 183.

⁹⁷ Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis: Chapters 1-17*, 371.

⁹⁸ Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis: Chapters 1-17*, 371.

when, because of the gracious working of God, things go well with him and what he does prospers. This is what happened with Abram.”⁹⁹ NETBible.org states,

The blessing of creation is now carried forward to the patriarch. In the garden God blessed Adam and Eve; in that blessing he gave them (1) a fruitful place, (2) endowed them with fertility to multiply, and (3) made them rulers over creation. That was all ruined at the fall. Now God begins to build his covenant people; in Gen 12-22 he promises to give Abram (1) a land flowing with milk and honey, (2) a great nation without number, and (3) kingship.¹⁰⁰

Leach comments that the verses further highlight the “biblical theme of God calling into being a people for himself. God’s people will receive from God in order to share God with the world.”¹⁰¹

Fourth, in addition to the promise of blessing upon Abram, God also promises to make Abram’s name great. In comparison to Genesis 11:4, where the people sought a name and reputation for themselves, here Abram is promised a name graciously by God.¹⁰² Hughes echoes similar thoughts: “By faith Abram was to get what never truly comes by self-serving effort.”¹⁰³ The purpose of the blessings bestowed upon Abram is so he can be a blessing to “his fellow men.”¹⁰⁴ Fifth, Genesis 12:3 highlights how Abram will be a blessing to others as God promises to “bless those who bless you.” The use of first person indicates God’s personal care of Abram.¹⁰⁵ Sixth, God also promises to curse those who dishonor Abram. Both promises imply that other individuals’ relationship to Abram would

⁹⁹ Boice, *Genesis*, 2:447.

¹⁰⁰ NETBible.org, “Genesis 12,” accessed May 18, 2017, <https://net.bible.org/#!/bible/Genesis+12>.

¹⁰¹ David A. Leach, *Genesis: The Book of Beginnings* (Valley Forge, PA: Judson, 1984), 36.

¹⁰² Kaiser, *Mission in the Old Testament*, 6-9.

¹⁰³ Hughes, *Genesis*, 184.

¹⁰⁴ Aalders, *Genesis*, 269.

¹⁰⁵ Wenham, *Genesis 1-15*, 276.

determine God’s relationship to them.¹⁰⁶ If the relationship was favorable, then God would be favorable and if the relationship was unfavorable, then God would be unfavorable to them. The relationship to Abram also has global implications: “In you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”¹⁰⁷ Wenham offers some clarity as he points out that “not every individual is promised blessings in Abram but every major group in the world will be blessed.”¹⁰⁸ Kaiser agrees with Wenham concerning people groups; however, he states, “The sweep of all the evidence makes it abundantly clear that God ‘s gift of a blessing through the instrumentality of Abraham was to be experienced by the nations, clans, tribes, people groups and individuals.”¹⁰⁹ Lastly, God promises to give the land to Abrams’s descendants.¹¹⁰ By extension, Fretheim states, “God’s plan from the very beginning of the world history was that Israel would possess the land, but that she would have to share it.”¹¹¹ To put it bluntly, Okoye states, “Abraham is the physical progenitor of Israel, and in blessing Abraham God is conferring blessing on his descendants, on

¹⁰⁶ Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis: Chapters 1-17*, 373.

¹⁰⁷ Okoye explains, “The exact denotation of family is unclear, but it is a category somewhere between ‘tribe’ and ‘house.’ It is sometimes rendered as ‘clan.’” Okoye, *Israel and the Nations*, 46. Hobbs writes, “Many competent interpreters translate the verb as a reflexive, ‘bless themselves.’ While this is a possible reading, it tones down the meaning—men emulating Abram’s example or blessing themselves in his name. The passive is preferred.” Hobbs, *The Origin of All Things*, 100. Wenham suggest a way to reconcile a reflexive or passive understanding of the passage: “It should be noted that even if a reflexive ‘bless themselves’ is preferred here, it would also carry the implications of a middle or passive. For if those who bless Abram are blessed, and all families of the earth bless Abram, then it follows that ‘all families will be blessed/find blessing in him.’” Wenham, *Genesis 1-15*, 278. Aalders agrees with Hobbs when he states, “The translation ‘be blessed’ is preferable because it sets forward the idea of ‘to be a blessing.’ It also corresponds more closely with the original declaration, ‘I will bless.’” Aalders, *Genesis*, 270.

¹⁰⁸ Wenham, *Genesis 1-15*, 278.

¹⁰⁹ Kaiser, *Mission in the Old Testament*, 11.

¹¹⁰ Hamilton writes, “This promise clearly eliminates Lot as the presumptive heir. The heir will be Abram’s own seed.” Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis: Chapters 1-17*, 377.

¹¹¹ Fretheim, *Creation, Fall, and Flood*, 119.

Israel.”¹¹² The blessings Abraham receives link back to Genesis 3:15¹¹³ and point forward to “Christ, the ultimate seed of Abram.”¹¹⁴

Clarity from Old Testament

Several things stand out as it relates to evangelism and mission. Namely, humanity was created by the will of God. Erickson comments, “All of our life is rightfully his by virtue of our origin and his continued ownership of us.”¹¹⁵ Humanity’s value is derived from God and thus one’s aim in life should be what brings glory to God.¹¹⁶ One cannot experience full humanity unless they are properly related to God.¹¹⁷ The fall marred the image of God imprinted in humanity, thus making it difficult for humanity to relate to one another and God. Kaiser remarks, “The whole purpose of God was to bless one people so that they might be the channel through which all the nations of the earth might receive a blessing. Israel was to be God’s missionary to the world-and thereby so were all who believed in this same gospel.”¹¹⁸

Evangelism and Mission in the New Testament

The Great Commission as stated in Matthew 28:18-20 is the window through which one can understand evangelism and mission in the New Testament. Matthew 28:18-

¹¹² Okoye, *Israel and the Nations*, 48.

¹¹³ Kaiser, *Mission in the Old Testament*, xiii.

¹¹⁴ Hughes states,

The Apostle Paul explains, “And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, ‘In you shall all the nations be blessed.’ So then, those who are of faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith” (Galatians 3:8,9). This gospel announced in advanced to Abram and fulfilled in Christ is now the church’s responsibility to proclaim. (Hughes, *Genesis*, 185)

¹¹⁵ Erickson, *Introducing Christian Doctrine*, 168.

¹¹⁶ Erickson, *Introducing Christian Doctrine*, 168.

¹¹⁷ Erickson, *Introducing Christian Doctrine*, 177.

¹¹⁸ Kaiser, *Mission in the Old Testament*, 12.

20 brings a reader to the peak of the book. Blomberg states, “Here is the climax of Matthew and of the gospel message. As the sequel to the crucifixion, Christ resurrection and exaltation forms the central event of Christian history and New Testament theology.”¹¹⁹ Carson rightly ties both Old Testament and New Testaments: “Matthew’s Gospel is now, in its final verses, returning to the theme introduced in the very first verse 1:1—that the blessings promised to Abraham and through him to all peoples of the earth (Gen 12:3) are now to be fulfilled in Jesus the Messiah.”¹²⁰

Such a window as presented in Matthew 28:18-20 should be opened as one views the great blessings God has prepared through His Messiah.

The Authority

In verse 18, Jesus validates his bodily resurrection as he approaches the disciples. Broadus comments, “He took great pains to show that here was a real body, of ‘flesh and bones,’ not ‘a spirit’ and that it was the same body, with the marks of crucifixion.”¹²¹ The resurrection of Jesus was important for the disciples because it validated the Scriptures and secured salvation for the people of God (1 Cor 15). Without the resurrection there is no hope and there is no command to follow.

Hendriksen remarks that Jesus makes the claim to possess all power and the right to use it.¹²² Carson denotes, “The authority of Jesus Messiah has already been heavily stressed in this Gospel e.g. 7:29, 10:1, 7-8; 11:27; 22:43-44; 24:35; cf. John 17:2). . . . The

¹¹⁹ Craig L. Blomberg, *Matthew*, The New American Commentary, vol. 22 (Nashville: Broadman, 1992), 425.

¹²⁰ D. A. Carson, *Matthew: Chapters 13 through 28*, in vol. 2 of *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, ed. Frank E. Gaebelin and J. D. Douglas (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1995), 596.

¹²¹ Broadus explains, “Yet he appeared only ten times that we know of in forty days. And he never remained long in their company. He was thus preparing them to live without him.” John A. Broadus, *Commentary on Matthew* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1990), 590.

¹²² William Hendriksen, *Exposition of the Gospel according to Matthew*, New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1973), 998.

Son becomes the one through who all God’s authority is mediated.”¹²³ In Matthew 11:27, this authority given to Jesus grants or denies the intimate knowledge of the God-head. Additionally, according to Luke 1:32-33, this authority fulfills Old Testament prophecy concerning the Messiah being the one who sits on the throne of David and rules over the house of Jacob (Isa 9:6-7). As a result of this authority, Jesus’s disciples have the confidence to do global missions in a way that Jesus was not able to do while in the flesh.¹²⁴

The Command

Jesus’s authority compels the disciples to heed his command. The command in verse 19 is to “make disciples.”¹²⁵ This command along with the word “go” indicates that one must be on the move to make disciples and not be stationary. Hendriksen elaborates, “‘Go’ also implies that the disciples—and God’s children in general—must not concentrate all their thought on “coming” to church. They must also “go” to bring the precious tiding to others.”¹²⁶ Gregg Allison surmises, “The disciples of Jesus are to take part in fulfilling the prophetic trajectory of the Old Testament concerning the proclamation of salvation to all the peoples of the world.”¹²⁷

To make disciples of all nations is to actively live in a way that the gospel is expressed in and through ones’ life. Broadus echoes, “To disciple a person to Christ is to bring him into the relation of pupil to teacher, ‘taking his yoke’ of authoritative instruction (11:29), accepting what he says as true because he says it, and submitting to his

¹²³ Carson, *Matthew Chapters 13 through 28*, 594.

¹²⁴ Carson, *Matthew Chapters 13 through 28*, 595.

¹²⁵ Carson, *Matthew Chapters 13 through 28*, 595.

¹²⁶ Hendriksen, *Gospel according to Matthew*, 999.

¹²⁷ Gregg R. Allison, *Sojourners and Strangers: The Doctrine of the Church*, Foundations of Evangelical Theology (Wheaton, IL: Crossway 2012), 73.

requirements as right because he makes them.”¹²⁸ Borthwick expands, “The call to discipleship means a lifetime decision, and not just a calling to receive forgiveness and gain heavenly assurance.”¹²⁹

Carson makes an interesting comment: “Baptizing and teaching are not the means of making disciples, but they characterize it.”¹³⁰ One must accept the claims of the gospel to heart and turn to Jesus in faith prior to baptism.¹³¹ Hendriksen explains, “The baptizing must be into the name—note the singular: one name; hence one God-of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. A name...represents the one who bears it.”¹³² Blomberg enlarges the thought by stating, “‘In [or into] the name’ means declaring allegiance to or becoming associated with the power and authority of Jesus.”¹³³

Jesus assures his disciples that as they obey and follow his command to make disciples, they do it with the assurance of his presence. Blomberg avows, “Jesus is passing the torch to his disciples, even as he promised to be with them forever—spiritually, not physically—to empower them for the future mission.”¹³⁴ Blomberg expands, “The disciples represent everyone in the church to which he writes and, derivatively everyone who professes to follow Christ in any age. The Lord is now risen! He calls his people to become disciple makers, and he promised to be with them irrespective of their successes or failures.”¹³⁵ Ultimately, Hendriksen states, “It is very clear

¹²⁸ Broadus, *Commentary on Matthew*, 593.

¹²⁹ Paul Borthwick, *Great Commission Great Compassion: Following Jesus and Loving the World* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2015), 35.

¹³⁰ Carson, *Matthew: Chapters 13 through 28*, 597.

¹³¹ Hendriksen, *Gospel according to Matthew*, 1000.

¹³² Hendriksen, *Gospel according to Matthew*, 1000.

¹³³ Blomberg, *Matthew*, 432.

¹³⁴ Blomberg, *Matthew*, 431.

¹³⁵ Blomberg, *Matthew*, 433.

from the story of the non-Jewish wise men (2:1-12), who came to worship the newborn King, and from such other passages as 8:11, 12:15:28; 21:43; 22:8-10, that from the very beginning the evangelization of the world was included in the purpose of God.”¹³⁶

Moving Forward

As one lives out the mission of God by carrying the gospel to the nations, one must keep in mind the quality and character of the disciple one develops. Failure to understand this gift of God will cause one to make disciples of oneself and not of Jesus Christ. It then becomes imperative that one points the pupil to observe all the things that Christ commanded and be cautious of any potential norms that may take one from the mission at hand.

Understanding the implications of Luke 15:11-32 are a key step to moving forward in missions and evangelism. A key statement that begins this parable is Luke 15:2: “and the Pharisees and the scribes grumbled, saying, ‘This man receives sinners and eats with them.’” Morris rightly states, “Jesus did not let the Pharisaic censure interfere with his ministry. He had come to help sinners, which he could scarcely do if he did not meet them.”¹³⁷ Just summarizes, “Luke 15 is a high point in the travel narrative . . . called “The Gospel of the Outcast” and “The Gospel for the Outcast.””¹³⁸

The statement by the Pharisees prompts Jesus to tell a parable. Bock points out that the cost of discipleship in Luke 14 contrasts the comfort of tax collectors and sinners in Luke 15.¹³⁹ The parables of Luke 15 include the parable of the lost sheep (vv. 1-7) and

¹³⁶ Hendriksen, *Gospel according to Matthew*, 999.

¹³⁷ Leon Morris, *Luke*, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries, vol. 3 (Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity, 2008), 255.

¹³⁸ Arthur A. Just Jr., *Luke 9:51-24:53*, Concordia Commentary (Saint Louis: Concordia, 1997), 586.

¹³⁹ Darrell L. Bock, *Luke 9:51-24:53*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1994), 1294.

of the lost coin (vv. 8-10). At the end of each parable what was lost was recovered due to an endless search that results in rejoicing (Luke 15:5, 9).¹⁴⁰ There is also a running theme of the joy in heaven over one sinner repenting (Luke 15:7, 10).

In Luke 15:11, Jesus begins to tell the parable of a father and his two sons. The parable begins with a disrespectful son who ask for his inheritance while his father is living.¹⁴¹ For a son to ask for his inheritance while the father is living was equivalent to wishing the father was dead.¹⁴² Likewise, the younger brother would be considered dead to his family as well.¹⁴³ The older brother is important at this point, as noted by Bailey: “Middle Eastern Culture has a traditional role for him that he refuses to play. As soon as his brother makes the outlandish request for his inheritance, the older son is expected to be galvanized into action.”¹⁴⁴ The father graciously honors the request of the younger brother.¹⁴⁵ The younger brother spends all he was given, then comes to his senses and turns back to go to the father’s house (Luke 15:13-19). While he was a distance away, the father sees him and immediately forgives him (Luke 15:20). The older brother displays an

¹⁴⁰ In reference to the shepherd and the woman of Luke 15, Vinson states, “the two characters are also ideal disciples. Each of them works hard to find the lost; neither of them dissuaded by the cost of discipleship, each of them is a generous host, ready to think of their own property as a gift to be shared with others.” Richard B. Vinson, *Luke*, Smyth and Helwys Bible Commentary (Macon: Smyth and Helwys, 2008), 506.

¹⁴¹ Kenneth E. Bailey, *Finding the Lost: Cultural Keys to Luke 15* (St. Louis: Concordia, 1989), 122.

¹⁴² Bailey, *Finding the Lost*, 112.

¹⁴³ Bailey, *Finding the Lost*, 109.

¹⁴⁴ Bailey writes,

When serious breaches in relationship occur, a mediator is selected or often naturally emerges in the community. This mediator is always the person with the closet relationships to both sides. The mediator moves from one party to the other in this “Kissinger diplomacy.” The older son is already mentioned in the story. The listener fully expects him to begin this classical and very effective process. His silence announces to all that the older son has poor relationship with both his brother and father . . . he will yet fulfill this duty for sake of the father. (Bailey, *Finding the Lost*, 122)

¹⁴⁵ Bailey denotes, “The father’s granting of the request makes clear that the character of the father in the parable is not modeled after a traditional Middle Eastern patriarch.” Bailey, *Finding the Lost*, 114.

unhealthy attitude toward the father's graciousness and the younger brother's return home by refusing to participate in the celebration (Luke 15:28). Interesting to note is the switching of positions by the brothers—the elder brother was in the house and is now on the outside, while the younger brother who was away from the house is now on the inside with the father.

It appears that the older brother's unhealthy notion has hints of self-righteousness and his justification by his works (Luke 15:29-30).¹⁴⁶ The elder brother's failure to understand the father's favor on his brother did not mean disfavor of the older brother.¹⁴⁷ A closer look reveals that the older brother's insalubrious demeanor might also be rooted in selfishness.¹⁴⁸ The items used to lavish upon the younger brother legally and rightfully belonged to the older brother (Luke 15:22). In other words, since the younger brother spent all of his inheritance (one-third) all that was left (two-thirds) belonged to the older brother at the death of the father (Luke 15:31). In essence, it took the resources of the elder brother mediated through the Father to restore the younger brother (Luke 15:32). Bailey remarks,

Jesus is addressing the human predicament. Every religious community has its insiders and outsiders. The first at least appear to keep the accepted patterns of faith and life, the second break them. For the insiders the very keeping of rules can create an ultraorthodox mentality that fosters a sense of superiority and a judgmental attitude toward all others.¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁶ Morris, *Luke*, 261.

¹⁴⁷ Bailey, *Finding the Lost*, 77.

¹⁴⁸ Robert Stein writes, "The older son would receive two thirds of the estate and the younger son one third (Deut 21:17) . . . usually such a division of the inheritance took place upon death of the father, but it could occur earlier. Sirach 33:19-23, however, advises against the later." Robert H. Stein, *Luke*, The New American Commentary, vol. 24 (Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 1992), 405.

¹⁴⁹ Bailey, *Finding the Lost*, 181.

Mark Black explains, “It is clear that the older brother represents those Pharisees who criticized Jesus for eating with tax collectors and sinners (vv. 1-2). It is also clear that the Pharisees must have felt the ‘sting.’”¹⁵⁰

Conclusion

From the beginning, humanity was created to play a role in carrying out the plan of God.¹⁵¹ Stephen Dempster states, “Whereas other creations come about by the divine word in a predictable manner . . . there is a pregnant theological pause before the creation of humanity. God takes counsel with himself before speaking.”¹⁵² Genesis 1:28 says, “Be fruitful and multiply and have dominion over,” indicating that humanity is to have a distinctive relationship between God and creation.¹⁵³ The creation narrative, according to Dempster, “announces the beginning, which commences a narrative leading up to Abraham, Israel, exodus, Sinia, conquest, kingship, temple, exile, and return. It is indispensable for the understanding of the Bible, sketching out an understanding of what it means to be human, namely to bring the world under the dominion of the image of God.”¹⁵⁴ Living on mission to make disciples through the sharing of the gospel of Jesus Christ is woven into the fabric of what it means to be made in the image of God. As a result, making disciples requires one to align with the will of God by making God known to the nations. This also requires the one who searches for the lost to search their own heart. Those who are motivated by repentance will have a heart that is willing to use their time, money, and resources toward missions and evangelism.

¹⁵⁰ Mark C. Black, *Luke*, The College Press NIV Commentary (Joplin, MO: College Press, 1996), 274.

¹⁵¹ Stephen G. Dempster, *Dominion and Dynasty: A Theology of the Hebrew Bible* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2003), 57.

¹⁵² Dempster, *Dominion and Dynasty*, 57.

¹⁵³ Dempster, *Dominion and Dynasty*, 58.

¹⁵⁴ Dempster, *Dominion and Dynasty*, 58.

CHAPTER 3

MISSIONAL ENGAGEMENT ISSUES

Evangelism and missions not only require a willingness to share the gospel of Jesus Christ but an encouragement of the follower to be sensitive to cultural and spiritual realities. Missional strategists in the early 1990s coined the term “10/40” to identify a critical global population who had not heard the gospel of Jesus Christ.¹ Recently, missiologists have identified another critical unreached people group but one not based on geographical location.² This group is a generation of individuals, “10/30,” who fall between the ages of ten and thirty years old.³ James White declares, “One-third of Americans under thirty say they have no religious affiliations, compared to 9 percent of those sixty-five and older.”⁴ The 10/30 group is said to make up more than half of the earth’s population.⁵ This immense mission field outnumbers the top one hundred geographical people groups combined.⁶ Because of the immensity of this generation, the church must give priority in reaching and discipling this group for Christ.

¹ Ed Newton and R. Scott Pace explain, “The term ‘10/40’ was based on latitudinal parameters that ranged from ten to forty degrees north of the equator in Asia, Europe, and Africa.” Ed Newton and R. Scott Pace, *Student Ministry by the Book: Biblical Foundations of Student Ministry* (Nashville: B & H, 2019), 35.

² Newton and Pace, *Student Ministry by the Book*, 35.

³ Newton and Pace, *Student Ministry by the Book*, 35.

⁴ James Emery White, *The Rise of the Nones: Understanding and Reaching the Religiously Unaffiliated* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2014), 21.

⁵ Newton and Pace, *Student Ministry by the Book*, 35-36.

⁶ Newton and Pace, *Student Ministry by the Book*, 36.

Cultural and Spiritual Realities

White states, “If the heart of the Christian mission is to evangelize and transform culture through the centrality of the church, then understanding that culture is paramount.”⁷ Darrell Bock states, “Cultural intelligence requires that we understand what is happening around us and how to engage these well.”⁸ One way to understand culture is to observe and study generations. Nerina Jansen explains the concept of generation, like the phenomenon of generations, is almost as old as humanity itself.⁹ The understanding of generations did not initially start out as an exact science. Joachim Matthes cites sociologist Emile Durkheim who “repeatedly points out that the basic concepts used and defined in the social sciences are first coined and circulated not as scientific concepts, but as social terms used in social discourse in order to delineate social phenomena as they occur in everyday life experiences.”¹⁰ Furthermore, Matthes implies that the term generation should be “treated as a pattern of interpretation, and ‘Interpretament’ that has emerged in the course of social communication itself before it was incorporated into the stock of social scientific knowledge and provided with a strict definition according to the epistemological rules valid in the corpus of knowledge.”¹¹

Jansen comments that the term *generation* has had various meanings ranging from “biological, genealogical fact of age—the so-called chronological age-measure externally in calculable units of time, to a designation as a measure of historical time and

⁷ James Emery White, *Meet Generation Z: Understanding and Reach the New Post-Christian World* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2017), 12.

⁸ Darrell L. Bock, *Cultural Intelligence: Living for God in a Diverse, Pluralistic World* (Nashville: B &H, 2020), 1.

⁹ Nerina Jansen, “Definition of Generation and Sociological Theory,” *Social Science* 49, no. 2 (Spring 1974): 90.

¹⁰ Joachim Matthes, “The ‘Uncontemporaneity’ of the ‘Contempraneous:’ The Problem of Generations,” *The Polish Sociological Bulletin* 102 (1993): 103.

¹¹ Matthes, “The ‘Uncontemporaneity’ of the ‘Contempraneous,’” 103.

eventually to a definition of the generation in sociohistorical terms.”¹² Despite the various meanings of the term, Jansen remarks that only the sociohistorical aspect of generations has survived the test of time, and this was not evident until the “second and third decades of the 20th century.”¹³ Matthes explains that the word *generation* was transformed in eighteenth-century Europe. *Generation* has a German language origin and was initially a “designation for descent relationships within extensive kinship systems.”¹⁴ The value attached to kinship started to decrease in favor of civil and modern state designations and thus this “genealogical meaning” of generation changed as well. Matthes elaborates, “The new form of socialization (*Vergesellschaftungsform*) which developed in Europe in the late 18th and in the 19th century was characterized by the emancipation of the individual from its traditional ties: feudal, local, and, in particular, kinship ties.”¹⁵ The individualization of generation had a profound impact as the term was now considered in relationship to others as a “social unit” no longer theoretical but in reality.¹⁶ Interesting enough, Matthes states, “As a genealogical concept, the term ‘generation’ was ascribed to all those who held the same position in the genealogical order, irrespective of their chronological age.”¹⁷

William Strauss and Neil Howe build and expand upon these embryonic concepts of generations. They explain, “Generations come in cycles.”¹⁸ There appears to be no universal lifecycle, because generations close to each other live different cycles

¹² Jansen, “Definition of Generation and Sociological Theory,” 90.

¹³ Jansen, “Definition of Generation and Sociological Theory,” 91.

¹⁴ Matthes, “The ‘Uncontemporaneity’ of the ‘Contempraneous,’” 103.

¹⁵ Matthes, “The ‘Uncontemporaneity’ of the ‘Contempraneous,’” 103.

¹⁶ Matthes, “The ‘Uncontemporaneity’ of the ‘Contempraneous,’” 103.

¹⁷ Matthes, “The ‘Uncontemporaneity’ of the ‘Contempraneous,’” 104.

¹⁸ William Strauss and Neil Howe, *Generations: The History of America’s Future, 1584-2069* (New York: Quill, William Morrow, 1991), 35.

depending on their age in history.¹⁹ Jansen notes, “The structure of the generation is the way in which the relations between the members of the generation are organized and articulated.”²⁰ In 1990, leaving out the oldest and youngest, America had four generations that formed a generational “constellation.”²¹ Constellations are always aging and moving up one place every twenty-two years. “Whenever the constellation shifts up by one notch,” according to Strauss and Howe, “the behavior and attitudes of each phase of life change character entirely.”²² As one generation is being born other generations are maturing and transitioning into a different stage in life.²³

During the development of the understanding of the concept of generation, the social implications emerged.²⁴ Matthes cites Martin Kohli with the development of the term *life-course-regime*. Life-course-regime are basic functions attributed to each life phase.²⁵ Jansen offers insight: “The members of a generation do not, however, always find themselves in the same position-as they grow older not only the world changes, but also their position in the world changes.”²⁶ Each phase of life according to Strauss and Howe are youth, rising adulthood, midlife, and elderhood.²⁷ Matthes elaborates, “‘Life-course-regime’ became installed in European societies . . . organized around the newly emerging social face of wage labour, and structured according to the phases of

¹⁹ Strauss and Howe, *Generations*, 34.

²⁰ Jansen, “Definition of Generation and Sociological Theory,” 91.

²¹ Strauss and Howe define constellation as “the lineup of living generations ordered by phase of life.” Strauss and Howe, *Generations*, 31.

²² Strauss and Howe, *Generations*, 31.

²³ Strauss and Howe, *Generations*, 31.

²⁴ Matthes, “The ‘Uncontemporaneity’ of the ‘Contempraneous,’” 105.

²⁵ Matthes, “The ‘Uncontemporaneity’ of the ‘Contempraneous,’” 105.

²⁶ Jansen, “Definition of Generation and Sociological Theory,” 94.

²⁷ Strauss and Howe, *Generations*, 31.

preparation, activity, and retirement.”²⁸ As a consequence of life-course-regime, age limits were taken truly to imply a specific behavior based on one’s age and provide an expected norm in society.²⁹ Tim Elmore and Andrew McPeak remind that for an individual to transition to one phase of life to another there usually would need to be a rite of passage.³⁰ Rites of passage are usually characterized by a change in status and alignment of the mind to a new way of thinking.³¹ Elmore and McPeak’s rites of passage seems to echo Jansen definition from 1974 that explains the correlation between age in the social structure called generation and duties that correspond to the new position.³²

Strauss and Howe detail maturing and transiting as “youths come to age, rising adults reach midlife, midlifers reach elderhood, elders pass on (or reach advanced old age)—and a new set of babies enters youth.”³³ Strauss and Howe describes each phase of life based on its age and central social role.³⁴ Youth are categorized as ages zero to twenty-one and their central role is dependance.³⁵ Albert Mohler would agree with Strauss and Howe that children and youth are dependent on parents and society, but would also argue to see them as a gift.³⁶ Youth are further described as those who are “growing,

²⁸ Matthes, “The ‘Uncontemporaneity’ of the ‘Contempraneous,’” 105.

²⁹ Matthes, “The ‘Uncontemporaneity’ of the ‘Contempraneous,’” 105.

³⁰ Tim Elmore and Andrew McPeak, *Generation Z Unfiltered: Facing Nine Hidden Challenges of the Most Anxious Population* (Atlanta: Poet Gardener, 2019), 221.

³¹ Elmore and McPeak, *Generation Z Unfiltered*, 221.

³² Jansen, “Definition of Generation and Sociological Theory,” 94-95.

³³ Strauss and Howe, *Generations*, 31.

³⁴ Strauss and Howe, *Generations*, 60-61.

³⁵According to Strauss and Howe, “every society recognizes a discrete coming-of-age moment (or ‘rite of passage’).” Strauss and Howe, *Generations*, 61.

³⁶ R. Albert Mohler Jr., *Life in Four Stages: A Biblical Celebration of Childhood, Youth, Adulthood, and Age* (Louisville: SBTS Press, 2018), 13-14.

learning, accepting protection and nurture, avoiding harm, and acquiring values.”³⁷

Jansen expounds that youth do not “occupy important positions in the social structure and is still at the beginning of the process of relation himself to his circumstances in a meaningful way.”³⁸ Strauss and Howe comment that the moment between youth and rising adult is important because “it may fix important differences in peer personality that last a life time.”³⁹

Strass and Howe describe the next phase of life as rising adulthood, whose ages are from twenty-two to forty-three with their central social role as activity. According to the authors, rising adults are said to be “working, starting families and livelihoods, serving institutions, and testing values.”⁴⁰ The midlife is described as ages forty-four to sixty-five years and their central role is leadership. In the midlife phase, the assumption is that this group will use values learned to lead. The elderhood phase is one whose ages are sixty-six to eighty-seven and central role is one of stewardship. The expectations according to the authors are that this group is passing on values and managing the processes they began earlier in life.⁴¹ Jansen similarly concurs with this explanation from Strauss and Howe, but seems to caution that both the child and the aged may be “living in the past and have no perspective on the present.”⁴² Strauss and Howe suggest that “by viewing history along the generational diagonal, by searching the cycle for behavioral clues, we

³⁷ Strauss and Howe, *Generations*, 61.

³⁸ Jansen, “Definition of Generation and Sociological Theory,” 95.

³⁹ Strauss and Howe, *Generations*, 61.

⁴⁰ Strauss and Howe, *Generations*, 60.

⁴¹ Strauss and Howe, *Generations*, 60.

⁴² It is interesting that Jensen describes the contributions of child and aged as minimal: “The child has not really become conscious of his circumstances yet and is still accepting without questioning, the perspectives of his parents.” Jansen, “Definition of Generation and Sociological Theory,” 95. Jansen goes on to describe similar that “the aged . . . in possession of his own perspective have been found during his younger years and are not directed at the circumstances of the present.” Jansen, “Definition of Generation and Sociological Theory,” 95.

can apply the mirror of recurring human experience to gaze around the corner of current trends and say something instructive about the decades to come.”⁴³ Gary McIntosh resonates similar thoughts: “As a generation moves through time, it causes a generational wave.”⁴⁴ Jansen similarly, observes that as new generations interact with existing generations the new generation is forced to change and ultimately ends up being different from the existing generation.⁴⁵ Strauss and Howe, McIntosh, and Jansen imply that each generation will have impact on their immediate circumstances and leave lasting impressions for the future.

Although Strauss and Howe address the timeline and characteristics of each phase of life, they fail to deal with ages that fall on the border of two groups.⁴⁶ Dillion Kalkhurst refers to ages that fall in between as a “cusper”: “A cusper is someone who was born on, or around the year that the prior generation transitions to the next.”⁴⁷ Failure to understand where a person may fall in their phase of life could lead to the mislabeling of a generation.

Generational Details

Central to understanding the breakdown of each phase of life is Strauss and Howe’s definition and understanding of cohort group. Cohort is said to be the building block of generations.⁴⁸ Social scientists describe cohort as referring to any set of persons

⁴³ Strauss and Howe, *Generations*, 39.

⁴⁴ Gary L. McIntosh, *One Church Four Generations: Understanding and Reaching all Ages in Your Church* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2002), 15.

⁴⁵ Jansen, “Definition of Generation and Sociological Theory,” 95-96.

⁴⁶ Dillion Knight Kalkhurst, *Intergenerational Engagement: Understanding the Five Generations in Today’s Economy* (Scotts Valley, CA: CreateSpace, 2018), vii.

⁴⁷ Kalkhurst, *Intergenerational Engagement*, vii.

⁴⁸ Strauss and Howe, *Generations*, 44.

born in the same year.⁴⁹ Matthes describes a change that happened during the eighteenth and nineteenth century in Europe, where, “as a genealogical concept, the term ‘generation’ was ascribed to all those who held the same position in the genealogical order, irrespective of their chronological age.”⁵⁰ Strauss and Howe make the distinction with cohort group as one being limited by a “span of consecutive years.”⁵¹ This distinction is based on three fallacies as it concerns cohort grouping.⁵²

The first is “the age-bracket fallacy.”⁵³ Strauss and Howe imply that this designation is “the mistake of endowing a life phase with an anthropomorphic identity over time.”⁵⁴ The second is “the life course fallacy.”⁵⁵ Strauss and Howe cite sociologist Matilda White Riley who states, “Life-course fallacy is the mistake of describing a lifecycle by tacking together all the different age brackets alive at the same time.”⁵⁶ The third is “the fallacy of cohort-centrism.”⁵⁷ Strauss and Howe explain cohort-centrism as “the assumption that the lifecycle experience of one’s own cohort-group offers a single paradigm for all others.”⁵⁸ Kalkhurst resonates similar sentiments as he cautions individuals not to assume a people are a certain way because of the year they were

⁴⁹Strauss and Howe, *Generations*, 44.

⁵⁰ Matthes, “The ‘Uncontemporaneity’ of the ‘Contempraneous,’” 104.

⁵¹ Strauss and Howe, *Generations*, 44.

⁵² Strauss and Howe, *Generations*, 45-46.

⁵³ Strauss and Howe, *Generations*, 45.

⁵⁴ Strauss and Howe imply that this fallacy focuses on taking something abstract and making it appear real. Strauss and Howe, *Generations*, 45.

⁵⁵ Strauss and Howe, *Generations*, 46.

⁵⁶ Strauss and Howe, *Generations*, 46.

⁵⁷ Strauss and Howe, *Generations*, 46.

⁵⁸ Strauss and Howe, *Generations*, 46.

born.⁵⁹ Such an assumption denies the uniqueness of an individual made in the image of God. Each fallacy fails to take into consideration that within the phases of life behavior is different from one generation to the next.⁶⁰

McIntosh writes, “Certain people . . . are connected by a place in time, by common boundaries, and a common character. We can say that those people are one generation.”⁶¹ Strauss and Howe magnify the idea of generations by stating, “Throughout American history, social moments have arrived at dates separated by approximately two phases of life, or roughly forty to forty-five years.”⁶² They further avoid the aforementioned fallacies by defining a generation as “a cohort-group whose length approximates the span of life and whose boundaries are fixed by peer personality.”⁶³

Peer personality. Strauss and Howe’s view generations as “people moving through time, each group or generation of people possessing a distinctive sense of self.”⁶⁴ This sense of self is shaped by its “age location.”⁶⁵ Interesting enough, Strauss and Howe give details on the fact that “during childhood and, especially, during the coming-of-age experiences separating youth and young adulthood, this age location produces ‘peer personality.’”⁶⁶ The allusion to peer personality is stated by Matthes, as he describes a

⁵⁹ Kalkhurst, *Intergenerational Engagement*, vii.

⁶⁰ Strauss and Howe, *Generations*, 47.

⁶¹ McIntosh, *One Church Four Generations*, 15.

⁶² Strauss and Howe, *Generations*, 35.

⁶³ Strauss and Howe, *Generations*, 60.

⁶⁴ Strauss and Howe, *Generations*, 32.

⁶⁵ Strauss and Howe describe age location as “age-determined participation in epochal events that occur during its lifecycle.” Strauss and Howe, *Generations*, 32.

⁶⁶ Straus and Howe describe peer personality as “a set of collective behavioral traits and attitudes and later expresses itself throughout a generation’s lifecycle trajectory.” Strauss and Howe, *Generations*, 32.

generation as “set or a group of people who were born at around the same time and who in the course of their socialization process, were subjected to, and marked by, the shared participation in certain phases of social and historical development and, thus, shared a common realm of temporal experience.”⁶⁷ Peer personality may also be developed due to the closeness of parents and children that help develop certain character traits.⁶⁸ This distinction of self is ordered by unique “unrepeatable opportunities” that impact their conscious.⁶⁹ Peer personality impacts each generation in different ways based on phase of life and when a person is born.⁷⁰ The personality of a generation is formed by its common age location, common beliefs and behavior, and perceived membership.⁷¹

Strauss and Howe expand on the idea:

Peer personality of each generational type shows new manifestation in each phase of life, and because it is determined by the constellation into which it is born (a pattern that is forever shifting), the ongoing interplay of peer personalities give history a dynamic quality. How children are raised affects how they later parent. How students are taught affects how they later teach. How youths come of age shapes their exercise of leadership—which, in turn, substantially defines the coming-of-age experience of others. This push and pull between generations move synchronously with other alternating patterns in American history: for example, between periods of public actions and private introspection, secularism and spiritualism, cultural suffocation and liberation, fragmentation and consensus, overprotective and underprotective nurture of children.⁷²

Peer personality is also impacted by social moments that leave a lasting impression on the minds of individuals in the generation.⁷³

⁶⁷ Matthes, “The ‘Uncontemporaneity’ of the ‘Contempraneous,’” 104.

⁶⁸ Nicholas A. Christakis and James H. Fowler, *Connected: How Your Friends’ Friends’ Friends’ Affect Everything You Feel, Think, and Do* (New York: Back Bay, 2009), 78.

⁶⁹ Strauss and Howe, *Generations*, 63-64.

⁷⁰ Strauss and Howe, *Generations*, 32.

⁷¹ Strauss and Howe, *Generations*, 64.

⁷² Strauss and Howe, *Generations*, 33.

⁷³ Strauss and Howe, *Generations*, 69.

Social moment. As generations come in cycles, they interact with social moments, which impact each generation in different ways.⁷⁴ A social moment, according to Strauss and Howe, “is an era, typically lasting about a decade, when people perceive that historic events are radically altering their social environment.”⁷⁵ Matthes concurs with Strauss and Howe, stating, “This mutual social typification of age groups finally also began to serve as a key to an explanation of social and cultural changes, conflicts and transitions.”⁷⁶ The length of social moments is how Strauss and Howe determine the time span between generations.⁷⁷ There are two types of social moments: secular crisis and spiritual awakenings.⁷⁸ Strauss and Howe define a secular crisis as “when society focuses on reordering the outer world of institutions and public behavior.”⁷⁹ “In every secular crisis,” according to Strauss and Howe, “except the Civil War, America had old Idealist, midlife Reactives, rising-adult Civics, and child Adaptives.”⁸⁰ The Civil War is considered an abnormality because the crisis came early, three adult generations permitted their dangerous peer instincts to prevail, and lastly, it came to an unsuccessful end.⁸¹ Strauss and Howe make the argument that yes, the Union was saved, slaves emancipated, and the industrial revolution let loose, but at what cost?⁸² According to

⁷⁴ Strauss and Howe state, “Social moments alternate between ‘secular crisis’ and ‘spiritual awakenings.’ These moments help shape and define history and new generations.” Strauss and Howe, *Generations*, 35.

⁷⁵ Strauss and Howe, *Generations*, 71.

⁷⁶ Matthes, “The ‘Uncontemporaneity’ of the ‘Contempraneous,’” 104.

⁷⁷ Strauss and Howe, *Generations*, 35.

⁷⁸ Strauss and Howe, *Generations*, 71.

⁷⁹ Strauss and Howe, *Generations*, 71.

⁸⁰ Strauss and Howe, *Generations*, 90.

⁸¹ Strauss and Howe, *Generations*, 91.

⁸² Strauss and Howe, *Generations*, 74.

Strauss and Howe, this cost was expensive: “Deep rooted sectional hatred, the impoverishment and political exile of the South, the collapse of Reconstruction into the era of lynching and Jim Crow, and the long delay that postwar exhaustion later imposed on most other social agendas, everything from antitrust policy and labor grievances to temperance and women’s rights.”⁸³ The inference is that this social moment did not have the appropriate start or end that those involved intended.⁸⁴

Strauss and Howe define spiritual awakening as “when society focuses on changing the inner world of values and private behavior.”⁸⁵ They further clarify that during a spiritual awakening the focus is on the spirit of the people.⁸⁶ Strauss and Howe cite William McLoughlin who defines awakenings as “periods of culture revitalization that begin in a general crisis of beliefs and values and extend over a period of a generation or so, during which time a profound reorientation in beliefs and values take place.”⁸⁷ This difference between values and beliefs in the public square are usually tied to conflicting worldviews, which lead to different behavior.⁸⁸ Colin Hansen and John Woodbridge would disagree with Strauss and Howe’s assessment on the source of spiritual awakenings.⁸⁹ Strauss and Howe’s quoting of William McLoughlin seems to focus on people being the source of spiritual change during a spiritual awakening without God. Hansen and Woodbridge clarify, “God employs certain means, such as preaching the Word of God, in

⁸³ Strauss and Howe, *Generations*, 91.

⁸⁴ Strauss and Howe, *Generations*, 74.

⁸⁵ Strauss and Howe, *Generations*, 71.

⁸⁶ Strauss and Howe explain, “The moment is not essentially public or collective (though it may spark crowds, hysteria, and violence) but personal and individual.” Strauss and Howe, *Generations*, 93.

⁸⁷ Strauss and Howe, *Generations*, 74.

⁸⁸ Matthes, “The ‘Uncontemporaneity’ of the ‘Contempraneous,’” 108.

⁸⁹ Colin Hansen and John Woodbridge, *A God Sized-Vision: Revival Stories that Stretch and Stir* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010), 25.

order to spur revival.”⁹⁰ Furthermore, Hansen and Woodbridge write, “Following a period of spiritual decline, someone steps forward to acknowledge failure to live to God’s good and gracious law. . . . God may hear their petition and answer their cry with revival.”⁹¹ Asserted by Strauss and Howe is the premise that “during each Awakening era, we witness mounting frustration with public institutions, fragmenting families and communities, rising alcohol and drug use, and a growing tendency to take risk in most spheres of life. Sex-role distinctions decline, and the protection accorded children reaches a low ebb.”⁹²

Strauss and Howe describe social moments as having an alternating pattern that occurs roughly every forty to forty-five years.⁹³ As a social moment happens, it not only impacts the current phase of life, but the current generation attempts to change their social role as it matures to the next. For example, they describe, “After a social moment has reinforced a ‘dependent’ social role in children, that cohort-group will later try to define rising adulthood in terms of that dependance.”⁹⁴ This redefinition by a cohort group is short lived because the group can only work through one phase-of-life transition.⁹⁵ A new social moment must realign social roles back into their original phases of life.⁹⁶ Strauss and Howe explain that during social moments dominant generations are entering

⁹⁰ Hansen and Woodbridge, *A God Sized-Vision*, 31.

⁹¹ Hansen and Woodbridge, *A God Sized-Vision*, 25.

⁹² Strauss and Howe, *Generations*, 96.

⁹³ Strauss and Howe also state that this alternating between secular crisis and spiritual awakening arrive on a regular schedule. Strauss and Howe, *Generations*, 71.

⁹⁴ Strauss and Howe, *Generations*, 72.

⁹⁵ Strauss and Howe elaborate that the need for a new social moment and the inability for a group to sustain a redefinition is due to “the growing incongruity between peer personality and age.” Strauss and Howe, *Generations*, 72.

⁹⁶ Strauss and Howe explain, “The new social moment represents a reaction against the ossifying and dysfunctional roles forged by each generation during the earlier social moment. As a result, the new social moment will be opposite in type from the one that came before.” Strauss and Howe, *Generations*, 72.

rising adulthood during the crisis and elderhood during an awakening. They intricate recessive generations are entering youth during a crisis and midlife during an awakening.⁹⁷ As a result of the social moments, each generation forms its own peer personality.⁹⁸

Generational influence. Each generation has a way of impacting the next both positively and negatively.⁹⁹ Matthes asserts that based on a person's life-stage, life span, social and cultural differences, and different historical birth dates allow for the potential of generational conflict.¹⁰⁰ Strauss and Howe define the four generational types as Idealist, Reactive, Civic, and Adaptive. They allude to the fact that “during a spiritual awakening, Idealist are moving into rising adulthood while Reactives are appearing as children; during secular crisis, Civics are moving into rising adulthood while Adaptives are appearing as children.”¹⁰¹ Strauss and Howe expound, “A dominant, inner-fixated Idealist generation grows up as increasingly indulged youths after a secular crisis; come of age inspiring a spiritual awakening.”¹⁰² The Idealist generation may also produce narcissistic rising adults, moralistic midlifers, potential visionary elders guiding the next social moment.¹⁰³ “A recessive Reactive Generation,” according to Strauss and Howe, “will grow up unprotected and criticized youth in a spiritual awakening; develop in to risk-taking and alienated rising adults; mellow into pragmatic midlife leaders during a

⁹⁷ Strauss and Howe, *Generations*, 72-73.

⁹⁸ Strauss and Howe, *Generations*, 73.

⁹⁹ Strauss and Howe, *Generations*, 39.

¹⁰⁰ Matthes, “The ‘Uncontemporaneity’ of the ‘Contempraneous,’” 108.

¹⁰¹ Strauss and Howe, *Generations*, 35.

¹⁰² Strauss and Howe, *Generations*, 74.

¹⁰³ Strauss and Howe, *Generations*, 74.

secular crisis and maintains respect (but less influence) as reclusive elders.”¹⁰⁴ Similarly, Strauss and Howe detail a dominant, outer-fixated Civic Generation as growing up as protected youth after a spiritual awakening.¹⁰⁵ Strauss and Howe explain that the Civic generation

come of age overcoming a secular crisis; unites into a heroic and achieving cadre of rising adults; sustains that image while building institutions as powerful midlifers; and emerges as busy elders attached by the next spiritual awakening. . . . A recessive Adaptive Generation grows up as overprotected and suffocated youths during a secular crisis, matures into risk-adverse, and conformist rising adults.”¹⁰⁶

A recessive Adaptive Generation, based on Strauss and Howe, may also produce indecisive midlife arbitrator-leaders during a spiritual awakening and less respected influential sensitive elders.¹⁰⁷ Matthes notes, “People born into a society at different times tend to differ in nuclear issues of how to perceive the world and how to act in it.”¹⁰⁸

Strauss and Howe reference, “Roughly from the mid-1960’s through the early 1980s, defined an era of unremitting hostility toward children.”¹⁰⁹ They give several examples, such as one in four apartment rental places banned children, birth control was a hot topic, adult sterilization doubled, legal abortions rose ten-fold, and Walt Disney Studios laid off cartoonist. Midlife generations often raise their children in a opposite way than what they were reared.¹¹⁰ In describing the previous generation’s parenting styles, Strauss and Howe offer, “Underprotected Reactives (say, the Lost) produced overprotected Adaptives (Silent), who then in turn raise underprotected Reactives (13ers). Civics (GIs),

¹⁰⁴ Strauss and Howe, *Generations*, 74.

¹⁰⁵ Strauss and Howe, *Generations*, 74.

¹⁰⁶ Strauss and Howe, *Generations*, 74.

¹⁰⁷ Strauss and Howe, *Generations*, 74.

¹⁰⁸ Matthes, “The ‘Uncontemporaneity’ of the ‘Contempraneous,’” 108.

¹⁰⁹ Strauss and Howe, *Generations*, 98.

¹¹⁰ Strauss and Howe, *Generations*, 98.

themselves raised under a tightening parental grip, relax the grip for Idealist (Boomers), who later retighten it around their own Civic (Millennial) children.”¹¹¹ This nurturing pattern is not based on the intentionality of the midlife parents but on peer personality of the generation and shifting mood of constellation era.¹¹²

In 1991, the youngest generation comprising 72 percent of America’s population were the Millennials and their generational type was labeled as Civic.¹¹³ Civics coming of age typically line up with a crisis era. Strauss and Howe state, “A crisis era opens with growing collective unity in the face of perceived social peril and culminated in a secular crisis in which danger is overcome and one set of new ideals triumph.”¹¹⁴ Interestingly, Strauss and Howe state, “If a secular crisis weakens instead of strengthens the confidence of rising adults, then a Reactive generation can be followed by an Adaptive rather than a Civic.”¹¹⁵ Based on Strauss and Howe’s generational type, Generation Z would be labeled as Adaptives. An Outer-driven area normally lines up with Adaptives coming of age.¹¹⁶ In an Outer-driven area, exclaims Strauss and Howe, “society turn towards conformity and stability, triumph ideals are secularized, and spiritual discontent is deferred.”¹¹⁷

Spiritual Warfare

Ed Newton and R. Scott Pace declare, “In our churches we must embrace student ministry for what it is: a spiritual battlefield that requires strategic enlistment and

¹¹¹ Strauss and Howe, *Generations*, 100.

¹¹² Strauss and Howe, *Generations*, 101.

¹¹³ Strauss and Howe, *Generations*, 35.

¹¹⁴ Strauss and Howe, *Generations*, 76.

¹¹⁵ Strauss and Howe, *Generations*, 75.

¹¹⁶ Strauss and Howe, *Generations*, 76.

¹¹⁷ Strauss and Howe, *Generations*, 76.

engagement in order to reach and teach young people effectively.”¹¹⁸ This population is changing the religious landscape in America.¹¹⁹ Bock echoes this change by stating, “Gone are the days where culturally one can use Scripture as an imprimatur for an idea’s validity.”¹²⁰ Millennials, as they age, are not following conventional wisdom and returning to the church.¹²¹ According to White, this is important because “the long held view that young people raised in the church may sow a few wild oats, drift away from the compulsory attendance inflicted by parents, but then return once they are marry and begin having children.”¹²² Unfortunately, returning to the church has not been the case according the trends.¹²³ White notes, “A real mark of a none is not the rejection on God but the rejections of any specific religion.”¹²⁴ The religious landscape is being populated by the “nones.”¹²⁵ Interesting enough, the nones neither practice religion nor oppose it. White declares, “This new reality of the “young and unchurch’ becoming the “older and unchurched” is in line with the results from the National Study of Youth and Religion, initially conducted from 2001 to 2005 and arguably the largest research project on the religious and spiritual lives of American adolescents.”¹²⁶

¹¹⁸ Newton and Pace, *Student Ministry by the Book*, 36.

¹¹⁹ White, *The Rise of the Nones*, 13.

¹²⁰ Bock, *Cultural Intelligence*, 6.

¹²¹ White, *The Rise of the Nones*, 14.

¹²² White, *The Rise of the Nones*, 14.

¹²³ White, *The Rise of the Nones*, 14.

¹²⁴ White, *The Rise of the Nones*, 23.

¹²⁵ White, *The Rise of the Nones*, 13.

¹²⁶ White, *The Rise of the Nones*, 15.

White, reports, “Mainlines are losing ground; the Bible Belt is less Baptist; Catholics have invaded the South; denominationalism is on the wane.”¹²⁷ The nones are also known as the religiously unaffiliated.¹²⁸ This change may be due to nones feeling that religious institutions are too concerned with non-biblical priorities.¹²⁹ John Dickerson comments, “Many evangelicals are splitting away from the right—not always because they disagree with its positions, but often because they disagree with its methods, priorities, or message to Americans at large.”¹³⁰ White gives one example of how the Moral Majority of the 1980s fought to have Christians in all major leadership positions in the US government, and by doing so, the hope was to change the moral landscape of America. White explains, “The Moral Majority won through the election of Ronald Reagan as president, and his subsequent Supreme Court appointments throughout the 1980s, brought great anticipation for substantive change.”¹³¹ As a result, little change happened and *Roe vs Wade* still remains the law of the land. White’s articulation of this point is not that the sanctity of life is unimportant, but “its caustic, abrasive, and unloving approach toward those apart from Christ” did not sit well with younger evangelicals.¹³² Dickerson states, “Far too long we have expected United States nonbelievers to behave and believe like Christians. When they have acted like pagans, we have at times attacked

¹²⁷ White, *The Rise of the Nones*, 13.

¹²⁸ White, *The Rise of the Nones*, 13.

¹²⁹ White cites the results from the Pew Forum on Religion and Public life by stating that the nones “think that religious organizations are too concerned with money and power, too focused on rules and too involved in politics.” White, *The Rise of the Nones*, 37.

¹³⁰ John S. Dickerson, *The Great Evangelical Recession: 6 Factors That Will Crash the American Church and How to Prepare* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2013), 135.

¹³¹ White, *The Rise of the Nones*, 39.

¹³² White, *The Rise of the Nones*, 39.

them for being precisely who they are apart from Christ.”¹³³ White declares, “So the effort to recapture the nation failed as a strategy and alienated a younger generation.”¹³⁴

The religious unaffiliated fall into three categories. First, according to White, are “those who were raised outside of organized religion.”¹³⁵ Second, are those who are not satisfied and have abandoned their current belief system.¹³⁶ Lastly, and probably the most disturbing, are those “being raised in a religious household” but never engaged in it.¹³⁷ White elaborates, “The ARIS survey found that the *nones* nearly doubled from 1990 survey to 2008, from 8.1 percent to 15 percent, making those who claimed no religion at all the third-largest defined constituency in the United States.”¹³⁸ This statistic alone should cause followers of Jesus concerned about the next generation to fall on their knees and call out to God. According to the ARIS report, cites White, “the challenge to Christianity . . . does not come from other religions but from a rejection of all forms of organized religion”¹³⁹ The urgency of prayer is exasperated when White declares, “The *nones* now make up the nation’s fastest-growing and second largest religious category, eclipsed by Catholics, outnumbering even Southern Baptist, the largest Protestant denomination.”¹⁴⁰ Dickerson states, “From the generation of 18- to 29-year olds, there are roughly four to six secularists (atheists, agnostics, and self-identified non-believers

¹³³ Dickerson, *The Great Evangelical Recession*, 135.

¹³⁴ White, *The Rise of the Nones*, 39.

¹³⁵ White, *The Rise of the Nones*, 25.

¹³⁶ White, *The Rise of the Nones*, 25.

¹³⁷ White, *The Rise of the Nones*, 25.

¹³⁸ White, *The Rise of the Nones*, 14.

¹³⁹ White, *The Rise of the Nones*, 27.

¹⁴⁰ White summarizes the results from the National Study of Youth and Religion: “‘The young and unchurched’ are now becoming the ‘older ad unchurched.’” White, *The Rise of the Nones*, 15-17.

combined) for everyone evangelical.”¹⁴¹ Many evangelicals are mature saints, and due to the current trends, the future may possess less evangelicalism.¹⁴²

The Next Generations

Earlier in describing parenting styles through their generation cycle, Strauss and Howe alluded to the fact that Idealist or Boomers would have a tight grip on their Civic kids, the Millennials.¹⁴³ The authors also explained how each subsequent generation would parent in an opposite way than how they were reared.¹⁴⁴ As parents of Generation Z (Gen Z) have been warned not to be helicopter parents, Gen Z had been given more liberty to discover and learn independently than any other generation.¹⁴⁵

Although Generation Z has been given liberty to study and learn independently, it has come with some cost.¹⁴⁶ The use of technology and the impact upon student minds’ has caused a rewiring of sorts.¹⁴⁷ Tim Elmore and Andrew McPeak gives five impacts on the brain as a result of this independence and technology: sleeplessness, anxiety/depression, poorer memories, diminished attention spans, and impulsivity.¹⁴⁸ One of the causes of sleeplessness maybe an overexposure to bright lights from screen and tablet which can send confusing brain signals according to Elmore and McPeak. They highlights that anxiety and depression maybe linked to FOMO (Fear Of Missing Out) and FOBO (Fear

¹⁴¹ Dickerson, *The Great Evangelical Recession*, 116.

¹⁴² Dickerson, *The Great Evangelical Recession*, 114.

¹⁴³ Strauss and Howe, *Generations*, 100.

¹⁴⁴ Strauss and Howe, *Generations*, 98.

¹⁴⁵ White, *Meet Generation Z*, 51.

¹⁴⁶ Elmore and McPeak, *Generation Z Unfiltered*, 46.

¹⁴⁷ Elmore and McPeak, *Generation Z Unfiltered*, 45-46.

¹⁴⁸ Elmore and McPeak, *Generation Z Unfiltered*, 47-49.

of Being Off-line).¹⁴⁹ Elmore and McPeak elaborate on FOMO by stating, “The New York Times defines FOMO as ‘the blend of anxiety, inadequacy and irritation that can flare up while skimming social media.’”¹⁵⁰ Elmore and McPeak explain that poorer memories might be linked the easy access to information through search engines such as Google and says the average attention spans of Gen Z has moved from twelve seconds in 2000 down to eight seconds today.¹⁵¹ This lack of focus, aided by quick decision making from gaming and the need for instant gratification, may lead to impulsivity.¹⁵² Daniel Goleman suggest that one’s emotional response to any situation may give insight to impulsivity: “The fact that we can trigger any emotion at all in someone else-or they in us-testifies to the powerful mechanism by which one person’s feelings spread to one another.”¹⁵³ Goleman alludes that this emotional interchange impacts every action.¹⁵⁴

The emotional response to a situation flows through one’s brain waves along either a “low road” or “high road” functioning.¹⁵⁵ The low road functioning, according to Goleman, is “circuitry that operates beneath our awareness, automatically and effortlessly, with immense speed.”¹⁵⁶ Most of what humans do functions spontaneously through a network operating via the low road. On the other hand, high road functioning, according to Goleman, “runs through neural systems that work more methodically and

¹⁴⁹ Elmore and McPeak, *Generation Z Unfiltered*, 47.

¹⁵⁰ Elmore and McPeak, *Generation Z Unfiltered*, 47

¹⁵¹ Elmore and McPeak, *Generation Z Unfiltered*, 47.

¹⁵² Elmore and McPeak, *Generation Z Unfiltered*, 47.

¹⁵³ Daniel Goleman, *Social Intelligence: The New Science of Human Relationships* (New York: Bantam Dell, 2006), 16.

¹⁵⁴ Goleman, *Social Intelligence*, 16.

¹⁵⁵ Goleman, *Social Intelligence*, 16-17.

¹⁵⁶ Goleman, *Social Intelligence*, 16.

step by step, with deliberate effort.”¹⁵⁷ In comparison, the low road is faster and less accurate whereas the high road is slower and more accurate.¹⁵⁸ Based on the rate of information via technology being instant, constant, and fast, it may cause the brain to function on the low-road. Constant connection with technology may lead to quick decision in reality without understanding the real consequences. Elmore echoes similarly by stating, “Researchers concluded that forcing players to make snap decisions in violent situations inhibited ‘proactive executive control’ over knee-jerk reactions and impulses, meaning they were more likely to react with immediate, unchecked hostility or aggression in real life.”¹⁵⁹ Goleman agrees that the level to which technology aids in creating a virtual reality, it consequently cuts one off to reality.¹⁶⁰ Successful living, implied by Elmore, is deeply tied to memories, which feed emotional and social intelligence.¹⁶¹

Connection please. Another cultural reality is the idea of one’s connectivity. According to Sparks and Honey, Gen Z places more of an emphasis on personal connections than the previous generation, the Millennials.¹⁶² Connectivity describes how individuals are tied to each other socially.¹⁶³ Nicholas Christakis and James Fowler suggest that in order to understand connectivity, one must study how social networks are

¹⁵⁷ Goleman, *Social Intelligence*, 16.

¹⁵⁸ Goleman, *Social Intelligence*, 17.

¹⁵⁹ Elmore and McPeak, *Generation Z Unfiltered*, 49.

¹⁶⁰ Goleman, *Social Intelligence*, 8.

¹⁶¹ Elmore and McPeak, *Generation Z Unfiltered*, 47.

¹⁶² Sparks and Honey, “Market Research on Generation Z: Forget Everything You Learned about the Millennials;” June 17, 2014, www.sparksandhoney.com/gen-z.

¹⁶³ Christakis and Fowler, *Connected*, xv.

being formed and developed.¹⁶⁴ They further state, “We believe that our connections to other people matter most, and that by linking the study of individuals to the study of groups, the science of social networks can explain a lot about human experience.”¹⁶⁵

Social networks. According to Christakis and Fowler, there are two basic dimensions of social networks; the primary being that of connection, “which has to do with who is connected to whom.”¹⁶⁶ Second is the idea of contagion, “which pertains to what, if anything, flows across the ties.”¹⁶⁷ Christakis and Fowler signify to the notion that when one’s friends and family are well connected it increases the closeness of the whole group.¹⁶⁸ According to Leonard Sweet,

One Harvard psychiatrist has isolated twelve connections we need to make in life if we are to be “well connected”: our family of origin, our immediate family, our friends and community, our work world, the world of art and beauty, a connection with our heritage, with nature, with pets, with ideas and information, with social groups, with ourselves.¹⁶⁹

Whether or not all twelve areas of connectivity are necessarily needed to be connected, the point that lives are made up of important connections cannot be avoided.

Christakis and Fowler elaborate by stating, “Social networks evolve organically from the natural tendency of each person to seek out and make many or few friends, to have large or small families, to work in personable or anonymous workplaces.”¹⁷⁰

Conversely, Sweet suggests that “people who are shy, socially challenged, or who find

¹⁶⁴ Christakis and Fowler, *Connected*, xv.

¹⁶⁵ Christakis and Fowler, *Connected*, xvii.

¹⁶⁶ Christakis and Fowler, *Connected*, 16.

¹⁶⁷ Christakis and Fowler, *Connected*, 16.

¹⁶⁸ Christakis and Fowler, *Connected*, 13.

¹⁶⁹ Leonard Sweet, *Postmodern Pilgrims: First Century Passion for the 21st Century World* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2000), 119.

¹⁷⁰ Christakis and Fowler, *Connected*, 13.

‘community’ painful and persecuting need connectedness--a connectedness that can come partly from nature, from beauty, from ritual, from family, from animals, but a connectedness that comes most wholly and holy only from God”¹⁷¹ Christakis and Fowler affirm a biblical principle, although not intentionally, when God speaks concerning Adam in Genesis 2:18: “It is not good that the man should be alone.” Sweet’s comments seem to line-up with more of a biblical worldview that humanity is made to connect and for connection, but there are deeper implications because connectivity speaks of humans being made in the image of God. As each member of the Godhead is in perfect relationship and fellowship with one another, humans too seek relationships in which to be in fellowship.

Connectivity to others affects many areas in daily experiences.¹⁷² According to Sweet, “the pursuit of individualism has led to this place of hunger for connectedness, for communities not of blood or nation but communities of choice.”¹⁷³ This search for communities of choice, based upon Christakis and Fowler, is an example of “homophily, the conscious or unconscious tendency to associated with people who resemble us.”¹⁷⁴ This hunger may be explained by Christakis and Fowler as they suggest that “social networks have value precisely because they help us achieve what we could not achieve on our own.”¹⁷⁵ Christakis and Fowler elaborate on this idea by stating, “Whether it’s Hells Angels or Jehovah’s Witnesses, drug addicts or coffee drinkers, Democrats or

¹⁷¹ Sweet, *Postmodern Pilgrims*, 116.

¹⁷² Christakis and Fowler, *Connected*, 7.

¹⁷³ Sweet, *Postmodern Pilgrims*, 109.

¹⁷⁴ Christakis and Fowler write, “The word homophily literally means ‘love of being alike.’” Christakis and Fowler, *Connected*, 17.

¹⁷⁵ Christakis and Fowler, *Connected*, 31.

Republicans, stamp collectors or bungee jumpers, the truth is that we seek out those people who share our interest, histories, and dreams.”¹⁷⁶

Leadership

Seeing oneself as a leader within a sphere of influence aids in missions and evangelism. Henry Blackaby and Richard Blackaby imply that the ability to influence other people is a key component of leadership.¹⁷⁷ John Piper describes spiritual leadership as using the means of God to lead God’s people where they need to be and to depend on Him.¹⁷⁸ Albert Mohler echoes similar thoughts by stating, “Leaders are stewards of human lives and their welfare.”¹⁷⁹ Emotions connect, according to Christakis and Fowler, because people are made to “mimic others outwardly, and in mimicking their outward displays, we come to adopt their inward states.”¹⁸⁰

Christakis and Fowler affirm, “How we feel, what we know, whom we marry, whether we fall ill, how much money we make, and whether we vote all depend on the ties that bind us.”¹⁸¹ More specifically, these ties, referred to as “a specific set of connections between people,” are key to discovering the amount of influence a person may have within a social network.¹⁸² As the connections within a social network develop,

¹⁷⁶ Christakis and Fowler, *Connected*, 17.

¹⁷⁷ Henry T. Blackaby and Richard Blackaby, *Spiritual Leadership: Moving People on to God’s Agenda* (Nashville: B & H, 2011), 182.

¹⁷⁸ John Piper, “The Marks of a Spiritual Leader,” *Desiring God*, January 1, 1995. <http://www.desiringgod.org/resources-library/articles/the-marks-of-a-spiritual-leader>.

¹⁷⁹ Albert Mohler, *The Conviction to Lead: 25 Principles for Leadership That Matters* (Minneapolis: Bethany House, 2012), 137.

¹⁸⁰ Christakis and Fowler, *Connected*, 37.

¹⁸¹ Christakis and Fowler, *Connected*, 7.

¹⁸² Christakis and Fowler, *Connected*, 9.

they form network communities.¹⁸³ Christakis and Fowler write, “A network community can be defined as a group of people who are much more connected to one another than they are to other groups of connected people found in other parts of the network.”¹⁸⁴

The apostle Paul speaks similarly as he describes relationships in Titus 2 that are both generational and gender specific.¹⁸⁵ These God-ordained roles are designed to influence, equip, and encourage younger generations in their walk with the Lord Jesus Christ.¹⁸⁶ Newton and Pace state, “Much of the failure of the contemporary local church to produce a harvest of spiritual fruit finds its root in the failure of its members to understand and fulfill these biblical relationships.”¹⁸⁷

Conclusion

Ecclesiastes 1:9 states, “That which has been is what will be, that which is done is what will be done, and there is nothing new under the sun.” The insights given by the previous authors are insightful and helpful but are not entirely new from a biblical standpoint. Earlier in the same chapter of Ecclesiastes, Solomon states, “what profit has a man from all his labor in which he toils under the sun? One generation passes, and another generation comes” (1:3-4). From this passage it can be inferred that each generation has a specific time to exist and to influence. Ultimately, Solomon is pointing to the vanity of all things apart from connection with God based on Ecclesiastes 12:13-14. One’s understanding of generations is not vanity at all because it opens the window to understanding the best ways to engage them for Jesus Christ.

¹⁸³ Christakis and Fowler, *Connected*, 11-12.

¹⁸⁴ Christakis and Fowler explain four different types of networks: (1) unconnected group, (2) bucket brigade, (3) telephone tree, and (4) military squad. Each group is more connected based on position of the person and traveling of information with the network. Christakis and Fowler, *Connected*, 12-13.

¹⁸⁵ Newton and Pace, *Student Ministry by the Book*, 42.

¹⁸⁶ Newton and Pace, *Student Ministry by the Book*, 42-43.

¹⁸⁷ Newton and Pace, *Student Ministry by the Book*, 42.

According to *New Unger's Bible Dictionary* the word *generation* is used in the Bible in three ways that all relate to each other. First, “as the production of offspring, in which sense it is applied to the offspring of an individual or successions of offspring noted in a genealogical table or called a “book of generations.”¹⁸⁸ The second meaning is simply denoting, “a span of time.”¹⁸⁹ Lastly, *New Unger's* expounds, *generations* can refer to persons “actually constituting a specific generation, as exponents of its state or character.”¹⁹⁰ *Wycliffe Bible Dictionary* summarizes by declaring that although *generations* typically means a span of time, those times in the Bible vary.¹⁹¹ This may be why the apostle Paul urges the believers of the church of Ephesus to redeem the time because the days are evil (Eph 5:16). Paul seems to understand that the days are fixed, and we must use our time wisely to influence for the kingdom of God.

As one thinks about how to redeem time through connections and how to influence others for Christ, one can look at the example of the first disciples in John 1:35-50. According to John 1:35-36, Andrew was already in a network that included John the Baptist. John the Baptist pointed his disciples to Jesus and not to himself (John 1:35-38). Andrew used his sphere of influence and told his brother, Peter, about Jesus Christ (John 1:40-42). Another disciple, Philip, was from the city of Andrew and Peter (John 1:44). Philip in turn used his influence and brought Nathanael to Jesus Christ (John 1:45).

The need to tell other generations about Jesus is extremely important but it must be done in a way that shows that words have been washed in wisdom, seasoned with salt, and gracious (Col 4:5-6).

¹⁸⁸ Merrill F. Unger, *The New Unger's Bible Dictionary*, ed. R. K. Harrison (Chicago: Moody, 1988), s.v. “generation.”

¹⁸⁹ Unger, *The New Unger's Bible Dictionary*, s.v. “generation.”

¹⁹⁰ Unger, *The New Unger's Bible Dictionary*, s.v. “generation.”

¹⁹¹ Charles F. Pfeiffer, Howard F. Vos, and John Rea, eds., *Wycliffe Bible Dictionary* (Chicago: Hendrickson, 1975), s.v. “generations.”

CHAPTER 4

DETAILS AND DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT

I am blessed to be able to engage young adults on a daily basis. As a result of my daily interactions, I see the potential for university students to impact the kingdom of God through the gospel of Jesus Christ. This chapter describes the process for empowering students of the Baptist campus ministry at the University of Louisville for missional engagement. The preparation and implementation of the project occurred in eighteen weeks between November 16, 2021, and March 20, 2022.

Project Preparation

The preparation of the project involved adapting a test, creating lessons, and soliciting students to participate. The implementation involved administering the pre-test, teaching five lessons, and administering the post-test.

Test Adaptation

From November 16, 2021, to December 4, 2021, I adapted and wrote the test as well as the agreement to participate.¹ The agreement to participate consisted of general demographic information, such as age, are you a Christian, length of time as a Christian, extra-curricular activities at school, employment status, year of school, and degree program. The test contained forty-one items to gauge participants' level of awareness regarding the need for missional engagement on campus using a five-point Likert scale. Sixteen items were selected to determine a change associated with the lessons. Of these, items 2-3 aimed at helping students become aware of how making disciples and being

¹ See appendix 1.

different often go hand in hand. Items 7, 8, 16, 20, 33, 36 aimed to help students become aware that sharing their faith is a part of maturing. Items 14 and 39 aimed to help students become aware that anyone can share their faith no matter their knowledge level. Items 10, 13, 18, 21, 23, and 31 aimed to make the students aware of the necessity of the gospel and the ever-present power of God to aid in accomplishing the task. Although all forty-one items were helpful, these sixteen items focused on the students' awareness concerning missional engagement.

Lesson Construction

Living on mission to make disciples through sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ is woven into the fabric of what it means to be made in the image of God. The construction of lessons 1 through 5 were completed December 5 through February 18, 2022. The lessons were designed generally around the elements that hinder one from living missionally and engaging others. Humanity's failure to find its identity and relationship with God hinders everyone from seeing the world correctly. Sin contributes to this blindness which alienates us from God and others. The only solution as detailed in the lessons is Jesus Christ.

Teaching Slides and Ethics Packet Production

On January 2-4, 2022, I created teaching slides for lessons 1-2. I submitted the test for the project to the expert panel on January 5, 2022. I submitted the slides to the expert panel on January 6, 2022. I received final approval from all expert panel members on January 18, 2022, for lessons 1-2 and the test, after incorporating recommendations of the panel. On February 10, I created teaching slides for lessons 3-4 and submitted it to the expert panel. On February 22, I received feedback and final approval for teaching slides for lessons 3-4, after incorporating their recommendations. On February 19, I created the teaching slides for lesson 5 and submitted to the expert panel. On February 25, I received final approval from the expert panel on lesson 5 teaching slides, after incorporating their recommendations. From February 26-March 20, 2022, the ethics packet was produced,

and it was submitted on March 30, 2022. On April 5, I received approval from Bill Henard, my supervisor, and the Ethics Committee to implement my project.

Project Implementation

The lessons taught focused on John 4:1-26. Each lesson focused on the role of the Holy Spirit's work and the purpose of Jesus coming to earth. Each lesson was taught during the Tuesday night worship time.

Lesson 1

On April 5, 2022, one of the student leaders led the BCM in prayer and asked blessing over the meal at 7:00 p.m. Students got in line; females first followed by males. They were served the food and took their seats at various tables to eat and converse. Once students were seated, another student leader passed out the agreement to participate² and the pre-test³ to the students. Thirty agreements to participate forms and pre-test surveys were distributed. Students anonymously turned in the items to the BCM office prior to the student worship time. Then, students walked over into the worship area. One of the worship leaders began to give announcements and welcomed everyone for joining us. They also mentioned that we could be followed on any social media sites using @uoflbcm, and were encouraged to follow us through the university's RSO (registered student organization) portal as well called EngageUofL.

Once announcements were stated, the worship leader invited students to stand to worship God. As the piano and guitar played, the lyrics for *Great Things* by Phil Wickham and Jonas Myrin appeared on the screen. After the song, the next song lyrics that appeared on the screen were those of *Build My Life* by Brett Younker, Karl Martin,

² See appendix 3.

³ See appendix 1.

Kirby Elizabeth Kaple, Matt Redman, and Pat Barrett. After the song was finished, the worship team prayed for me and the teaching session that was about to start.

I introduced the next slide called “group questions,” which were designed to generate dialogue around ideas that would later be seen in the lesson. The following questions were presented: is it good to be alone?, does loneliness lead to isolation?, can you have one without the other?, does communication play a role in loneliness?, and can communication alleviate isolation? I then told students to divide into groups of 2-4 people and discuss the questions. After ten minutes for discussion time, I asked for a representative from each group to summarize one of their answers to the questions. Most students agreed that it is not good to be alone. One student pointed out that one can be in a crowd and still feel alone. Several groups agreed that communication can aid in alleviating isolation.

Lesson 1 began with an introduction slide called, “Loneliness and Isolation.” The title was based on the context of John 4:1-7.⁴ The slide had two pictures of the same person side by side; one image was clear and the other blurry. We then read the next few slides in unison that contained the verses from John 4:1-7. I read the slide entitled exploring John 4:1-7 and mentioned to the students that we would seek to answer the following questions and statements from the section of Scripture: is it good for a person to be alone?, who are the Pharisees?, what are disciples?, and why did Jesus have to go through Samaria?, then a reminder of Jacob, and lastly looking closer at the request of Jesus.

The following slide answered, who are the Pharisees? At the bottom of the slide was a picture depicting a group of Pharisees, one person holding a scroll in his hand and the others looking strangely at each other. The slide stated, “The Pharisees were a religious group that were experts in the Law (all things OT) but only focused on the

⁴ Lessons 1 through 5 found their root in John 4:1-26. See appendix 4 for lessons.

outward observance (ritualism). An example would be tithing or ritual cleaning.”⁵ I also asked students to remember Nicodemus from John 3. The following slide had an icon with the word “follow,” it also had the image of a clicker hand about to push a button, to follow, as if on a computer screen. This slide answered the question, what are disciples? I began to explain that disciples were essentially followers of someone, but then noted the difference from our current understanding of followers: to be a disciple implies you receive knowledge and training. It also implies receiving correction and reproof. I mentioned that this distinction is so counter-cultural that the person that you are following has the right to speak truth in love in your life. Students were ultimately told: we want to be followers of Jesus and use His Word (the Bible) to shape our lives.

The next slide had a picture of a white dove about to land, with the background of a sunny, blue sky and white clouds. I used this slide to explain the Holy Spirit’s work by noting that the Holy Spirit is the third person of the Trinity, the God-Head. The Holy Spirit is God. He is God’s control, authority, and presence in the world.⁶ The Holy Spirit performs acts that only a person can perform (witnessing, sending, revealing, converting, etc.). The last two statements on the slide were: and there is so much more! Ultimately, without the Holy Spirit we would not know Jesus Christ or understand his Word.

The following slide gave an Old Testament and a New Testament example of the work of the Holy Spirit. I taught that in the Old Testament, He empowered individuals for a specific task and left them once the task was over (see Samson as an example in Judg 13-16). I reminded students that at Jesus’s baptism, the Holy Spirit rested on Jesus. He remained, pointing to the fact that Jesus is the Messiah, the anointed One. I also taught that the Holy Spirit empowered Jesus’s ministry. The next statement on the slide answered the

⁵ Thomas Nelson, *Nelson’s New Illustrated Bible Dictionary*, ed. Ronald F. Youngblood (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1995), 979.

⁶ John M. Frame, *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Christian Belief* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R, 2013), 477.

question, what was the mission of Jesus? I mentioned to the students that Jesus's ministry is found in Matthew 1:21 before His incarnation: "She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins."

The next slide answered the question, why did Jesus need to go through Samaria? The slide was entitled, "On the way to Galilee," and it pictured a middle eastern well on the right side of the slide. I explained that Jesus was not in competition with John the Baptist. I furthered mentioned that Jesus's hour had not come; He had other places and things to do according to His Father's will. One of those divine items was to go through Samaria. It is easy to ignore people who are different. I also taught that this detour was the shortest distance between Judea and Galilee. Samaria was once a capital city for the Northern Kingdom of Israel. I then explained who Jacob was and his significance in Scripture. I reminded the students of the patriarchs of the Hebrew nation (Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob): Abraham was the faithful father who followed God by faith. Isaac was the faithful son who trusted and obeyed his father. And Jacob was a trickster, con person, and yet God redeemed him and used him for his divine purposes. I mentioned that in Genesis 48:22, Jacob bought some land from the sons of Hamor (Gen 33:19) and gave it to his son Joseph. Joseph's body was brought back to this land after the Israelites' enslavement in Egypt and was buried there, as was his request.

The next slide was called "Alone at the well?" We continued with the picture of the middle eastern well in this slide as well. As we transitioned students from the biblical background information to John 4:1-7, I highlighted that Jesus was tired from the long walk. This fact was important as it points to Jesus's humanity. The time of day was important, being high noon. The emphasis was placed on the woman at the well being by herself. I pointed out that women normally travel in groups and get water either early morning or in the evening. Another emphasis was placed on the fact that this woman was alone and isolated from others. This thought set the backdrop to emphasize the good news that Jesus was also at the well.

The following slide answered the question, is it good to be alone? This slide emphasized Genesis 2:18: “It is not good that man should be alone.” I also mentioned Genesis 2:22, where God made for Adam a helper, woman, Eve. I stressed that Adam could not fulfill the command to be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth (Gen 1:28) by himself. Students were reminded of Genesis 2:23-25, the first marriage, and the implications of this union. The implications from Genesis 1:28 are that Adam and Eve together can create children, to teach them about God, so that they can tell others about God.

This next slide highlighted the social norms that Jesus broke to engage this woman at the well. This slide continued the well image from the previous two slides. I explained that social norms are shared standards of acceptable behavior by groups. I further explained that rabbis and Jewish men do not hold conversations with women in public, which underscored the lesson that Jesus teaches us to break with social norms when they devalue a person made in the image of God. I also mentioned that, no matter our situation in life, we never cease to have value and worth in the sight of God.

The concluding slide of lesson 1 had a picture of a child with a backpack and a cat covid mask looking straight at the audience, along with a group of older individuals wearing white covid masks, all looking at one phone. This concluding slide reminded the students of three main ideas and asks a question: (1) Jesus came to identify with sinners; (2) one must break from their comfort zone to engage others; and (3) everyone who is alone does not necessarily want to be alone. I finished lesson 1 by asking students who they will engage this week. I prayed and the worship team came back on the stage and sang *How Deep the Father's Love for Us* by Stuart Townsend. After the worship team finished the last line of the song, the night ended in prayer for engaging others in the upcoming week. Once the time ended, I reviewed the permission to participate forms and pre-test surveys and found that 11 out of 30 students completed them.

Lesson 2

On April 12, around 7:00 p.m. one of the student leaders prayed and thanked the Lord for our meal for the night. Students went through a line and were served. Around 7:45-7:50 students transitioned from eating to the worship area. Students were welcomed and thanked for their presence at the BCM. The student-led worship team highlighted how students could plug into the BCM by joining us through the EngageUofL portal. Students were also informed that they could follow us on most major social media sites using @uoflbcm. Once those announcements were done, students were invited to stand and sing with the worship team the following lyrics to *Behold Our God*, words and music by Jonathan Baird, Meghan Baird, Ryan Baird and Stephen Altrogge. Following this song, the next song was *Great Are You Lord*, words and music by Jason David Ingram, David Leonard, and Leslie Jordan. Once the song was finished, the worship team prayed for me and the lesson that would be taught.

Prior to teaching lesson 2, I reused several slides from lesson 1. The first slide from lesson 1 that I reused was, what does it mean to be a follower or disciple. The next two recycled slides were on the Holy Spirit's work and examples of His operation in the Old and New Testaments. This slide also helped to emphasize Jesus's mission while he was on earth. I reminded students of the context from lesson 1 by reprocessing the slide stated, "alone at the well?" This slide was followed by the slide called, "alone," which reminded the students of God's design and the fact that it is not good to be alone. This slide was followed by the slide entitled, "breaking social norms." Students needed those reminders if they were going to be empowered to live missionally, engaging lives on campus. This introduction was followed by group questions.

Prior to the group questions, I did some housekeeping based on an observation I had during the small group discussion time during lesson 1. This observation was that some individuals in the small groups monopolized the conversations for the whole group. As a result, on the next slide containing the group questions, I included the statement, "Remember to give everyone an opportunity to talk!" I proceeded to introduce the group

questions: how is our identity shaped?, what does it mean to have purpose?, what are the benefits of being culturally competent?, and should culture dictate our behavior? Students broke into groups of three or four and discussed the questions for about ten minutes. Then, I listened to the responses from each group. Some students stated that one's upbringing determines a person's identity. Another student suggested that to have purpose is to know what you want to do in your life. Others stated that they are coming to college to hopefully figure out their purpose in life. Another group expressed that being culturally competent helps you understand others better, putting yourself in their shoes. The next question as it related to culture dictating behavior had mixed responses. Some students said it depended on the issue, while others stated the Bible should guide our life. I did not affirm either group because the goal was for students to think about these ideas prior to the lesson being taught.

The next slide was entitled, "Cultural Differences: Understanding One Another." The slide had a picture of a woman with bronze colored skin, with make-up. The following slide had the verses John 4:8-9, which we read the verses. The next slide focused on John 4:8, specifically the phrase, "to buy food" (this portion was underlined on the screen). I read the following statement on the slide: "Jesus disciples were willing to purchase food from Samaritans betrays a certain freedom from the self-imposed regulations of the stricter sorts of Jews who would have been unwilling to eat food that had been handled by Samaritans."⁷ I stated to the students that this information informs why Jesus was there alone with no disciples but also that the disciples of Jesus were different than other Jews in this area.

The next two slides were entitled "Trouble in the Kingdom." These slides gave historical background that may underline the source of some issues. The first bullet point cites 2 Samuel 12:24, stating that Solomon is David's son by Bathsheba. I also mentioned

⁷ D. A. Carson. *The Gospel according to John*, The Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991), 217.

that King David was promised a son that would sit on the throne forever; this promise ultimately being the person of Jesus Christ. The next bullet point noted 1 Kings 11:26-40, and summarized Jeroboam's rise to power. Jeroboam, a servant, was successful and thus promoted by Solomon. This bullet point had three subpoints, the first stating that Ahijah, a prophet, tore twelve pieces of cloth from his garment and gave Jeroboam ten pieces. I mentioned that this illustration meant that God was giving ten tribes to Jeroboam and two tribes would stay with David's family, Judah and Benjamin. I then explained the next subpoint, stating that, based on 1 Kings 11:43, Solomon tries to kill Jeroboam, so he flees to Egypt, but then Solomon dies. The next major point read and taught from this slide was based on 1 Kings 12:1-24: Jeroboam returns, but Rehoboam, Solomon's son, is next in line to be king.

The second slide entitled "Trouble in the Kingdom" began with the comment that Rehoboam was asked by his father's advisors not to be as harsh as his father Solomon. I highlighted three subpoints: First, Rehoboam did not listen to the elders but listened to his own peers ("little finger is thicker than my father's thighs" 1 Kgs 12:10). Second, because Rehoboam did not listen to his father's advisors, the kingdom was split into ten tribes that would be ruled by Jeroboam, as stated by the prophet. I further said that Jeroboam was an evil king, afraid that true worship of God might turn people back to Rehoboam (David's heir). He established false worship of idols: two golden calves. The last major point on the slide emphasized 1 Kings 16:24: King Omri bought the hill of Samaria, he walked in evil like Jeroboam, and Samaria had a history of false worship and idolatry.

The next slide was entitled "Consequences of Disobedience." This slide focused on 2 Kings 17:7-18. This slide pointed out the next teaching point that God brought the Israelites out of Egypt into the land of Canaan (the promised land). Two subpoints of this main idea were, first, that the children of Israel were the people of God and thus were supposed to be different. God promised blessings for obedience and curses

for disobedience (Lev 26; Deut 27-28). Israel failed to honor God and worship him. Second, God allowed Assyria to take Israel into captivity. The Assyrians took the rich and left the poor in the land to marry Assyrians. The two ethnic groups had children (Jews/Assyrians), called Samaritans.

The following slide was entitled “Trouble in God’s Kingdom.” I taught that the Samaritans were considered half-breeds. The Samaritans were despised for their false worship mixed with pagan beliefs. They established their own place to worship in Mt. Gerezim. They also established their own beliefs using the Old Testament Scriptures; they only believed certain portions of the Old Testament. The last point from the slide was that when the Israelites came back from captivity to try to rebuild Jerusalem, it was the Samaritans who caused problems and opposed them (Ezra 4:1-24; Neh 4:1-6).

The next slide was entitled “Look at John 4:9.” The background information given to students thus far aided in a better understanding of the conversation between the woman at the well and Jesus Christ. We focused specifically on the phrase, “How is it that you, a Jew, ask me for a drink from me, a woman of Samaria?” The following slide pointed out that, according to Genesis 24:14, hospitality required the giving of water to a stranger. The next slide bulleted three statements: (1) true identity can only be found in the One who made us; (2) we are made in the image of God; and (3) we were made to reflect the image giver!

The next four slides focused on the implications of having a false identity—anything not rooted God. The first slide had one statement on it, surrounded by images of smart technology. The statement was, “False identity will place barriers on true help!” The next slide also had smart technology on it and stated, “False identity can often keep one tied to the past.” The next slide was that of technology being used in a business setting for meetings and the statement on the slide was that false identity can often create false narratives. The last slide had one example from the Bible as it relates to false identity and stated, “False identity hinders us from appreciating the Good Samaritan.” I summarized

the story of the Good Samaritan. The slide pointed out that the lawyer (scribe) was trying to justify himself (Jewish). The Jewish lawyer's response to the parable by Jesus in Luke 10:37 was "the one who showed him mercy." The last slide had large font saying "Let's pray." I prayed and then the worship band came to the stage and asked everyone to stand and sing *He Will Hold Me Fast*. The words and music are by Ada Ruth Habershon and Matthew Merker. At the end of the song, the worship team prayed and dismissed the group.

Lesson 3

On April 19, around 7:00 p.m. one of the student leaders prayed and thanked the Lord for our meal for the night. Students went through a line and were served. They sat around tables and enjoyed the conversations with one another. Around 7:45-7:50 students transitioned from eating to the worship area. Students were welcomed and thanked for their presence at the BCM. The student-led worship team highlighted how students could plug into the BCM by joining us through the EngageUofL portal. Students were also informed that they could follow us on most major social media sites using @uoflbcm. Once those announcements were done, students stood and sang along with the worship team, *Before the Throne of God Above* by Charitie Lees Bancroft and Vikki Cook copyrighted by Sovereign Grace Worship in 1997, and then *In Christ Alone* by Keith Getty and Stuart Townend copyrighted in 2001 by Thankyou Music. When the worship team finished leading the group, they prayed for me and the forthcoming lesson.

Prior to teaching lesson 3, I reused several slides from lessons 1 and 2. The first slide from lesson 1 that I reused was "what does it mean to be a follower or disciple?" The next two recycled slides were on the Holy Spirit's work and examples of His operation in the Old and New Testament. This slide also helped to emphasize Jesus's mission while he was on earth. I also reminded students of the context from lesson 1 by reprocessing the slide stated, "Alone at the well?" This slide was followed by the slide called "Alone," which reminded students of God's design and the fact that it is not good to be alone. This slide was followed by the slide entitled, "Breaking social norms." From lesson 2, I recycled

the slide stating that false identity can often keep one tied to the past. The final recycled slide from lesson 2 stated that true identity can only be found in the One who made us. It furthered commented on the fact that we are made in the image of God and we were designed to reflect the image giver. The explanation of what it mean to be made in the image of God was followed by the current's week group questions.

The group questions were on a slide with a backdrop of desert sand. The questions were as follows: what drives our desires?, can we help someone without hurting them?, how can we avoid being easily offended?, and can helping lead to necessary discomfort. I allowed students to break up into groups of 3-4 and discuss for ten minutes. When the ten minutes was up, I returned to hear their answers. One group said that their desires were tied to what they wanted out of life, like getting an education, so they are in school. Another group responded that it all depends on what is important in that moment. The room what split half and half on question 2, as some said you can help without hurting and others responded that sometimes a person may think your helping is hurting them by not fully understanding the help. Several students mentioned that they are not easily offended because they only pay attention to their family or close friends. In other words, comments from others are not taken that seriously. Most of the room agreed that questions 2 and 4 were very similar but maybe in the case of drug addiction or some life-threatening thing necessary discomfort is needed. The group questions generated good dialogue prior to teaching the lesson.

The title of lesson 3 was "Thirsty," and was based on John 4:10-15. Lesson 3 began with a statement from Sherry Turkle, from her book *Reclaiming Conversation*, as she explains the importance of face-to-face conversations. Her statement was given as one sentence per slide leading up to the text for the lesson. The first slide had a male and a female staring at each other and the quoted text was, "Face to face conversation is the

most human—and humanizing thing we can do.”⁸ The second slide had a male listening to a female as she was talking, while both were holding cups of coffee. The quote continued, “It is where we learn to listen.”⁹ The following slide has a baby on its stomach staring at the facial expressions of his mother, who was at face level with baby. The quote continued, “It is where we develop the capacity for empathy.”¹⁰ The quote finished on the next slide on which two males are at a meeting of some sort, they are shaking hands, and the other person is smiling really big. Turkle’s quote finishes on this slide by stating, “It is where we experience the joy of being heard and understood.” On the next two slides we read in unison John 4:10-15.

The next slide appeared with a desert sand background and the definition of dehydration. I taught that dehydration is a dangerous loss of body fluid caused by illness, sweating, or inadequate intake of fluids. The slide highlights that water is needed for maintaining internal temperature and keeping cells alive. I taught that a person can only survive three days without water. I also emphasized that water is an important part of life and the world. I explained that Jesus was about to use a natural need and point to a deeper reality. The next slide began to deal with John 4:10. This particular slide stated, “If you knew the gift of God.” The words “gift of God” were highlighted, and I explained that the gracious gift of God is eternal life. The next phrase from the text was, “Who is speaking to you.” I further taught that Jesus Christ is God’s Son, and the only way to eternal life. The question from the verse states, “You would have asked him . . . and he would have given you living water.”

The subsequent slide states that the Samaritan woman was unaware that Jesus was the Messiah. This statement was followed by three bullet points. The first was, “why?”

⁸ Sherry Turkle, *Reclaiming Conversation: The Power of Talk in a Digital Age* (New York: Penguin, 2015), 3.

⁹ Turkle, *Reclaiming Conversation*, 3.

¹⁰ Turkle, *Reclaiming Conversation*, 3.

The next bullet quoted 1 Corinthians 2:14: “The natural person does not accept the things of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned.” The following bullet point said that good news the Holy Spirit works in revealing who Jesus Christ is (witnessing, sending, revealing, and converting). The next slide had a picture of a beach with sand the same color as the desert slides, but the difference was that this sand was engaged by water from the ocean. The slide only had one statement on it: “living water?”

The next slide explained the concept of living water in the Old Testament. I read Jeremiah 2:13: “For my people have committed two evils: they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters and hewed out cisterns for themselves, broken cistern that can hold no water.” The next quote was from Isaiah 12:2-3: “Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and will not be afraid; for the Lord God is my strength and my song, and he has become my salvation. With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation.” I then explained to the students that according to both passages in the Old Testament, God was understood as the source of living water. Furthermore, since Jesus is God, He is able to give living water: eternal life. The following slide highlighted the Samaritan woman’s idea of living water in three bullet points: fresh water, moving water, and running water from a spring.

The next two slides in lesson 3 were that of a desert with three travelers carrying backpacks under an overcast sky. The word “naturally” was in bold and in orange on the left-hand side of the slide, followed by three ellipses that pointed to the main comments from the Samaritan woman, the first being that you have no equipment, the well is deep, and where do you get this living water. The second slide of the two had the words “naturally again,” followed by three ellipses with a question and a quote. The question was, “Are you greater than our father Jacob?” And the quote cited Genesis 24:17-18, where Jacob’s mother, Rebekah, offered water to Abraham’s servant. The next slide was recycled from lesson 2 stating that, according to Genesis 24:14, “hospitality required giving of water

to a thirsty stranger.” The lesson slide following this slide was a picture of a mountain range with the sun setting in the background. The words, “unaware of her true need!,” cascaded on the mountains. At the bottom of the slide were the statements, “Everything in this world apart from Jesus Christ will always leave you wanting more. Only Jesus Christ can satisfy!”

The next slide used the phrase “everyone who drinks of this water,” from John 4:13-14. The phrase was followed by three bullet points: (1) being spring of water well up to eternal life; (2) clean pure water, a continuous flow, bubbling up to eternal life; and (3) this is the power and presence of the Holy Spirit in the person who trust in Jesus Christ. The next five slides gave students the implications and some application points of John 4:10-15. The first of five had a picture of a budding flower with the statement that “Jesus is the source of eternal life!” The second of five was a picture of running water and stated, “Jesus Christ is the source of living water!” The third of five slides gave students an application point: “Jesus exemplifies to us how engaging others takes time!” The fourth of five slides gave the results of time with others by stating, “Time in conversation builds trust!” The last of the five slides stated, “Trust allows others to seriously consider what we are saying! The final teaching slide asked the students, “Who will you engage with the goal of sharing Jesus Christ as the answer to our thirst?” I ended the teaching time by praying that God would open doors for us share Jesus that week. Following my prayer the worship team lead the students in singing *Not in Me* by Eric Schumacher and David L. Ward copyrighted in 2001 by ThousandTongues.org. After this song, the worship team leader prayed and this ended session 3.

Lesson 4

On April 26, around 7:00 p.m. one of the student leaders prayed and thanked the Lord for our meal for the night. Students went through a line and were served. Then they sat around tables and enjoyed the conversations with one another. Around 7:45-7:50 students transitioned from eating to the worship area. Students were welcomed and

thanked for their presence at the BCM. The student led worship team highlighted how students could plug into the BCM by joining us through the EngageUofL portal. Students were also informed that they could follow us on most major social media sites using @uoflbcm. Once those announcements were done, students were invited to stand and sing with the worship team *All I am* by Mallory Wickham and Phil Wickham copyrighted in 2011 by Phil Wickham Music, and *Old Rugged Cross* with words and music by Alan Jackson.

The title of lesson 4 was, “Elephant in the Room, Sin” based on John 4:14-18. Prior to teaching lesson 4, I reused several slides from lessons 1-3. The first slide from lesson 1 that I reused was, “what does it mean to be a follower or disciple?” The next two recycled slides emphasized “the Holy Spirit’s work,” followed by “Examples of the Holy Spirit’s operation in the Old Testament and in the New Testament.” This slide also helped to emphasize Jesus’s mission while he was on earth. From lesson 2, I recycled the slide stating that false identity can often keep one tied to the past. The final recycled slide from lesson 2 stated, “True identity can only be found in the One who made us!” It furthered commented on the fact that we are made in the image of God, and we were designed to reflect the image giver. From lesson 3, I recycled the slides that quoted Sherry Turkle and her comments on face-to-face conversations. This was followed by the current’s week group questions. I did the group question differently this week. I divided the room of students into groups of three to five people and then placed each group question on a separate slide and gave five to seven minutes per slide for discussion. After each slide I listened to feedback from the groups. The first group question slide had two questions: (1) where do I find direction in life?, and (2) can I be going in the wrong direction and not know it? Both questions were on the slide with a roadway as the backdrop. After seven minutes I asked for feedback. Some students stated that we get our direction from God, while others said their parents or family. There seemed to be a unanimous yes to question 2 on slide 1. The second slide had the question, “who determines right and

wrong? A group? My peers? Family? Society?” The students informed me that this question and the previous question were very similar, and that their answers would likely be the same. Consequently, I moved to the next slide which asked, “what is the influence of the aforementioned groups on their personal lives?” Most groups mentioned how important their family is as it relates to their lives. However, other groups were dependent on the closeness of the relationship in each. Most students acknowledged influences from society, but the other influences in their life matter more. The following slide introduced the name of the lesson: “Elephant in the room.” The slide featured two kids sitting on a child-size couch staring at an elephant in their room sitting in a chair. The next slide was a recycled slide from lesson 2 that detailed God’s design for humanity not to be alone, the slide was entitled, “alone?” The next slide was a blank slide with only words that stated, “God’s design: One man and one woman for life. Picture of Jesus Christ and the Church!” The next slide was recycled from lesson 3, and focused on the phrase, “everyone who drinks of this water.” This slide reminded the students of the power of presence of the Holy Spirit in the person that trusts in Jesus.

The next slide was entitled, “understanding our brokenness!” The slide had a woman viewing her reflection in a broken mirror. The next slide was entitled, “brokenness is us.” There was a picture of a woman peaking from behind a mask, and the slide stated, “Result of the fall; shameful, fearful and hiding.” The slide went on to quote Romans 8:23: “Groaning inwardly as we wait eagerly for the adoptions of sons, the redemption of our bodies.” The next slide was entitled, “brokenness in nature.” This slide had the image of dried earth that had cracked from lack of water. The Scripture verse printed over it was Romans 8:22: “For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now.” The next teaching slide was one entitled, “brokenness in relationships.” This slide reviewed the curse from the fall, specifically the conflict between male and female in Genesis 3:16. The slide had a male and female with their arms folded looking in opposite directions instead of at each other. I also explained that the same

word, desire, is used in Genesis 4:7. I further noted that the best commentary on the Bible is the Bible itself. The subsequent slide was a recycled slide from lesson 3 that explained the concept of God being the source of living water in the Old Testament. Another recycled slide from lesson 3 was used, emphasizing that the woman was unaware of her true need and that everything apart from Christ leaves one unsatisfied.

The next slide began to dive deeper into Jesus helping the Samaritan woman see her real need. This slide was entitled, “Sir, give me this water.” The teaching slide used the phrase from John 4:16: “Go call your husband and come here.” Since the woman did not understand her own spiritual need, Jesus aids her in understanding. “I have no husband,” Jesus said to her, “You are right in saying, ‘I have no husband’; You have had five husbands, and the one you have is not your husband” (John 4:17-18). Verses 17-18 were followed up by two statements on a slide from Gerald L. Borchert and another by D. A. Carson. Jewish tradition permitted three husbands, but she obviously had long passed that more lenient rule.¹¹ The next statement was two ways these five husbands could be interpreted: (1) she had been married five times and divorced five times, or (2) she has never been married and had five adulterous relationships and the husband she has now belongs to someone else.¹² I mentioned that either way you looked at it, the woman was living in sin.

The following slide was entitled “searching in the wrong places.” This title was above a picture that had a sign that pointed to an entrance and a woman going into a different door. This slide was followed by two slides with a road on it with writing above the road and on the road. The first slide stated no human can fulfill a God need. The statement on the road was that failure to find purpose in God can lead you down dark paths. The subsequent slide stated our ultimate need is Jesus Christ. Life will always offer

¹¹ Gerald L. Borchert, *John 1-11*, The New American Commentary, vol. 25A (Nashville: Broadman, 1996), 206.

¹² Carson, *The Gospel according to John*, 221.

substitutes to God's way. The next slide elaborated on substitutes in four statements: substitutes will (1) never live up to the original; (2) always leave you wanting more; (3) cause you to search for more and (4) cause you to settle for less.

The concluding slides focused on what it means to repent. The slide was entitled "turn to Jesus Christ." The slide had repentance as the main bullet followed by four statements: repentance (1) is turning from your sin and turning to Jesus Christ; (2) involves trusting that Jesus Christ is God; (3) involves trusting that Jesus Christ has done everything you need to please God on the cross of Calvary; and (4) involves trusting that Jesus Christ has risen from the dead and is seated at the right hand of the Father. I ended the teaching by praying and asking God to reveal himself to those who did not know him. After praying, the worship team came back on the stage and led the students in the song *Living Hope* by Phil Wickham. After the song, the night was closed in prayer by the worship leader, and session 4 concluded.

Lesson 5

On May 3, around 7:00 p.m. one of the student leaders prayed and thanked the Lord for our meal. Students went through a line and were served. They sat around tables and enjoyed conversations with one another. Around 7:45-7:50, students made the transition from eating to the worship area. Students were welcomed and thanked for their presence at the BCM. The student led worship team highlighted how students could plug into the BCM by joining us through the EngageUofL portal. Students were also informed that they could follow us on most major social media sites using @uoflbcm. Once those announcements were done, students stood and sang along with the worship team to *Lord I Lift Your Name on High* by Rick Founds, followed by *Nothing but the Blood* by Matt Redman.

The first slide for lesson 5 included the group questions. The questions were read to the students, and they were given fifteen minutes due to the depth of the questions. The group question for week 5 were three big questions but question 2 had three sub

questions that required the students to think deeper. The first question was, what is your idea of God?, followed by what is worship? This was followed by the sub questions of does it matter how I worship?, does it matter who or what I worship?; and does it matter where I worship? The last question was, is cultural knowledge important for spiritual conversations? For the first question, a group answered that God is over everything. Another group said that someone different than us. The rest of the groups just seemed to sit quite on this question. Question 2 generated a little more interaction. A group gave a Sunday school answer that we worship God through Jesus but did not answer the question. Many students mentioned that it does not matter where or how you worship, just worship God in your own way because God knows your heart. The question of who or what a person worships, and does it matter, was answered with “yes” by a group, and the other groups agreed with this answer. The last question concerning cultural knowledge for spiritual conversations was also answered in a unified “yes.” After the discussion questions, I mentioned that I would have to explain a couple terms in order for the current passage for the night to make sense.

The next slide covered the term “prophet.” On the slide was a stone statue of a person with a writing utensil and a tablet in his lap. The statue was a person in a robe with a long beard and most of his forehead covered by the robe. The title of this slide was, “What is a prophet.” Four bullet points described this term: (1) a person who spoke for God; (2) his authority came from God; (3) he boldly communicated God’s message to God’s people; and (4) I quoted Deuteronomy 18:22: “When a prophet speaks in the name of the Lord, if the word does not come to pass or come true, that is a word that the Lord has not spoken . . . you need not be afraid of Him.” The next slide asked, “what is the Pentateuch?” I taught that the word literally means “five book work.” I also explained that sometimes it is referred to as the Torah (instruction) or Law. I also noted that it is the first five books of the Old Testament written by Moses. I then listed those books as Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. This slide was followed by a

recycled slide from lesson 2, entitled, “Trouble in God’s kingdom,” which reminded students of the Samaritans’ ethnicity, false worship, false beliefs, and hostility toward with the Israelites.

The next slide was entitled, “false worship.” I explained, based on 2 Kings 17:24-29, that the king of Assyria after conquering the land brought in people from several other conquered lands to populate the (Israelite city of Samaria). I also mentioned that these people did not fear God or have reverential respect or hold in awe the God of the Israelites. Second Kings 17:25 reads, “Therefore the Lord sent lions among them, which killed some of them.” I then summarized 2 Kings 17:26-29 by saying that the king of Assyria was told that people did not know the law of the god of the land. Therefore, the king had one of the priests who was taken away brought back so that he could teach the nations now in Samaria the law of the god of the land. The next bullet after the previous statement was, “Here is the problem, the people just added the God of Israel to their gods. They still worshiped their gods and made idols.” I then explained that as a result of the false worship, the Samaritans came up with their own Pentateuch. The Samaritans changed the Word of God to fit their belief system. This false worship caused them to build their own temple, but this temple was destroyed at the end of the second century.

The next slide was entitled, “key passages for our understanding today.” The first passage listed was Deuteronomy 11:29: “And when the Lord your God bring you into the land that you are entering to take possession of it, you shall set the blessing on Mount Gerizim and the curse on Mount Ebal.” I explained that Samaritans took biblical passages out of context to suit their beliefs. Taking passages out of context is where the emphasis on Mount Gerizim and their temple originated. This error would have been fine, but Deuteronomy 12:4-5 states that God would determine where the Israelites were to worship by stating, “You shall not worship the Lord your God in that way. But you shall seek the place that the Lord your God will choose out of all your tribes to put his name and make his habitation there. There you shall go.” The next passage was Genesis 12:3:

“Abraham passed through the land of Shechem,” then Genesis 33:18-20 (after meeting Esau): “Jacob came safely to the city of Shechem . . . bought land . . . erected an altar.” According to most data, Mount Gerizim is located near Shechem. I mentioned to the students that much of the Samaritan beliefs had some biblical basis, but it was not the complete picture.

I then had the students read John 4:19-26 in unison. The next slide was a photo of large body of water with a picture of land obscured in the upper part of the screen. This image had hands lifting water out of it and water running out of the palms of the hand back into the body of water. The title of the slide below the hands was “Quenching the Thirst: Jesus Christ!” The remaining slides in this lesson were white with black writing. The next slide focused on the key phrase, “Sir, I perceive you are a prophet.” It had five statements with explanations under each bullet point. The first statement was, “Remember the work of the Holy Spirit’s revealing, awakening.” The first observation I made was that the woman was made aware that whomever Jesus is, He is not an ordinary Jewish man. The next bullet point said, “Jesus is much more than a prophet.” I then reminded students that a prophet speaks on behalf of God. Jesus is God. He is the very Word of God. The next bullet point was “Rabbit trail game.” It explained that the Samaritan woman was unable to face her sin, so she changes the subject. I reminded students of how she reverted back to her false identity (familiarity). I also mentioned that moving forward is a supernatural work of God. The next bullet focused on worship (another familiar heated point of contention between Jews and Samaritans). The next statements did simple comparisons: Mt Gerizim or Jerusalem? Samaritan way or Jewish way?

The next slide sought to clarify those questions and thus the name of the ensuing slide was “nature of worship.” This slide contained four bullet points with explanations under each. The first statement was an application point: winning an argument to prove you are right should not be the aim of conversations. The phrase “the hour is coming” was explained by noting that whenever this is mentioned in the book of John it always

refers to Jesus's death, burial and resurrection. This is the key event, Calvary. I also mentioned a supporting statement based on a discussion earlier in the lesson: you know whether a prophet is true based on whether what he says comes to pass. Jesus rose from the grave, victoriously. The next statement mentioned that worship is about giving back to God what He requires. Deuteronomy 6:5 says, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, and all your soul and with all your might." Worship requires all of us. Worship is not based on a place, but a person. This next statement had three supporting items: (1) the only worship that God receives is that of his Son; (2) only God can please God; (3) He receives our worship only because we are in Jesus Christ.

The following slide was dubbed, "you don't know." This was phrase was from John 4:22. This slide had three major items that I explained to the students. First was that you worship what you do not know. The supporting notes were that Samaritans took God's word and changed it into something that suited their taste. In essence, the Samaritans created their own bible, worship, and worship building site. In John 4:22, Jesus emphasized, "We worship what we know." This comment was followed by a quote from D. A. Carson about the Samaritans: "The object of their worship was unknown."¹³ The Jews worshipped what they knew—they worshipped God as He had been revealed in all the Old Testament. Although the Jews, especially the Pharisees, knew God as revealed in the Old Testament, they still worshipped God incorrectly. The last phrase of John 4:22, "Salvation is from the Jews," highlights that truth came to the Jews first and then to the world.

The next two slides were named "in Spirit and Truth." The first of the two slides had six statements: (1) the Jews' worship was false because it focused on outwardly actions but wrong heart posture; (2) the Samaritans' worship was false because it was not based on truth; (3) the only way to worship God is through Jesus. He is the better Temple.

¹³ Carson, *The Gospel according to John*, 223.

He is the better Tabernacle; (4) Jesus told Nicodemus in John 3:6, “You must be born again”; (5) without new birth through the Holy Spirit, placing one in Jesus Christ, it is impossible to have worship that is pleasing to God; and (6) worship must always be based on God’s reveal truth in His Word, not one’s opinions. The next slide of spirit in Truth themed slides had eight statements. The first two statements out of the eight were the first two statements from the previous slide, emphasizing how both Jews’ and Samaritans’ worship were incorrect. The third statement on this slide was that God is spirit and is invisible. We can only know God if He is pleased to reveal himself. Praise God, he has done so by sending his Son Jesus! The next three statement were recycled from the previous slide as well. Those statements reminded students of how Jesus is better: the necessity of being in Christ for worship that is pleasing to God and worship is always based on reveal truth of God’s word. The last statement was that worship must involve all of us, our actions and our heart posture.

The next slide was named, “I know the Messiah is coming,” from John 4:25-26. I taught six statements based on these verses: (1) in the Pentateuch, in Deuteronomy 18:15, Moses prophesied that God would raise up another prophet just like him and it is to him you shall listen; (2) although the Samaritans had a bad interpretation of the Pentateuch, they too expected the Messiah; (3) Jesus revealed Himself to the Samaritan woman as the Messiah; (4) in the original language it says, “I who speak to you am”; (5) Jesus was saying not only am I the Messiah, I’m God!; and (6) Jesus Christ is prophet, priest, and king!

The final slide of lesson 5 was entitled, “Concluding thoughts.” This slide gave students four thoughts to ponder from the five teaching sessions: (1) pursuing someone in conversation to show them Jesus Christ is hard work; (2) no matter how false a belief system may be, it cannot stop God from giving light; (3) we must listen carefully and answer questions that create bridges to the Gospel; and (4) we must always be thankful for the work of the Holy Spirit who enables us to share so that others see Jesus Christ. This

ended the teaching time and I prayed for students to apply the truths they had been taught. Following my prayer, the worship team came to the stage and asked students to join them in singing *We believe* by Matthew Hooper, Richie Fike, and Travis Ryan. After the song, the worship team said a prayer and I passed out the post-test and left the room. Students were instructed to turn in the post-test to the BCM office prior to leaving for the night. Students turned in the post-test anonymously to the BCM office. This ended lesson 5. I received eleven post-tests.

Data Collection and Analysis

The following information depicts the demographic of the participants. Out of the students present, only eleven returned the pre-test and the post-test. Three out of the 11, or 27.3 percent, agreement to participate forms were not completely filled out. However, all eleven participants completed three categories. The demographic categories collected were Christian/non-Christian, extra-curricular activities, and employment status. Demographic information reported that 10 of 11, or 90.9 percent of the students were Christian. Students reported that 7 of 11, or 63.6 percent, are involved in extra-curricular activities to include by not limited to clubs, sports, and/or Greek life on campus. Interesting enough, more than half, 8 out of 11, or 72.7 percent, indicated they were employed while enrolled in school. This is interesting considering the demand of school/work life that students must navigate at such an early age.

I collected 11 pre-tests and 11 post-tests. Each item on the pre-test and post-test was based on a five-point Likert scale. Each answer by the student could have a value from 1 to 5 points based on their response. Likert scale values were as follows: strongly agree was 1, disagree was 2, uncertain was 3, agree was 4, and strongly agree was 5. I created a Excel spreadsheet to keep up with the data. I labeled each participant from 1 to 11 to line up with the number of pre-tests and post-tests I received. I matched the pre-test and post-test to each participant. I added up the total scores for each individual pre-test and placed them in an Excel spreadsheet. I then added up each individual post-test and

place them in the Excel spreadsheet. I compared the data from each group to match up each participants' pre-test and compared it to their post-test. I then ran a paired two-tail *t*-test for the 11 pre and post test. The results of the *t*-test indicated that the lessons taught at the Baptist Campus Ministry on the campus of University of Louisville made a statistical difference, resulting in their increase knowledge of missions and evangelism indicated by $p(T \leq t)$ two-tail of 0.001509169 or $p < 0.001509169$. Not only was a difference in paired two-tail *t*-test, but the average score increased in the participants by 9.06 percent. The average score for the pre-test was 125.6 and the average score for the post-test was 136.73.

Table 1. Pre/post test scores

Respondent	Pre-Test	Post-Test
1	126	141
2	121	130
3	121	137
4	127	142
5	127	125
6	121	141
7	132	153
8	124	146
9	122	123
10	137	137
11	121	129
Average Score	125.36	136.73
% change		9.06%

The test contained forty-one items aimed to gauge the level of awareness regarding the need for missional engagement on campus using a five-point Likert scale. Sixteen of the questions were developed specifically to determine a change associated with the lessons. Items 2-3 aimed to measure students' understanding as it related to making disciples and the byproduct of being different often going hand in hand. Items 7, 8, 16, 20, 33, 36 aimed to measure students' awareness that sharing their faith is part of

maturing. Items 14 and 39 aimed to measure students’ awareness that anyone can share their faith no matter their knowledge level. Items 10, 13, 18, 21, 23, and 31 aimed to measure the students’ awareness of the necessity of the gospel and the ever-present power of God to aid in accomplishing the task. Table 2 indicates that these sixteen items selected to indicate a change in knowledge as it relates to missions and evangelism also showed an increase. The average score for students for the pre-test was 58.64 and 65.36 for the post-test. The change and increase in knowledge and awareness related to mission and evangelism increased by 11.47 person.

Table 2. Evangelism and mission items

Respondent	Evangelism Pre-Test	Evangelism Post-Test
1	62	69
2	59	66
3	58	64
4	59	62
5	50	65
6	64	72
7	59	72
8	63	72
9	57	45
10	55	66
11	59	66
Average Score	58.64	65.36
% Change		11.473%

Conclusion

This project empowered the students of the Baptist Campus ministry at the University of Louisville for missional engagement. The project touched on several items that may hinder a student from living a missional engaging life. The project covered topics such as social norms, loneliness, God’s design for human flourishing, cultural competence, the work and power of the Holy Spirit, and the mission of Jesus just to name a few. I am grateful for the sufficiency of Scripture to aid in our wholistic development as the

missional people of God. Because we are made in the image of God, our aim is always to bring relationships, whether friends or family, under the dominion of God.

As a result, of the data collected from the pre-test and post-test, statistical significance could be derived from the whole group as indicated by the *t*-test and data from tables 1-2. From the pre-test, post-test, and the lessons in between students were challenged and exposed to the importance of living life to engage their campus with the gospel of Jesus Christ. I am confident in the Word of God for its work in the students through the empowerment of the Holy Spirit to changes lives for the glory of God.

CHAPTER 5

EVALUATION OF THE PROJECT

This project empowered the students Baptist Campus ministry to reach their peers for Christ. Teaching children or training progenies to tell others about the true and living God finds its origin all the way back to Genesis 1:27-28. In these verses, our identity is revealed as being made in the One who made us: we are image bearers. We uniquely reflect His image in our genders of male and female as they complement one another. To be fruitful and multiply implies that this complementary pair can produce offspring to aid in subduing and having dominion over the earth.

Chapter 2 further showed how this thread of bringing the world under the dominion of God through missions and evangelism is a reoccurring theme. Although the introduction focused to some degree on children, the training of students correlates well.

The providential hand of God is present in having a Baptist Campus ministry presence on a predominately secular campus. Not only is the hand of God providential in allowing a BCM presence on campus, but also providential is the location of the physical building near the student activity center in the middle of campus. There is a diverse history of the campus along with the diverse population of students. It still amazes me that the gospel roots of a seminary are embedded in the history of University of Louisville. As a result of this project, I am excited to see what God will do through us on campus.

There was a need for this project but also an urgency. Although Jesus promises in Matthew 16:18 that the gates of hell shall not prevail against the church, one has to wonder what type of church it will be if this generation is not reached with the gospel of Jesus Christ. The sheer size and influence that Generation Z will have in the coming years will be important for how missional engagement is viewed and done.

Evaluation of the Project's Purpose

The purpose of the project was to empower students of the BCM for missional engagement at the University of Louisville. This purpose was transparent, achievable, and necessary. From the beginning of the Bible, one is able to see the need to follow God and lead others to do the same. Ultimately, this is realized in the person of Jesus Christ who has torn down the wall of partition that separated people from God and one another (Eph 2:11-22).

The achievability of the project was contingent on the participation of students and their willingness to take following Christ seriously. Students had to consistently show up every week and participate in the worship time. With student exam and work schedules, this was a feat in itself. Thankfully, eleven students prioritized this time to participate in the class and complete pre- and post-test.

The necessity of the project cannot be over emphasized as it bleeds out from resources in chapter 2 and 3. The empowerment of students of the Baptist Campus Ministry for missional engagement at University of Louisville is needed and my prayer is that it will yield dividends for years to come.

Evaluation of the Project's Goal

The first goal was to assess the current understanding of missions and evangelism among students. The pre-test was adapted and created with a variety of questions related to evangelism and missions. The forty-one-item pre-test allowed students to respond in privacy. Although all the items were important, sixteen items were selected to gauge different aspects of evangelism and missions. This goal was to be met when ten students completed the assessment for further analysis. Data was collected from eleven students' pre-tests, therefore goal 1 was successful.

The second goal was developing a five-week curriculum on biblical evangelism and missional living. There were many passages to choose from, but through prayer the Lord landed me on John 4:1-26. This passage addressed many issues that students face on

campus and will face as they attempt to live with a missional engaging mindset. Chapters 2 and 3 were also foundational and aided in shaping the teaching lessons. The lessons were designed to challenge and inform students on practical ways to engage their campus following the example of Jesus Christ. An expert panel offered grammatical and spell check help along the way. The expert panel was also a source of encouragement as I tackled the task of creating the lesson plans. Because of this expert panel help, I was able to provide a quality teaching product and accomplish goal 2.

The third goal was to increase the students' knowledge of missions and evangelism by implementing the curriculum. I taught the series to a group of thirty students, however, only eleven of this group completed the pre- and post-test surveys.

After the lessons, there was a 9.06 percent change in all forty-one items, and 11.47 percent change in the sixteen items designed to gauge certain aspects of evangelism and missions. The project was statistically significant based on the *t*-test score mentioned in chapter 4. This goal was considered successful when students showed an increase in knowledge of mission and evangelism as indicated by their mission and evangelism post-test score.

The fourth goal of the project was to coach students through development and implementation of a plan to engage the UofL campus. The BCM was offered an opportunity to host the orientation staff this summer in our building prior to summer orientation starting. I presented this information to the BCM and sought to see if this would be an opportunity they wanted to pursue. I coached students on how this would be a chance to practice what they had just learned from the teaching sessions. The students agreed to participate and engage the summer orientation staff. The BCM students took the lead on what this event would look like. On May 17, 2022, the BCM served Chick-Fil-A to the summer orientation staff. Some students served the food, while others engaged the staff by sitting strategically at tables to meet new people to build relationship with the intention of sharing Jesus Christ. They planned to have at least one BCM student at each

table, but no more than two. Students commented that they were able to talk to the student staff and tell them about the BCM and why they choose to be part of the BCM. One female student mentioned that she was able to invite students to start going a Bible study. The BCM hosted thirty-two members of the summer orientation staff.

The students were excited to put into practice what they had learned. This post-survey activity was very successful as it paid dividends during the summer orientation sessions. Students took the lead from planning meals to seating strategically at tables engaging the staff. Their involvement and leadership made goal 4 successful.

Strengths of the Project

One strength of the project was its central focus on the Word of God. Second Timothy 3:16-17 reads, “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.” Although sources outside the Bible were used in this project, they only confirmed the truth contained in the sacred writings. Furthermore, since living missionally on campus involves engaging others with the gospel, and Jesus used the Scripture (Matt 4:1-11), the Bible should be our tool as well.

The focus on the Word of God had some residual effects as well. First, this allowed me to model to students that real truth comes from the Word of God. Second, it helped students learn how to read Scripture closely. Third, it taught students how to listen to the Word of God while reading in unison weekly. Fourth, students observed that the Bible is relevant and speaks to many contemporary issues. James 1:22 says, “But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.” Lastly, the project taught students that the Bible is not only meant to be read and heard, but also obeyed.

Another strength of the project was the small group discussion time. James Emery White states, “Apologetics, in many ways, is at its best when it finds the cultural bridges we can walk across, and then while walking, address the questions and barriers

that exist along the path.”¹ The small group time benefited the students’ learning process for several reasons. First, it moved away from a classroom environment where one person is assumed to have all the knowledge and only give lectures. Since the average attention span of Generation Z is only 8 seconds the teaching had to be engaging and experimental.² Second, students engaged in various points of view and ultimately shaped and challenged their current view. Third, students talked about relevant issues that surround the campus and impact their lives. The discussion questions created bridges and the Bible ultimately provided connection points for students.

Some examples of those bridges were addressing loneliness and isolation from John 4:1-7 in lesson 1. Students often experience loneliness as they venture away from family and friends on a college campus. On a university campus, if one does not have transportation, it can be tough to take care of simply needs such as groceries or toiletries. Lesson 3 brought up a campus reality of cultural differences. Students from all around the world come to a university campus with various worldviews. A wise student must be able to navigate these waters if they plan to engage the campus for Christ. Lesson 3 focused on being thirsty—some students did not know all people have a deeper desire and design to be connected to God in the person of Jesus Christ. Lesson 4 focused on sin. Without parents to enforce rules and regulate students’ behavior, they have freedom unlike any time before to live anyway they want. Lesson 5 emphasized the solution to humanity’s ultimate problem, the person and work of Jesus Christ. Because John 4:1-26 addresses these concerns, students were able to have objections but then see how the Bible provides the solution.

¹ James Emery White, *Meet Generation Z: Understanding and Reaching the New Post-Christian World* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2017), 131.

² White, *Meet Generation Z*, 115.

Weaknesses of the Project

One major weakness of the project was attendance. Attendance dropped off drastically at the BCM from March 2020 to Spring 2022. If I would have done the project in Fall 2019-February 2020, more students would have participated. With an increase in attendance, more students would have been impacted through the lessons. Although the project was successful, I wanted as many students as possible to live for missional engagement on the campus of University of Louisville.

The second weakness of the project was the delay in completing the project. While finishing chapter 3 and contemplating my project, I moved from Lexington, Kentucky to Louisville, Kentucky. This transition was stressful as I tried to balance life and my kids going to a new school, starting over and attempting to make new friends. My wife also initially found it difficult to find employment, which added to my stress level. Ultimately, this transition caused me to pause my studies for some time. In many ways this was a difficult season, running two BCM's until a permanent person could be found at my previous campus and thinking about my new context as it related to this project.

What I Would Do Differently

The first thing I would do differently if I were to complete this project again would be to start out with BCM as the context. I initially considered teaching and doing my project in a local church setting. I even had conversations with two different church staff personnel. Working with a church that already has its own teaching schedule for the year, passages they are preaching through, and trying to schedule a new class proved daunting. I am grateful for clarity and help that made me realize my current context is the BCM, and that the project was designed to benefit my current context.

The second item I would have done differently would be to use Zoom during in throughout the 2020 Bible studies to prepare students and gauge interest about project participation. I would have better used social media as a platform to advertise on campus for other student participation for a broader response as it related to the pre- and post-test.

I was somewhat disappointed that many students attended each session but only eleven turned in the pre- and post-test.

Additionally, on the agreement to participate form, I would have included more demographic information such as gender, religious background, frequency of church attendance, and familiarity with church, and a request for a description of the participants' spiritual journey on a five-point Likert scale. As it relates to describing one's spiritual journey, I could have included a range from non-Christian to new believer to maturing in faith. As it relates to church attendance, maybe asking if they attended a church in a rural or urban setting. These markers would have given me a better understanding of the participants taking part in the project.

Lastly, I touched on some issues that students experience on campus and also noted in John 4:1-26 that it would have been good to give more practical solutions and resources that directly focused on these issues.

Theological Reflections

As noted, the Word of God is sufficient to address all needs (2 Tim 3:16-17). This project dealt with empowering students at the Baptist Campus Ministry for missional engagement on the campus of University of Louisville. Apart from the Word of God and the empowerment of the Holy Spirit, this would have been an impossible task. The Word of God was so important that it was reemphasized and reviewed prior to each lesson.

The biblical foundation from Genesis 1:27-28 revealed many concepts that surface repeatedly in Scripture and on campus. Being made in the image of God would not have come to be had God not decided to create. God was perfectly satisfied in himself, of himself, and by himself, yet he chose to make humanity in his image. Everything that exists reveals God's eternal power and divine nature according to Romans 1:20. The God who creates and exists is worthy of total worship and dedication. This project made abundantly clear that God did a great work by putting on humanity and coming to earth to redeem sinners. This was Jesus's mission before the incarnation (Matt 1:21).

Humans were made to connect. It amazed me during this project that students understood the importance of connecting virtually but did not fully comprehend the need to connect in person. The lessons helped students understand that “it is not good for man to be alone” (Gen 2:18). Students only understood this in terms of marriage, but to see how it impacts the human condition was really encouraging. Post-project it has been refreshing to see students willingly engaging other students on campus in all walks of life.

Personal Reflections

This project developed me into a better minister of the gospel of Jesus Christ. It forced me to become better at research and looking for correlations between the Bible and secular resources. The reading of additional resources helped me discover that the world or anything opposed to the things of God are looking for answers that only are found in the Word of God. I also discovered that, at best, a secular culture could only identify the leaf of a problem without addressing the root of it.

My strategic leadership has improved drastically. Not only did this project change or influence the mindset of the students, but it also changed the culture of the BCM in more ways than one. Prior to this project, students would have mentioned that they were about reaching lost students for Jesus Christ, but their actions said differently. As a result of this project, students have been deliberate in engaging strangers in conversations on campus. I have also observed students naturally mentioning their faith during outreach activities. The slides and the groups questions sent additional cues and teaching as well, driving home the point of each lesson.

My listening skills may have improved through this project. I have been able to listen to statements from students and hear underlying issues. I read about Jesus doing this in a greater and better capacity throughout the Scriptures.

Lastly, I have grown in my dependence on the Lord. The lesson preparations, research time, family, and BCM life have kept me on my knees in prayer asking for the grace of God to continue pressing and pushing forward with this project.

Conclusion

This project changed me in several ways. It altered me to have a deeper concern about lostness among college students. The project also spurred me to think more intentionally about having gospel conversations. Students are still thirsty for the living water revealed in Jesus Christ.

This project also altered the personality and DNA of the BCM. The students are deliberate about making sure everyone is greeted by at least one leader during any of the activities. Engaging others through conversations has been delightful to watch.

My heart has been shaped and made anew because of the gospel of Jesus Christ. I still stand in amazement that He came to die for me. I want the BCM and others on the campus of University of Louisville to experience this new life in Jesus Christ. This project and lessons influenced the way I interact with incoming freshmen. I want to use the lessons to develop a freshman Bible study for small group study. I may even expand on it to develop how one should pursue gospel-centered gender-specific conversations. There are some conversations better had by those of the same gender.

The truths of this project are so practical and necessary that it will be something I refer to for years to come. My prayer is that other college-aged ministries can benefit from this project.

APPENDIX 1

ENGAGING THE CAMPUS PRE- AND POST-TEST

Using the following scale as a guide, please respond truthfully to each statement according to your personal beliefs, practices, and experiences.¹ Also, please circle the number of any statement you do not understand.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly Agree

- _____ 1. Jesus was just a good teacher and taught that we should practice love.
- _____ 2. Every Christ-follower has the privilege of making disciples.
- _____ 3. Being different in our culture is optional for the believer.
- _____ 4. Every Christ-follower should have good works in their life.
- _____ 5. God is holy.
- _____ 6. God must punish sin.
- _____ 7. Every Christian should have a core group of friends that helps with their spiritual development.
- _____ 8. I know how to share my personal testimony with another person.
- _____ 9. Living like a Christian is more important than telling someone about being a Christian.
- _____ 10. All humans are born sinners.
- _____ 11. All humans are basically good.
- _____ 12. God calls people to Himself, but it can be resisted.
- _____ 13. Salvation is an act of God in which He gives new spiritual life.

¹ This pre-post test is adapted from Dennis Edgar Wingate, "Training Believers in Personal Evangelism at Grace Baptist Church, Ridgeway, Virginia" (DMin project, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2013), 140-42.

- _____ 14. A commitment to effective Christian witnessing requires formal evangelism training.
- _____ 15. When you are a follower of Christ, you can lose your salvation.
- _____ 16. I feel unprepared to present good news about Jesus to others.
- _____ 17. Trouble in my life is a sign of God's disapproval.
- _____ 18. God offers forgiveness of sin and eternal life.
- _____ 19. Eternal life is maintained through good works.
- _____ 20. It is important for me to share my testimony.
- _____ 21. The gospel message is for all people in the world.
- _____ 22. Dedication is not required for all Christians.
- _____ 23. People who die without a personal relationship with Jesus go to hell.
- _____ 24. Being in a small group will always lead to Christian growth.
- _____ 25. World missions are unnecessary for God to reach the nations.
- _____ 26. Evangelism is only needed within my home.
- _____ 27. All who truly follow Christ will be kept by God's power until the very end of their lives.
- _____ 28. Brokenness in my life threatens personal evangelism and the spread of the gospel message.
- _____ 29. All gospel conversations will yield spiritual fruit.
- _____ 30. The death of a Christian has a very different end than that of a non-Christian.
- _____ 31. The Holy Spirit aids in talking about Jesus.
- _____ 32. Suffering is optional for the follower of Christ.
- _____ 33. The more I engage in personal evangelism, the better I will become at it.
- _____ 34. Evangelism is more important than biblical teaching and preaching.
- _____ 35. It is better to leave spiritual conversations to a pastor or trained individuals.
- _____ 36. Making disciples involves proclaiming the gospel message, baptizing those who respond in faith, and teaching them how to live in the ways of God.
- _____ 37. Proclaiming the good news of Jesus Christ will always lead to spiritual conflict.
- _____ 38. Christians are against most fun things and names them sin.

- _____ 39. There are numerous models/methods today for doing personal evangelism.
- _____ 40. The gospel message is one of many ways to God.
- _____ 41. The gospel message instills love and hope to the community.

APPENDIX 2

PROJECT EVALUATION

Empowering students for missional engagement					
Evaluation					
1= insufficient 2=requires attention 3= sufficient 4=exemplary					
Criteria	1	2	3	4	Comments
Does the title clearly and concisely describe the project? (Does it include the church's name and location?)					
Is the purpose statement clearly and succinctly stated?					
Does the purpose statement include the target group, what is to be accomplished and where the project will take place?					
Does the title and purpose statement agree?					
Are the goals clearly articulated?					
Is there an obvious progression in the sequencing of goals? In other words, do they build upon one another in a logical manner?					
Is it clearly stated how each goal will be measured?					
Is the "benchmark of success" noted in relation to goal accomplishment? (What is success?)					
When the goals are reached, will they achieve the stated purpose of the project?					
Does the context section specially focus upon matters related to the purpose of the project?					

1= insufficient 2=requires attention 3= sufficient 4=exemplary					
Criteria	1	2	3	4	Comments
Does the context section adequately describe the issues within the ministry setting that have given rise to the project?					
Does the context section flow from the purpose/goals and lead the reader to understand the rationale for the study?					
Does the rationale section adequately detail the need for the study?					
Does the rationale section convince a skeptical reader that the project ought to be conducted?					
Have the limitations of the study been clearly articulated?					
Have the delimitations of the study been clearly articulated?					
Has special terminology been defined using bibliographic support?					
Has the process that will be followed in securing input, data, and feedback from project participants been clearly stated?					
Has the instrumentation that will be used to collect data from participants been clearly detailed?					
Is a copy of the instrumentation included in the appendix with any needed permission for use if a standardized or adapted instrument was utilized?					
Does the research design stipulate how many participants will be enlisted and the manner in which the enlistment will occur?					
Have the statistics that will be used to determine if the intervention (i.e., the project) has made a statistically significant difference be noted with explanation and bibliographic support?					
Has the means of measurement for each goal been clearly stated with clearly detailed marks of goal accomplishment?					

APPENDIX 3

AGREEMENT TO PARTICPATE

The research in which you are about to participate is designed to assess the current understanding of evangelism and mission by the participant. Brian Hinton is conducting this research for the purpose of collecting data for a ministry project. Any information you provide will be held strictly confidential, and at no time will your name be reported or identified with your responses. Participation is strictly voluntary, and you are free to withdraw at any time. By completion of this survey, you are giving informed consent for the use of your responses in this project.

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

I give permission for my child to participate _____
Signature and date (if under 18)

I agree to participate personal ID# _____

I do not agree to participate

This will aid in obtaining some demographic information about the individuals participating.

1. What is your current age? _____
2. Are you a Christian? _____
3. How long have you been a Christian? _____
4. Are you active in extra-curricular activities at school (clubs, sports, Greek Life)?
___ A. Yes
___ B. No
5. Are you employed while attending school?
___ A. Yes
___ B. No
6. What year are you in school? (Freshman, Sophomore, Junior, Senior)
7. Degree program _____

APPENDIX 4
LESSON OUTLINES

Lesson 1: Loneliness and Isolation

Context: John 4:1-7

Key ideas:

- Holy Spirit's work
 - Jesus' Mission
 - Disciples/followers
1. Engage Students (small groups' discussion)
 - Is it good to be alone?
 - Does loneliness lead to isolation?
 - Can you have one without the other?
 - Does communication play a role in loneliness?
 - Can communication alleviate isolation?
 2. Receive Feedback from each small group leader.
 3. Explore John 4:1-7
 - Explain Genesis 2:18 (context, gender, compatibility, human flourishing)
 - Who were the Pharisees?
 - What are disciples and are they important?
 - Why did Jesus need to go through Samaria? (Divine appointment)
 - Who is Jacob?
 - Isolation
 - What time is it? The sixth hour?
 - A woman at a well?
 - Jesus' request? (social norms)
 4. Concluding thoughts from John 4:1-7
 - a. Jesus came to identify with sinners.

- We need to break from our comfort zones to engage others.
- Everyone who is alone doesn't necessarily want to be alone.

Lesson Plan 2: Cultural Differences

Context: John 4:8-9

Key ideas:

- Holy Spirit's work
- Jesus' Mission
- Overcoming the past

1. Engage Students (small groups' discussion)
 - How is our identity shaped?
 - What does it mean to have purpose?
 - What are the benefits of being culturally competent?
 - Should culture dictate our behavior? Explain.
2. Receive Feedback from each small group leader.
3. Explore John 4:8-9
 - Why did the disciples leave?
 - What is the deal with Jews and Samaritans?
 - Split in Israel (Rehoboam/Jeroboam)
 - 1 Kings 16:24 (origins/ a place of idolatry)
 - 2 Kings 17:7-18 (consequences of sin)
 - Marriage between Jews and Assyrians (Samaritans)
 - Trouble from Samaria (Ezra 4:1-24, Nehemiah 4:1-6)
4. Concluding thoughts from John 4:8-9
 - a. True identity can only be found in the One who made us!
 - False identity will place barriers on true help.
 - False identity can often keep one tied to the past.
 - False identity can often create false narratives.
 - False identity hinders us from appreciating the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:36-37)

Lesson 3: Thirsty?

Context: John 4:10-15

Key ideas:

- Holy Spirit's work
 - Jesus' Mission
 - Intentional conversations
1. Engage Students (small groups' discussion)
 - What drives our desires?
 - Can we help someone without hurting them?
 - How do we avoid being easily offended?
 - Can helping lead to necessary discomfort?
 2. Receive Feedback from each small group leader.
 3. Explore John 4:10-15
 - Unaware of true need (unaware of the real thirst)
 - What is living water?
 - Naturally vs Spiritually
 - Give me this water: longing for water.
 4. Concluding thoughts from John 4:10-15
 - a. Jesus is the gracious Gift of God.
 - Jesus is the source of living water and eternal life.
 - Jesus exemplifies to us how engaging others takes time.
 1. People are often unaware of their real need.
 2. Time in conversation builds trust.
 3. Trust allows other to seriously consider what we are saying.

Lesson 4: Elephant in the Room--Sin

Context: John 4:16-18

Key ideas:

- Holy Spirit's work
 - Jesus' Mission
 - Understanding our brokenness
1. Engage Students (small groups' discussion)
 - Where do I find direction in life?
 - Who or what determines right and wrong?
 - A group? My peers? Family? Society?
 - What is the influence of each of the above groups in your life?
 - Can I be wrong and not know it?
 2. Receive Feedback from each small group leader.
 3. Explore John 4:16-18
 - Genesis 2:18-25 (flashback: not good for man to be alone)
 - Solution
 - Genesis 3:1-19 (the fall)
 - Brokenness in us (shameful, fearful, and hiding) (Romans 8:23)
 - Brokenness in nature (Romans 8:22)
 - Brokenness in relationships (Genesis 3:16-17, Genesis 4:7)
 - Go call your husband.
 - Looking for meaning and love in the wrong places.
 - No human can fulfill a God need.
 - Failure to find purpose in God, can often lead one down dark paths.
 4. Concluding thoughts from John 4:16-18
 - a. Only God can fulfill our ultimate desire in the person of Jesus.
 - Life will always present substitutes to God's way.
 - Substitutes never live up to the original.
 1. Substitutes will always leave you wanting more.
 2. Substitutes will cause you to search for more.
 3. Ultimately, substitutes will cause you to settle for less.

Lesson 5: Quenching the Thirst—Jesus Christ

Context: John 4:19-26

Key ideas:

- Holy Spirit's work
 - Jesus' Mission
 - Staying focused during Gospel conversations.
1. Engage Students (small groups' discussion)
 - What is your idea of God?
 - What is worship?
 - Does it matter how I worship?
 - Does it matter what or who I worship?
 - Does it matter where I worship?
 - Is cultural knowledge important for spiritual conversations?
 2. Receive Feedback from each small group leader.
 3. Explore John 4:19-26
 - What is a prophet?
 - What was his function?
 - Samaritan religious beliefs
 - Background of Mt Gerizim
 - What is the Pentateuch? (Hebrew Version)
 - Only believed in the Samaritan Pentateuch.
 - selective beliefs from the Pentateuch.
 - Mt Gerizim vs. Jerusalem? Worship wars?
 4. Concluding thoughts from John 4:19-26
 - Pursuing someone in conversation to show them Christ is hard work and takes time.
 - No matter how false a belief system may be, it cannot stop God from giving light.
 - We must listen carefully and answer questions that create bridges to the Gospel.
 - We must always be thankful for the work of the Holy Spirit who enables us to share and opens the hearts of others to see Jesus Christ.

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ABSTRACT

EMPOWERING STUDENTS OF THE BAPTIST CAMPUS MINISTRY FOR MISSIONAL ENGAGEMENT AT THE UNIVERSITY OF LOUISVILLE

Brian Christopher Hinton, DMin
The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2022
Faculty Supervisor: Dr. William D. Hernard

This project was designed to empower students of the Baptist Campus Ministry at the University of Louisville for missional engagement. Chapter 1 defines the context and the rationale for the project. Chapter 2 details the biblical and theological basis for the project. Chapter 3 describes the cultural awareness that one should have interacting with young adult students. Chapter 4 describes the teaching curriculum on missions and evangelism. Finally, Chapter 5 offers reflection concerning the project.

VITA

Brian Christopher Hinton

EDUCATION

BS, Grambling State University, 1998
MBA, Webster University, 2000
MA, Asbury Theological Seminary, 2012
MDiv, Asbury Theological Seminary, 2012

MINISTERIAL EMPLOYMENT

Associate Pastor, Main Street Baptist Church, Lexington, Kentucky, 2005-
2012
Regional Campus Minister, Kentucky Baptist Convention, Louisville,
Kentucky, 2012-
Southern Baptist Convention Trustee, New Orleans Baptist Theological
Seminary, New Orleans, Louisiana, 2022-

ACADEMIC EMPLOYMENT

Adjunct Professor, Boyce College, Louisville, Kentucky, 2019, 2021